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THE mona lisa

by
SCOTT LUND

Leonardo da Vinci — the original Renaissance man — was a skilled scientist, inventor, mathematician, anatomist, architect, musician, cartographer, writer and painter. His most famous work, the “Mona Lisa,” has been a source of fascination and debate for nearly five hundred years. Who was Mona Lisa? Why did da Vinci take 16 years to paint her? And why did he keep her constantly with him until his death? ¶ Scott Lund, an accomplished pianist, writer and student of forgotten history, several years ago turned his attention to the “Mona Lisa.” With incisive research and his knowledge of ancient symbolic language, he has unlocked the Mona Lisa Code. ¶ Lund is now writing “The Janus Code,” a book about this work, and is producing a multi-media exhibit about da Vinci’s secret symbolism. Bel-Air Magazine is proud to print Lund’s first article about the Code. For more information, visit www.scottlund.com.

AFTER CENTURIES OF speculation and misinterpretation, the astonishing riddle of Leonardo da Vinci’s “Mona Lisa” is solved here for the first time. The world’s most famous work of art is not the portrait of a mortal woman; it is the revelation of a

single heavenly soul divided between two earthly bodies.

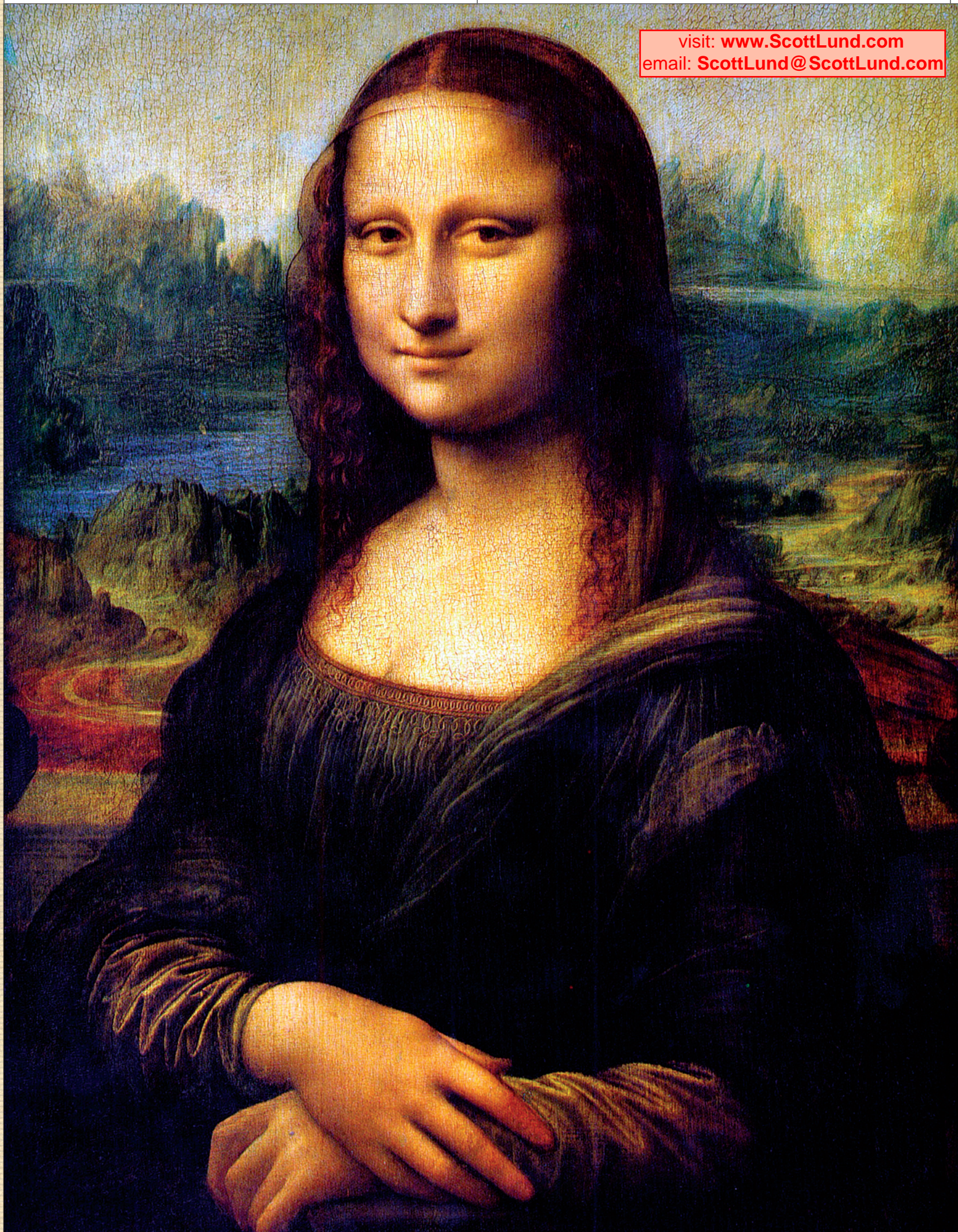
“Mona Lisa” is a female-male soul representing the paradox of beginning life. To achieve his ingenious vision, da Vinci fused the heresy of a pagan god to the Christian mystery of human genesis. He expressed divine conception through the dualistic symbolism of

Janus, the Roman god with two faces.

The “Mona Lisa” can now clearly be seen through the inner workings of da Vinci’s own mind. These conclusions are based upon da Vinci’s writings, a hidden code within the painting’s name and obvious symbolic interpretations.

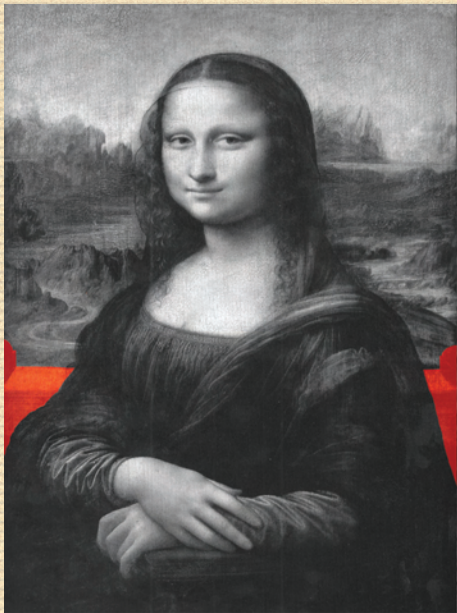
One belief that especially intrigued da Vinci was the manifest idea that a ►

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UPPER LEFT: ORIGINAL
"MONA LISA" WITH
LOCATION OF PARTIAL
PILLAR BASES IN RED.

UPPER RIGHT: THE
ISLEWORTH "MONA LISA"
WITH PILLARS.

BOTTOM LEFT: SKETCH OF
"MONA LISA" WITH
PILLARS BY RENAISSANCE
PAINTER RAPHAEL.

BOTTOM RIGHT: WALTERS
MUSEUM COPY OF "MONA
LISA" WITH PILLARS



mother and her unborn child had to share a single soul. Da Vinci wrote explicitly on that very subject, and his attempts to understand the shared-soul mystery were likely at the heart of his exploratory autopsies of fetuses and wombs.

Da Vinci's apparent artistic challenge to himself was not to paint an ordinary human body but, rather, the awesome wonder of a celestial soul in the midst of its sacred life-giving act of splitting into two separate souls. By using the duality of the god Janus as his inspiration, da Vinci developed a clever and uniquely suited theme for painting two corporeal bodies as one metaphysical entity.

Most revealing is the anagram I deciphered that occurs when the letters of MONA LISA are rearranged into the Latin words ANIMA SOL. This translates literally as "Soul/Sun god."

Sol was the pagan god who eventually became the Sol Invictus (Invincible Sun) of Christian Emperor Constantine. But the Sun god had an intriguing origin. Sol had evolved from the more archaic god Janus.

Romulus, the legendary founder of Rome, is credited with being the first to worship Janus, and thereafter Janus was considered first in importance before all their other gods. As the god of "new beginnings," Janus functioned well as

the appropriate overseer for the inception of life, and the Romans never began any endeavor without invoking his name.

Janus was often characterized as one head with two bearded faces looking in opposite directions. While the dual nature of Janus was clear, his virile representations belied the fact that he was essentially a god that was one-half female. This feminine side found expression through the goddess Jana – his less-conspicuous namesake.

While seemingly a masculine god, Janus had an ambiguous sexual persona that likely resembled Leonardo da Vinci's view of himself, thus making an attractive metaphor for him to use.

Considering its associated meaning, the ANIMA SOL anagram can be faithfully interpreted as "the soul of Janus." Because the anagram so clearly defines da Vinci's intent, it is now self evident that he was the first to call his painting the "Mona Lisa," not his biographer Vasari. With the meaning of Janus hidden within the "Mona Lisa" name, da Vinci apparently intended to fool not only the eyes of the uninitiated, but also their ears.

The symbolic meaning of the "Mona Lisa" makes complete sense once the viewer sees the painting as a twofold composite of a single hermaphroditic soul. The right side of the painting represents an expectant mother, and

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the left side of the painting represents a male fetus. (Because the figure faces the viewer, its right side is male and its left, or sinister side, is appropriately female.)

THE REASON THE FIGURE OF THE “Mona Lisa” has no eyebrows, nor even eyelashes, is because facial hair is preempted by the unborn child. For the same reason, da Vinci painted the facial structure in such a way that there is no indication that any teeth might exist behind the enigmatic smile.

The way the hands are depicted is most telling. The plump right hand dominates the more feeble left hand grasping the end of the armrest. This symbolizes the separate entities of a robust male fetus that gains vitality at the expense of a mother suffering the pain of childbirth.

The stormy waters of pregnancy are seen in the ominous lake depicted in the background on the left side of the painting. From the lake there winds a road bordered with blood-red color that evidently symbolizes an umbilical cord.

All around there are surreal rock



TYPICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE GOD JANUS ON COINS.

formations, including jagged protuberances that could never have seen the erosive effects of weather and time. Da Vinci masterfully painted that half of the landscape in a way that depicted the raw and untempered nature of an unborn child.

In contrast, the right side of the picture — the side representing the mother — is calm and pastoral, with a bridge providing a link to civilization. The horizon on the right side is higher than that on the left, signifying the superiority of the mother. Her superiority is also seen in the dominance of the left side of the face. As a soul would

presumably wear no jewelry, so we see that the figure in the “Mona Lisa” also wears none — not even a wedding ring.

Da Vinci took years to paint the “Mona Lisa” because he used a painstaking technique called *sfumato* that required the application of thousands upon thousands of tiny dots of color. This resulted in a glowing, otherworldly effect befitting the depiction of a heavenly soul. The incredible amount of time required, and the fact that da Vinci never parted with the painting, make it obvious that it was never a commissioned portrait for a wealthy married woman. The woman identified as Lisa Gherardini most likely modeled to provide the female aspect for the painting.

Extremely important, and usually overlooked by the viewer, are two partial pillar bases on either side of the central figure. There are four historic copies of the “Mona Lisa” by other painters that all depict a pair of complete stone columns. This suggests that the original painting eventually had its sides trimmed off. Not only do two pillars support the overall theme of biformity, but they create the basis for “the primary symbol of the god Janus — an arch!”

Janus was considered by the Romans to be the god of all doorways, gates and arches. The Latin word for door (*janua*) was derived from his name, and all triumphal arches were built as his representation.

At the very center of the Roman Forum there once stood the Temple of Janus. It was a passageway with arched entrances at both ends flanked by columns. That temple was certainly da Vinci’s inspiration for the architectural setting of the “Mona Lisa,” where we behold his ethereal figure seated in a passage in front of a columned arch.

There has been speculation that da Vinci’s homosexual assistant of 25 years, Salai, is somehow incorporated into the “Mona Lisa.” Within the context of Janus symbolism, it seems



CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE TWO-FACED GOD JANUS WITHIN HIS PRIMARY SYMBOL – AN ARCH.

probable. It would be just like da Vinci to add yet another layer of complexity to his painting. The letters of MONA LISA can also be reassembled into MON SALAI, which means “my Salai” in French.

Certain features of the “Mona Lisa” do resemble both da Vinci and Salai, and it is quite possible that da Vinci fused his own likeness with that of his life partner, whom he considered to be his “other half.” The necessary female aspect of the twin-gendered god could have been achieved by adding features from Lisa Gherardini.

With the probable presence in the painting of Salai, Lisa Gherardini and da Vinci himself — I have little doubt that the Mona Lisa represents da Vinci’s ego as a self-loving woman. **BAM**

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