



## The eye of a designer...

## *Bigger is Better*

Hey, did I get your attention with that? But, very often it can be true, bigger is better. In the world of graphics and art this couldn't be more valid. When you want your final work to be beautiful, vibrant and detailed, it is important to work on and create your artwork in a large scale format.

One of the great masters of the art world, Ansel Adams, used this belief in all of the images he ever created. He developed his talent over a period of time and was curious enough to learn the science behind the photography. As he learned, he realized that the photographic negative held meticulous details that were often lost when the print was made. He developed an unprecedented talent for darkroom creativity, and also established the zone system. His techniques allowed him to artistically manipulate photographs in a way that no one else could recreate, ever.

The logistics and process for the zone system are quite complex and tedious. But, the thought behind it is fairly simple. He would set his camera exposure for the shadowed, or dark areas. Then, adjust his developing time in the darkroom for the amount of highlights in the most lit areas. He would then *dodge and burn* this negative to a new sheet of film. By dodging, he would block the light exposing the new negative. This would be done with an opaque piece of paper roughly cut to the portion that was to be dodged. This light block would be moved around quickly with his hand during a portion of the exposure, allowing light to burn harder into specific areas. Remember, he is working with negatives, so more light makes the area darker and less light makes it brighter.

Ansel Adams' techniques are brilliant, and his masterful hands made images that will forever take your breath away. He worked with a view camera, which is a very large format camera. You load it with sheet film, which in his case was 8 x 10. This is the actual size of the negative, almost 50 times larger than a 35mm negative. This is how he captured such fine details in his work. He also had a very keen eye, and always found an interesting angle to shoot at. Adams did shoot commercial

photos as well, but often complained that it took time away from his creativity. He was by no means financially wealthy, and often took commercial assignments just to make ends meet. However, he felt very rich in the fact that he was able to do what he loved, and he always knew that he was lucky and blessed for that.







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## *Bigger is Better* (continued)

Like with many great artists, Ansel Adams' images became extremely valuable over a long period of time. He was a man that was devoted to his craft and always tried to improve upon his latest work. He was also a very giving man, and shared his knowledge and skills with many. Most of the commercial work he did was for companies with which he used their products, Kodak, Zeiss, Hasselblad, etc. These companies were very grateful for his expertise and Adams would often develop new or better products for them. Great bonds were formed with these companies, and his work was given even more credence.



ANSEL ADAMS



ANSEL ADAMS

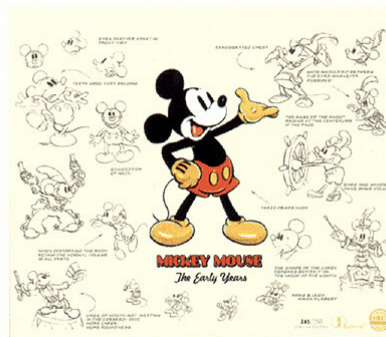
Since his death in 1984, his prints have become increasingly more valuable. On occasion a new print will surface that no one ever knew about, and the awe that was realized by many people in the past is experienced today. He was truly a remarkable artist and craftsman.



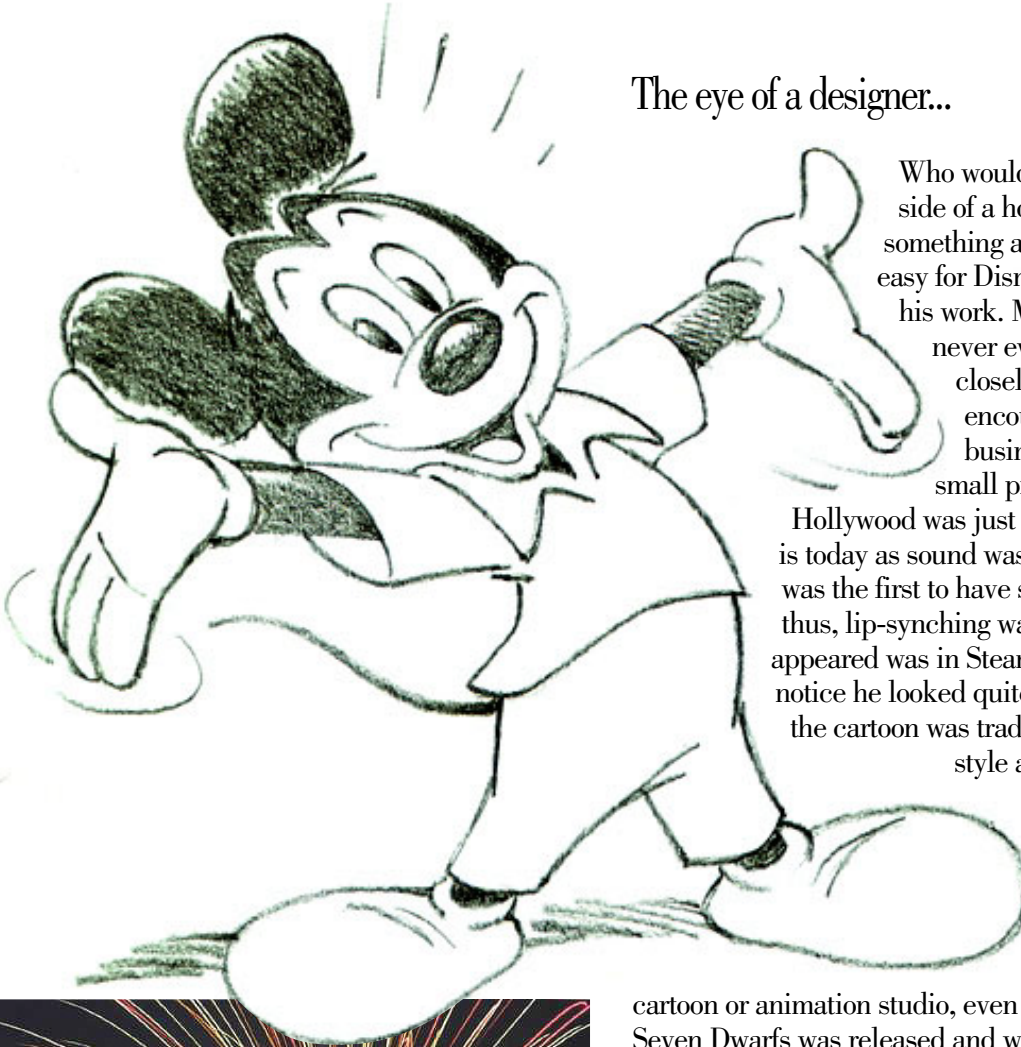
Hey, where is the happiest place on earth? Disneyland, silly...lol. It is true though, it really is a magical place. Just look at the person who created it, he has a child like enthusiasm and spirit. Walt Disney's imagination was endless, and his vision too had no limits. I don't think I have ever seen a picture of him where he wasn't smiling or laughing. He spread his enthusiasm to all that were around him, catching them up in his spirit and inspiring them all the way.

Disney began to doodle as a youngster, spending more time on his drawings than with his homework. Art was definitely something that intrigued him. He grew up in rural Missouri and gained a great appreciation of nature and animals. Most of his characters are

animals and many of his settings are very beautiful natural scenes, rich with color.







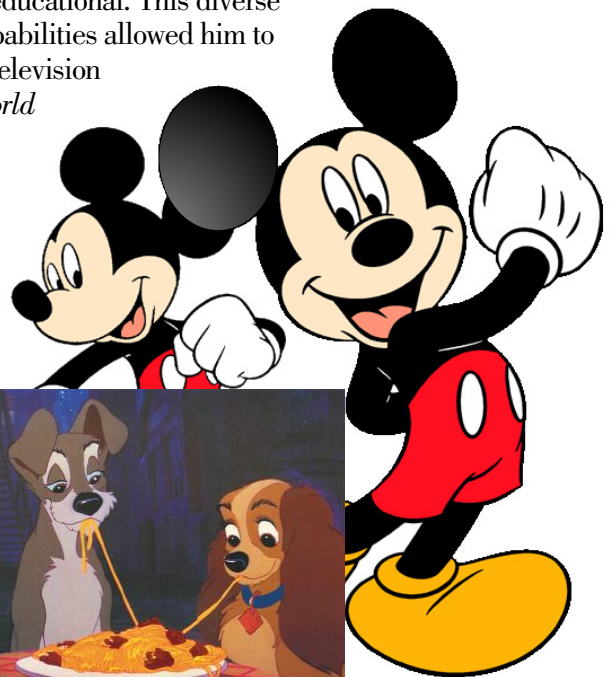
Who would of thought that those small doodles on the side of a homework assignment would evolve into something as fantastic as Mickey Mouse. It was not easy for Disney though, a ton of time and effort went into his work. Many of his early projects would fail, but he never even considered giving up. He worked very closely with is brother, who was a great source of encouragement. The two would open a small business in Burbank and started doing some small projects for local studios.

Hollywood was just beginning to become the metropolis that it is today as sound was being introduced to the movies. Disney was the first to have sound synchronized with the animation, thus, lip-synching was discovered. The very first time Mickey appeared was in Steamboat Willie, a short cartoon. You will notice he looked quite different back then, but the liveliness of the cartoon was trademark disney. Walt Disney created his own style and production of animation and it required a great amount of work. He would use a seperate cell for every frame, so his characters would breathe, blink, sigh, you name it, they did it all. They truly came to life. This detication to detail made his work far superior to any other

cartoon or animation studio, even to this day. In 1937 Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs was released and was the very first full length animated feature film. It was a HUGE success, nobody believed that a cartoon could look so beautiful and be soooo entertaining.

Disney did several nature series that were extremely entertaining as well as educational. This diverse range of filmmaking capabilities allowed him to have a very successful television show, *The Wonderful World of Disney*. It truly was a wonderful world and he showed it magnificently.

His studios still produce technically superior work, but some of the charm of his characters he took with him. Who can ever forget the two dogs sharing that piece of spaghetti in *Lady and the tramp*, just way too cute.







Leonardo daVinci 1452 - 1519 Possible self-portrait

**daVinci's notebooks:** His notes were extremely difficult to read because of his peculiar mirror writing. Some thought he did this so no one would steal his ideas, while others believed he wanted to keep his thoughts unknown from the church. Many of his theories were not along the same lines as the church. He also added humor, possibly even laughing at himself. Leonardo daVinci included his own likeness in many of his drawings, some believe the Mona Lisa has a strong resemblance to him.

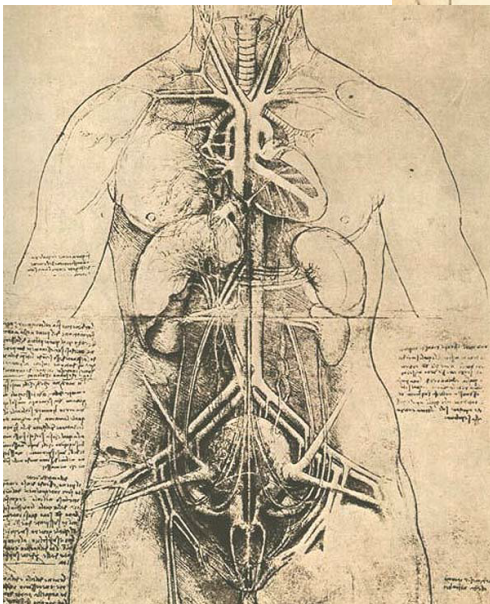


figure 30A

## The eye of a designer...

## Bigger is Better (continued)

Perhaps best known as an artist, his name inevitably brings to mind images of the Last Supper or the Mona Lisa. He was also an architect and a scientist. Yet, if asked, he would ultimately refer to himself as an engineer. Driven by an unrelenting curiosity and an insatiable hunger for knowledge, Leonardo daVinci was an incredibly innovative thinker who perceived the world not only as his personal playground, but also as one with unlimited possibilities. From his fertile mind sprang designs of flying machines and instruments of war, as well as practical theories and concepts in engineering, mathematics, and medical science. Many of which were centuries ahead of their times.

Leonardo daVinci was the first to think of our body working with a circulatory system (*figure 30A*). He devised that the heart was a pump and, thus, forced the blood through arteries, the major organs, and back to the heart through veins. He sketched it all out in his notebook including his thoughtful insights, written alongside. Whenever he would write in these notebooks, he used mirror writing. He wrote backwards and started from the right to the left. He also had the remarkable ability to draw and write at the same time, it takes a truly incredible mind to accomplish that.

DaVinci was intrigued with the discovery of the vortex, the tunneling of liquid and air. A vortex is what you see as a small tornado in the water when you drain the bathtub. He theorized that the human heart had chambers and used valves to circulate the blood. When the heart pumped it forced blood out of the valve and into the artery, creating a vortex, the force of this vortex then closed the valve. When the heart expanded back, it drew blood from the

veins through separate valves, creating a circular system. It took close to 500 years to prove him right.

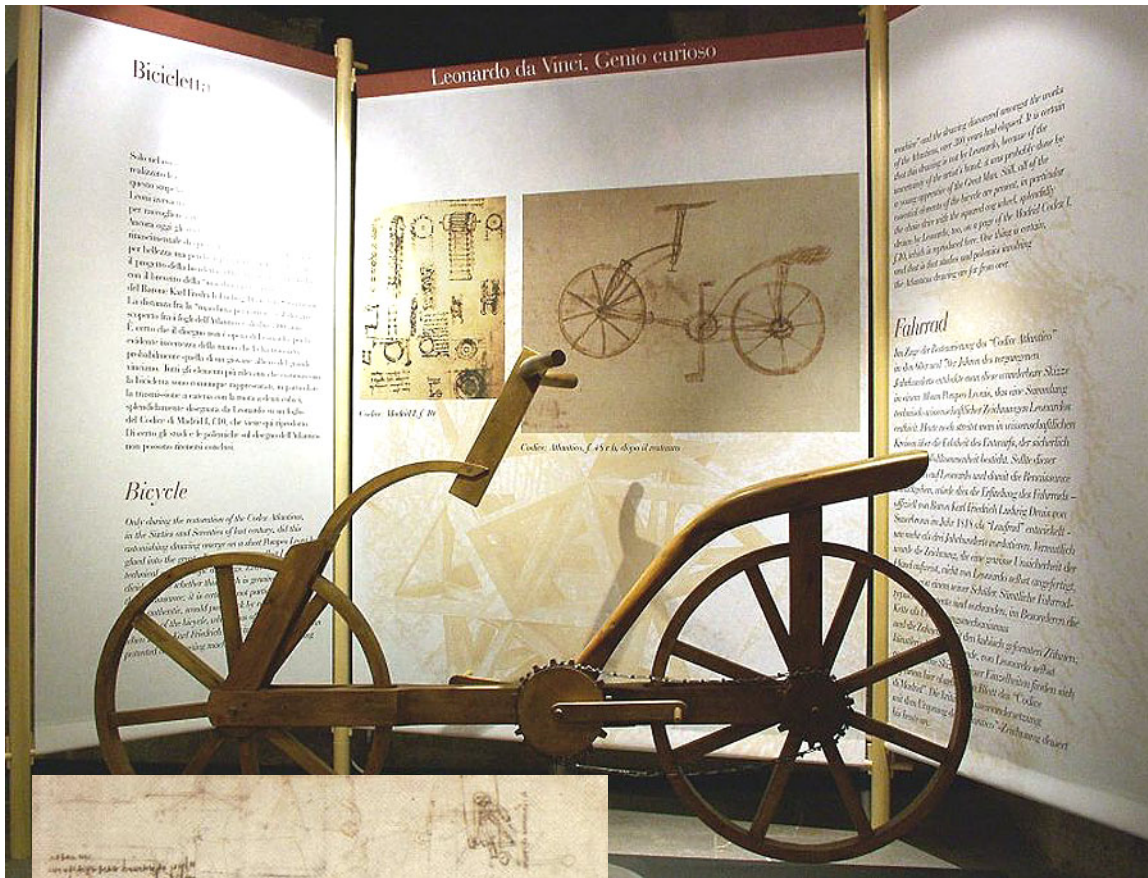
How does someone figure that all out in their mind? Simply, amazing. Lucky for us he put his thoughts in several notebooks for others to study for centuries.

Notebooks are crucial for artists and designers alike. You may spend a considerable amount of time learning a specific technique, and these notes will

quickly remind you what you have learned. Once you fully learn a technique, it will become second nature to you. Until that time you will need to relearn the technique each time you use it. Notes will make this process much easier and quite a bit faster.





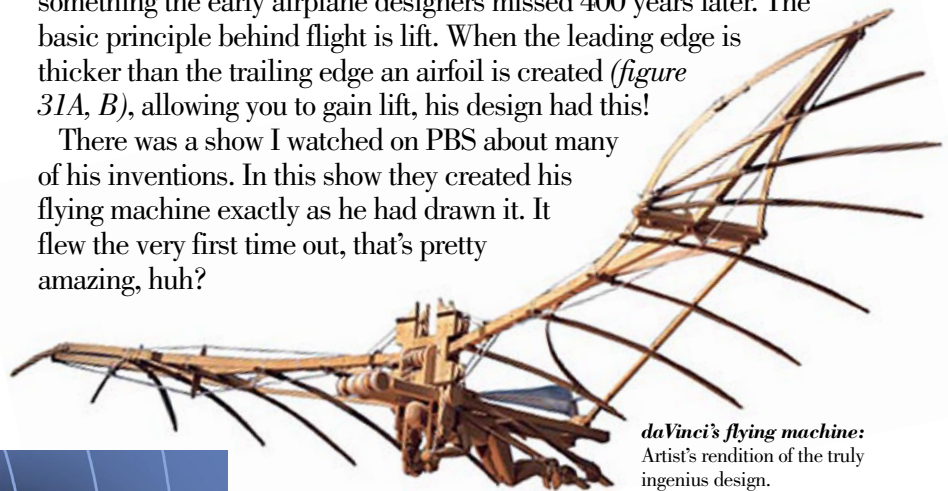


Leonardo da Vinci was quite a prolific inventor, as well. The likes of which included the parachute, submarine, clocks, cranes, robots, and many others including the bicycle. So many of *his* inventions are an everyday part of our lives today. He incorporated many of his interests in his inventing, this was evident in his flying machine. Da Vinci's passion for flight grew from his incredible fascination with birds. He was amazed by their flight, their agility and speed. How could a creature fly through a forest at such great speed and have the ability to navigate so precisely? Leonardo was convinced he could find out.

He studied birds for a long time trying to figure out how they could ride on air. The sketches he drew in his notebook reveals a structure

that is quite similar to a bird's wing. With levering devices he could easily manipulate the wings to help provide control. He paid very close attention to the *complete* structure of the bird's wing and realized it was thicker on the leading edge, or front, of the wing. This was crucial to the concept, and something the early airplane designers missed 400 years later. The basic principle behind flight is lift. When the leading edge is thicker than the trailing edge an airfoil is created (*figure 31A, B*), allowing you to gain lift, his design had this!

There was a show I watched on PBS about many of his inventions. In this show they created his flying machine exactly as he had drawn it. It flew the very first time out, that's pretty amazing, huh?



da Vinci's flying machine:  
Artist's rendition of the truly ingenious design.

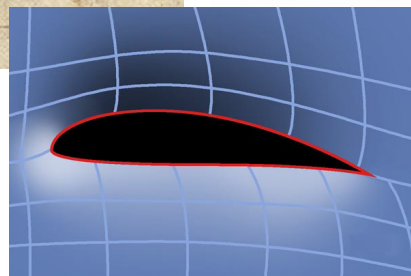
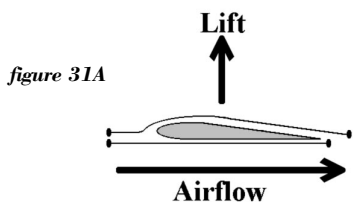
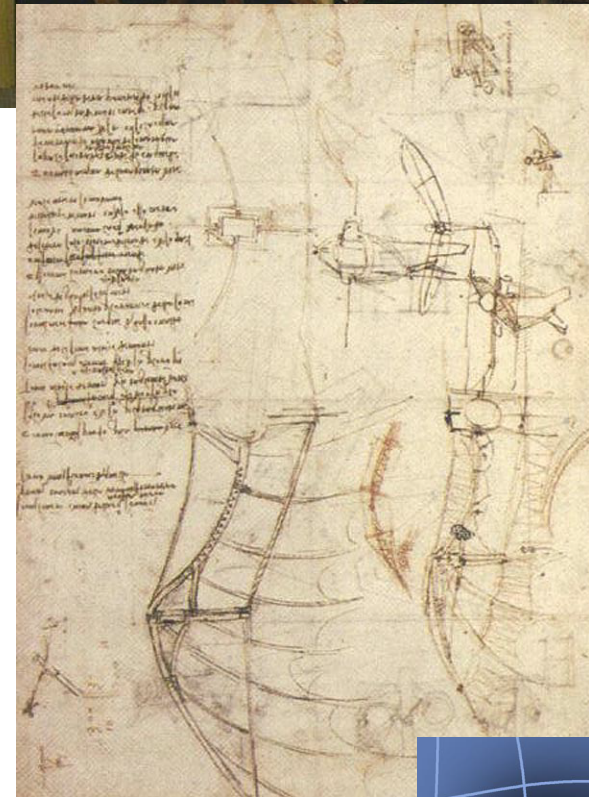


figure 31B





Leonardo, the artist. Still *another* facet of this very complex man, and this one may be his most loved. It seems to me that da Vinci kept his artwork very personal, almost like a hobby. He had so many thoughts and ideas in his head, maybe he used his paintings as a way to relax his mind. He really did not think of himself as an artist, yet his creations are that of photographic detail. The nuances he captured in the folds of the skin are a result of countless hours studying the form. Possibly, he used his art as a way of testing his theories of the human anatomy.

Da Vinci's spectacular drawings of the skeletal and muscular systems were so exact that they still appear in medical manuals to this day. The dialog and style of his notebook drawings are duplicated in every owner's manual or assembly instruction sheet ever written. His was the mind that

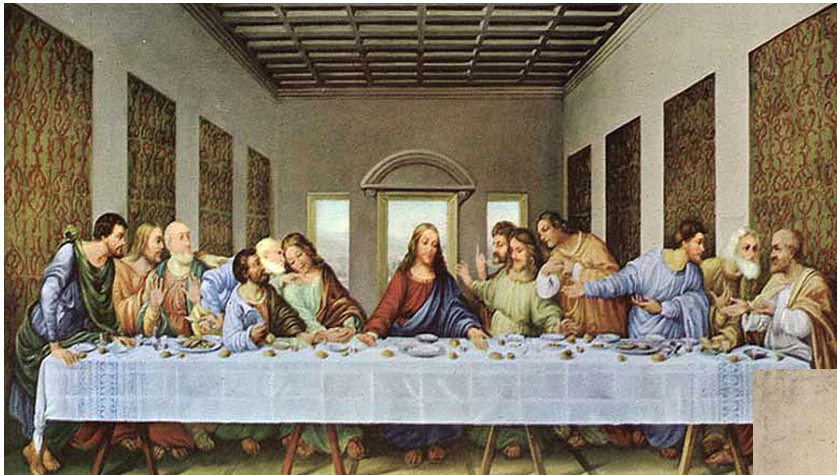
devised this form of instructing through a combination of words and images. It kinda blows your mind to think that one person could have come up with so very many important ideas. Da Vinci was a mathematical genius and also one of the most gifted artists, he was like no other.

Well, you have read about three very different artists who shared a common belief...bigger is better. Bigger in the sense of both dimension and vision. These designers saw *everything* bigger than life and created a way to share it with the world most beautifully. Their efforts

were rewarded by the enormous admiration of their artwork and the uniqueness of each individual artist.

President John F. Kennedy once said in a speech, announcing the Apollo program, "We choose to go to the moon. Not because it is easy, but because it is *hard!*"

**Study sketches:** da Vinci used his study sketches to work out details in his art. Once he found the best way he would commit it to paint.



**the Last Supper:** Da Vinci used his vast understanding of perspective to create great depth in this painting. Without establishing this strong perspective in the walls and ceiling, the apostles and Jesus would *not* appear to come right off of the canvas.

