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# Visual Analysis of Leonardo da Vinci's painting — La Belle Ferronnière

Leonardo da Vinci was an Italian artist born in April 1452 and died in May 1519 who lived in the Renaissance era. His fame and popularity were based on his paintings and contribution to the Italian artwork. Leonardo was also an active inventor, a vibrant musician, writer, and scientist as well as a talented sculptor amongst other fields. His various career fields proved that he wanted to know everything about nature. In the book "Leonardo Da Vinci: The Mind of the Renaissance" by Alessandro Vezzosi, it is argued that Leonardo was one of the most successful and versatile artists and anatomists of the Italian renaissance based on his unique artwork and paintings (Vezzosi, p1454). Some of his groundbreaking research in medicine, metal-casting, natural science, architecture, and weaponry amongst other fields have been explored in the book. He was doing all these in the renaissance period in Italy from the 1470s till his death.

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*La belle ferronnière painting by Leonardo Da Vinci- Vezzosi*

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La belle ferronnière is a portrait of a certain lady that has been attributed to Leonardo da Vinci. The image is based in the Louvre, the world's largest art museum and also a historical tribute in Paris, France. The image is also referred to as the portrait of an unknown woman. The application of the title of Leonardo's image in the 17th was to identify the painting as ironmonger's daughter or wife which was a modest indication of Francis 1's reputed mistress married to a certain Le Ferron (Vezzosi, p1457). However, it is hard to dispute that the real sitter in the painting is Beatrice d'Este, the wife of Ludovico Sforza, evident due to to Leonardo's courtship in the Court of Milan at the time.

The essence of the La belle ferronnière which means the wife of an ironmonger, a ferronnier, has been a subject of vast speculation. Confusion has been raised on understanding the portrait since differentiating it from the paintings of the lady with an Ermine, Milanese lady, and Duchess of Mantua (Vezzosi, p1455). The portrait was placed in the Louvre as culture preservation since this is the most visited art museum worldwide and thus, people are able to learn the past culture expressed through the painting. Additionally, the person's characteristics that the artist attempted to focus on included the courage expressed in the image. In the Leonardo da Vinci's portrait, the sfumato or blurred technique of painting was used in making the artwork a success and provision of a clear image that everyone can view and understand the perceived message. Additionally, his competence in mathematics, science, and other engineering fields was essential in improving his artwork through determining the size applicable in a 63 × 45 cm painting. He also used shadows and light in his paintings. Despite the fact that there existed a variety of great writers during the Renaissance period, the La belle ferronnière painting has been attributed to Leonardo da Vinci due to the painting

techniques in the image such as the black background who is amongst the famous Italians during this period.

Leonardo's statue which is confused with the lady of ermine's portrait was once believed to be the image of one of Lodovico's mistresses called Cecilia Gallerani. The use of the delicate chain that is worn by La belle ferronnière and the lady of ermine across the forehead bring about confusion in identifying the two portraits. La belle ferronnière model of a painting by Leonardo da Vinci is veiled in mystery since it is a painting done while the artist was held in the Court of Milan and it depicted Beatrice d'Este, the wife of Ludovico Sforza (Zöllner, p180). This challenges an earlier acknowledgment of the portrayal to be mistress of Ludovica by the name Lucrezia Crivelli.

The La Belle ferronnière portrait has been a subject of debate for the past decades regarding the artist who painted it. The identification of the portrait is based on the drawing effects and techniques used in the drawing since the early artists differed in such areas. Although the identification of the portrait has been disputed, the author argues that Lucrezia is the sitter in Leonardo's statue which has been referred to as La belle ferronnière. The photographic realism of the portrait that has been achieved through the subtle chiascuro against the background's black limbo is the continuation of a theme lady with an Ermine. His techniques are also echoed by the 17th-century artist, Baroque in further drawings as Zöllner asserts (p178). The statue of La belle ferronnière currently hangs in the Louvre, and it is considered amongst the prime examples of Renaissance art. This is because the painting was first completed by the Italian Renaissance artist known as Leonardo da Vinci in the 1500s.

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In conclusion, Leonardo da Vinci's artwork has been widely accepted in history and even today due to his distinctive drawing features. The drawing of La belle ferronnière, a white woman with black hair, in the Italian Renaissance period has been a subject of debate for the past many years due to the complexity in determining the actual person presented in the drawing. Based on Leonardo's techniques and his courtship to Ludovico Sforzo in the Court of Milan, it can be concluded that the sitter in the painting is Lodovico's wife: Beatrice d'Este.

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