Leonardo 3

Exhibitions and museums
Research center and workshop
Historical and scientific studies
Popularization through innovative media
Publishing company

Leonardo3 (L3) is an innovative research center and media company (encompassing a center and workshop for research and study; exhibition and museum production; editorial, television and multimedia production; and a publishing company) whose mission is to study, interpret and make cultural heritage available to the public through the use of avant-garde, internally-developed methods and technology.

All of L3’s research workshops and products (physical and digital models, books, multimedia materials, documentaries, exhibitions and museums) are dedicated to the work of Leonardo da Vinci. The center’s results are of global significance: we’ve created the first working prototype in the world of Leonardo’s Self-Propelling Cart; we’ve discovered and reconstructed the Great Kite and the Harpsichord-Viola, the first physical model of the Multi-Cannon Gunship and the first real models of the Mechanical Bat, the Mechanical Lion and the Robot-Soldier; and we’ve carried out unprecedented virtual and physical interpretations of countless other machines designed by the Da Vinci genius. We’ve also discovered and reconstructed all the machines of Arab scientist Al-Muradi from the year 1000.

On the popularization front, we’ve created a digital edition of the Codex Atlanticus, which represents the widest dissemination of a Leonardo codex in history. With the Codex on Flight, we accomplished something even more extraordinary, since the codex is presented in High Definition and every single element is interactive. In fact, we developed special L3 HyperView technology for the express purpose of letting the public interactively explore drawings and paintings in a museum setting.

Hundreds of thousands of people have visited our exhibitions in cities like Milan, Turin, Livorno, Vigevano (Italy), Tokyo, Chicago, New York, Wichita (USA), Toronto (Canada), Doha (Qatar), Manama (Bahrain), Riyadh (Saudi Arabia), Kuwait City, Mexico City and São Paulo (Brazil). We have designed and are working on creating and managing three museums/“edutainment” centers in Milan, the United States and Asia.

L3 studies the past and creates innovative tools of communication for stimulating public interest. This is why we weave together physical models, three-dimensional reproductions and interactive software. We believe, in a word, in “edutainment” as a tool for enjoying our cultural patrimony, without limits. L3’s success in Italy and around the world make its achievement the first solid “case” in which artistic-cultural heritage is enhanced by the use of high technology.
October 2005
New York, USA: the Municipality and the Chamber of Commerce of Milan commission L3 to create a Leonardo exhibition in New York, on Fifth Avenue, to help celebrate Columbus Day. The same show is also presented in the Rainbow Room at Rockefeller Center for a gala evening also organized by the Municipality of Milan.

Milan, Italy: in collaboration with the Ambrosiana Library, L3 designs and produces the show The Virtual Codex Atlanticus, which opens at the Ambrosiana Picture Gallery (sponsor: FOCUS magazine).

November 2005
Milan, Italy: FOCUS Extra magazine (Gruner&Jahr/Mondadori Group) co-publishes the L3-produced CD-ROM Codice Atlantico (Codex Atlanticus) with L3. With a print run of more than 100 thousand copies, it becomes the largest distribution of a single work by Leonardo in history.

December 2005
Milan, Italy: L3 reaches an agreement with Feltrinelli and Electa to publish Codice Atlantico (Codex Atlanticus) and I Ponti di Leonardo (The Bridges of Leonardo), both of which are released in major bookstores and museums throughout Italy. L3 gives an interview for a Discovery Channel documentary. L3 grants permissions (for its images, books, videos, etc.) in Canada, Croatia, Germany, Great Britain, France, Japan and Sweden.

January 2006
Milan, Italy: due to its great success with the public, the closing date for the Virtual Codex Atlanticus exhibition is extended from January to June.

February 2006
The insurance group Commercial Union/Aviva choose the Virtual Codex Atlanticus exhibition as the event and venue at which to announce its re-branding to the banking world.

March 2006
L3 brokers a national distribution deal with PDE. Its publications are consequently released in bookstores throughout Italy.

April 2006
Chicago, USA: L3 creates the most important and innovative part of the exhibition Leonardo: Man, Inventor, Genius at the prestigious Museum of Science and Industry (the largest of its kind in the world). Due to the show’s success, the NBC television network sends its crew to Milan to interview the associates of L3. The report is broadcast nationally on NBC Nightly News (with an audience of 12 million people).

Tokyo, Japan: SONY chooses the L3 show The Virtual Codex Atlanticus to help celebrate the 40th anniversary of the SONY Building in Giza, in the heart of Tokyo. Within the first 10 days, the show logs a record crowd of more than 20 thousand visitors.

May 2006
Chicago, USA: the city of Chicago invites L3 associates to hold a series of talks on Leonardo da Vinci and organizes meetings to discuss the possibility of creating an L3 museum in the United States. The meetings are so successful that an announcement is already made at the lectures regarding the forthcoming construction of a Leonardo3 museum in Chicago.

Tokyo, Japan: SONY moves the Virtual Codex Atlanticus show to the exploraScience Museum. Extensive clips from interviews with L3 associates are broadcast on the renowned TV show Sekai Fushigi Hakken on the TBS channel during primetime (9-10pm).

The New York Times publishes an enthusiastic review of the exhibition in Chicago created by L3. It reports: “An enormous touch screen provides one of the smartest, most elegant interfaces for exploring complex material. Created by the company Leonardo3.”

June 2006
Chicago, USA: a “pro L3 museum” committee is formed of institutional members and entrepreneurs.

Milan, Italy: L3 wins the important “Contagious Beauty 2006” Telecom Italia Award, which celebrates commitment to enhancing Italian cultural heritage, the transmission of values and the discovery of beauty and the emotions thus provoked. The award is meant to emphasize and promote quality of cultural communication based on richness of content, expressive originality and emotional impact. The jury is chaired by renowned essayist and professor Umberto Eco (who also awards the prize along with Pirelli president Marco Tronchetti Provera) and comprised of Riccardo Chiaberger, Dario Del Corno, Philippe Davolio, Andrea Kerkbaker, Marco Magnifico, Renato Mannheimer, Mario Raimondo, Vittorio Sermonti,
Andrée Ruth Shammah, Massimo Vitta Zelman and Ugo Volli. They are unanimous in awarding the prize to “Leonardo3’s Virtual Codex Atlanticus” project, distinguished for its ability to “make beauty contagious” through art and culture.

The Virtual Codex Atlanticus show at the Ambrosiana Picture Gallery is extended to October, demonstrating how even in the place that houses the original Codex Atlanticus, its digital version enjoys unprecedented popularity with the public.

July 2006
Tokyo, Japan: L3 (in collaboration with Atum) releases the Japanese edition of its Codex Atlanticus book + CD-ROM. SONY re-opens the show The Virtual Codex Atlanticus at the SONY Building (closing in early September).

Milan, Italy: new L3 publications arrive in bookstores. In the meantime, the Codice Atlantico (Codex Atlanticus) book + CD-ROM has entirely sold out of its first print run and is already in its second edition.

October 2006
Milan, Italy: the innovative book Il Laboratorio di Leonardo (Leonardo’s Workshop) is published. Intended for kids and adults of all ages, it invites readers to discover the Genius of Leonardo via exclusively 3D images and includes paper models to be assembled and a video game.

February 2007
Milan, Italy: art critic and columnist Vittorio Sgarbi asks L3 to produce an event on Leonardo at the Palazzo della Ragione. The show is called Leonardo’s Workshop and Sgarbi defines it as “an important and significant exhibition, a kind of six-month-long museum”.

May 2007
Turin, Italy: with the assistance of the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Leonardo3 presents Leonardo’s Self-Portrait in L3 HyperView and the Codex on Flight in interactive 3D format. It’s the first time in history that cultural patrimony is made available in an interactive high-definition format. The event is sponsored by the EMC Corporation, a world leader in computer solutions for data management.

June 2007
Rome, Italy: a forum is held at the headquarters of the ICE foreign trade institute regarding a collaboration between Italy and China, on the occasion of the Italian visit of Ou Xinqian, the vice chair of China’s National Development and Reform Commission. L3 produces an exhibition and two of its founders speak at the conference along with Minister Emma Bonino and other institutional representatives.

Wichita, USA: Leonardo3 opens a new show at Exploration Place in Wichita, Kansas, the “Air Capital of the World” and home to the headquarters of aircraft corporations like Cessna, Learjet and Beechcraft.

Milan: I Ponti di Leonardo (The Bridges of Leonardo) goes into its first reprint.

July 2007
Rome, Italy: L3 signs an agreement to work with the Italian Ministry of International Trade. Ministry expert Cristina Molinari declares: “We will present the work of Leonardo3 all over the world”.

September 2007
Milan, Italy: the 3 September edition of the Corriere della Sera newspaper devotes an entire page to Leonardo3. World-famous Leonardo scholar Carlo Pedretti writes: “When it comes to interaction, everyone is enthusiastic and this work is very rigorous. The computer is an indispensable tool. At Leonardo3, they must be bold and forge ahead. In the city of Leonardo, where he lived from 1482 to 1500, we need a systematic project devoted to the artist and the scientist. A permanent one…”.

Milan, Italy: the new and highly-anticipated book I Robot di Leonardo (Leonardo’s Robots) is released in bookstores. At over 450 pages, it’s the fruit of extensive and complex work, illustrated by never-seen-before 3D images that throw new light on designs like the Mechanical Lion, the Robot-Soldier and the Self-Propelling Cart. The book receives primetime/front-page coverage on the Italian news program TG3, the Corriere della Sera newspaper and FOCUS magazine, among others. Leonardo expert Carlo Pedretti writes: “Leonardo’s Robots is a wide-ranging and lavish review that comes off as the virtual achievement of a grandiose museum with the most innovative aspects of Da Vinci technology”.

October 2007
Milan, Italy: the new interactive digital book Il Codice del Volo (The Codex on Flight) comes out in bookstores, giving the wider public a chance to understand an important masterpiece of Leonardo’s for the first time.
November 2007

Doha, Qatar: Italian President of the Republic Giorgio Napolitano and Minister of International Trade Emma Bonino, in the company of the Emir and the Sheik of Qatar, inaugurate the L3 exhibition Leonardo, Machines and Design at the Fahad Bin Ali Palace. The show is organized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cultural Heritage, on the request of the Italian Ministry of International Trade and with the assistance of the ICE foreign trade institute, for the express purpose of highlighting the talents Italians have long shown in mechanics, engineering, innovation and design. The news of this exhibition receives national and international media attention.

December 2007

Chicago, USA: Chicago Mayor Richard Daley and President of the Province of Milan Filippo Penati meet in Chicago to establish a research team devoted to the Leonardo3 museum project in Chicago.

South America: L3 signs contracts for shows to be held in 2008 in Brazil and in Mexico.

January 2008

Kuwait City, Kuwait: the traveling exhibition Leonardo, Machines and Design is launched at the Al-Babtain Central Library with the assistance of the Italian Ministry of International Trade, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the ICE foreign trade institute.

Milan, Italy: Il Codice del Volo (The Codex on Flight) is published jointly by L3 and the Gruner&Jahr/Mondadori Group and comes out on newsstands throughout Italy as a supplement to FOCUS magazine.

March 2008

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: the traveling exhibition Leonardo, Machines and Design opens at the National Museum of Saudi Arabia in collaboration with the Italian Ministry of International Trade, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the ICE foreign trade institute.

April 2008

São Paulo, Brazil: the show Os Segredos Dos Codigos de Leonardo da Vinci opens at the Museu da Casa Brasileira, in collaboration with the Italian Ministry of International Trade and the ICE foreign trade institute, under the High Patronage of the President of the Republic of Italy.

Mexico City, Mexico: the show Da Vinci Codigo Atlantico (containing never-before-seen models like the Harpsichord-Viola and the Robot-Soldier) opens at the Papalote Museo del Nino, under the High Patronage of the President of the Republic of Italy. The show remains open until 31 August.

Manama, Bahrain: the traveling exhibition Leonardo, Machines and Design makes its last stop at the Bahrain National Museum.

Milan, Italy: the official round table for the “International Leonardo3 Project” takes place on 8 April.

June 2008

Doha, Qatar: L3 signs an important contract with the Qatar Museums Authority to study the work of an Arab scientist and produce publications and a permanent exhibition for the Museum of Islamic Art.

August 2008

Milan, Italy: the Carriere della Sera devotes an important section of the newspaper to Leonardo3’s museum project for Milan with the title: “The Expo Expands: Yes to the Leonardo museum”.

November 2008

Doha, Qatar: L3 opens its permanent exhibition The Book of Secrets for the inauguration of the Museum of Islamic Art. The extraordinary machines of an Arab scientist from the year 1000, all interpreted and brought back to life by Leonardo3 researchers, are unveiled to the world for the first time in history. The exhibition presents physical reconstructions, interactive stations and a futuristic holographic mega touch-screen. The opening is attended by the Emir of Qatar and dignitaries from around the world; L3’s work represents the only present-day reconstructions and modern technology to be displayed among the more than 800 antique artifacts exhibited in the museum.
December 2008
Milan, Italy: L3 publishes English and Arabic editions of the Book of Secrets.

April 2009
Livorno, Italy: Leonardo3’s show Leonardo and Flight opens at the Museum of Natural History of the Mediterranean, in collaboration with the Province of Livorno (4 April–4 July 2009).

September 2009
Vigevano, Italy: the Municipality of Vigevano, with the support of the Banca del Monte di Lombardia and the Province of Pavia, inaugurate Leonardo3’s highly-anticipated show Leonardo’s Workshop inside Vigevano Castle. In less than a month, more than 13 thousand visitors pass through the show, which is scheduled to last six months.
Milan, Italy: Il Libro dei Segreti (The Book of Secrets) is published jointly by L3 and the Gruner&Jahr/Mondadori Group and comes out on newsstands throughout Italy as a supplement to FOCUS magazine.

October 2009
Milan, Italy: L3 publishes the books Leonardo Workshop in the Ideal City and The Book of the Codex on Flight.

November 2009
New York, USA: “Da Vinci’s Workshop” exhibition opens at Discovery Exposition Center of Times Square (November 21, 2009 - March 14, 2010). The exhibition receives a great review in New York Times and has over 80,000 visitors.

October 2010
Milan, Italy: L3 presents “The Last Supper”, an interactive software which reveals new studies and discoveries of Leonardo’s masterpiece.

February 2011
USA: “Da Vinci’s Workshop” opens at the prestigious Franklin Institute in Philadelphia on February 5 until May 22, recording about 100,000 visitors.

October 2011
Canada: on October 13, the exhibition “Da Vinci’s Workshop” opens at Ontario Science Center in Toronto.

March 2013
Milano: “The World of Leonardo” opens in Piazza della Scala. Extended until February 2014, in the first eight months has recorded more than 140,000 visitors. This exhibition has been awarded a State prize by the President of Italy.

November 2013
San Marino: “The World of Leonardo” opens in the Republic of San Marino with new installations on the entire territory and the aim to boost tourism in the winter months.

September 2014

September 2015
Milano: “The World of Leonardo” is extended until December 2016. It has recorded more than 400,000 visitors. New discoveries are now part of the exhibition: Mechanical eagle, Stretch drum, Rapid-fire crossbow, Musical cannon and more.
“Distinctive works of genius are all over this startling exhibition… This exhibit should be seen.”

“This show actually brings you closer to understanding the real workshop of Leonardo: his mind.”

THE NEW YORK TIMES

“Leonardo da Vinci did not actually build most of these marvels. Yet, five centuries later, a team of Italian scholars has managed to do so.”

THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

“Touch screens let you see a digitally refreshed Mona Lisa, showing the brighter colors da Vinci probably used, and the hidden pieces of The Last Supper even experts missed.”

CBS PHILLY

“A new exhibition at The Franklin Institute gives visitors a truly hands-on examination of the inventions of Leonardo.”

CBS PHILLY

“Esposte a New York e a Vigevano due realizzazioni tratte dai codici del genio di Vinci”

CORRIERE DELLA SERA

“Tutto il Genio raccontato in tre dimensioni”

IL GIORNALE