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Edited by

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THE ARMAND HAMMER CENTER FOR LEONARDO STUDIES AT UCLA

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GIUNTI



64/P.

Dr. Brian Lang
Chief Executive
British Library
96 Heuston Road
London, N.W. 1

Dear Dr. Lang,

As you undoubtedly know, Professor Carlo Pedretti Director of the Center for Leonardo Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, is presently working on a new facsimile edition of Leonardo's Codex Arundel 263, which has been taken apart in order to have its individual sheets photographed open flat the way they were compiled by Leonardo.

The operation has also enabled Professor Pedretti to rearrange the sheets in chronological order for his edition. In doing so, he could ascertain that several of the beautiful and famous studies on the problem of the caustic of reflection in parabolic mirrors were carried out during Leonardo's stay in the Vatican, around 1515, as part of his plan to employ solar energy for industrial purposes.

Professor Pedretti has just suggested to me that there might be a possibility to have a selection of these Leonardo sheets on loan for an exhibition in our Apostolic Library, where there are the two Archimedes manuscripts mentioned and possibly consulted by Leonardo for his project. These and several other documents pertaining to Leonardo's presence in the Vatican would provide the most appropriate background information for an exceptional display of the Leonardo pages, and in turn the Apostolic Library would be well prepared to reciprocate by allowing the exhibition to travel to London. A suitable date for such an event would be the later part of 1999, but we are certainly eager to plan it to our mutual satisfaction, just as Professor Pedretti is ever ready to submit a detailed plan for a selection of some fifty sheets of the codex and all complementary material.

Since the necessary sponsorship is already available, the project could be undertaken immediately.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

Leonard E. Boyle

Leonard E. Boyle
Prefect
The Vatican Library
18 February 1997

THE BRITISH LIBRARY

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4 July 1997

Carlo Pedretti

I suspect that my reply to Father Boyle's letter of 18 February has gone astray. He had proposed that we should consider the inclusion of leaves from the Leonardo da Vinci Codex Arundel 263 in an exhibition in the Biblioteca Apostolica in 1999.

I replied on the basis that the possibility of this loan had been discussed with my colleagues, Ann Payne, Manuscripts Librarian and Jane Carr, Director of Public Affairs, and that we are all agreed that this could provide an excellent opportunity for a display, although not for as many as 50 leaves as you had suggested.

I am therefore pleased to agree in principle to the loan of certain of the leaves, but subject to more detailed discussion with Ann Payne and Jane Carr, both of whom are known to you.

We will look forward to hearing further news in due course.

Yours sincerely
Brian Lang

Brian Lang

Of course, there is a moral to the charming bibliographical tale. And this is about library policies as adopted by many of the American institutions of higher learning. Time and again antique book dealers in the U.S. offer important books dismissed by prestigious institutions as duplicates. University librarians claim that the policy is sound because space is needed for new acquisitions. Recently a shoe box was added to the Belt Library only because it carried the image of the *Mona Lisa*. Such a shoe box measures $32 \times 19 \times 12 \text{ cm} = 7176 \text{ cm}^3$. The 1893 edition of the Codex on the Flight of Birds measures $36 \times 25 \times 4 \text{ cm} = 3600 \text{ cm}^3$. A fair exchange? No comment.

LEONARDO IN THE HOLY YEAR

The authorities of the British Library have agreed in principle to the special Leonardo exhibition that the Vatican Apostolic Library had recently proposed to them. The exchanged correspondence reproduced here above is self-explanatory.

LEONARDO'S ROBOT

The travelling exhibition 'Les ingénieurs de la Renaissance de Brunelleschi à Léonard de Vinci', first shown in Paris, Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie in 1995-1996, and then in Florence, Palazzo Strozzi, in 1996-1997, is about to be taken to New York where it is scheduled to open at the World Financial Center in October 1997. Organized by the Museum and Institute for the History of science in Florence, Italy, whose Director Professor Paolo Galluzzi has also edited its catalogue, this special event will feature as an added attraction a CD Rom simulation of Leonardo's lost robot as interpreted by Mark Elling Rosheim in the previous volume of our journal. Simona Cremante, a student in the history of science at the University of Florence with a dissertation project on the Codex Huygens (see p. 270 above), has contributed a significant piece of background information concerning Leonardo's teacher, Verrocchio, who is recorded by Vasari (III. 375) for the construction of an automaton

comparable to the Leonardo bell-ringer shown on the Windsor fragment RL 12716 & 12688: 'È anco di mano del medesimo il putto dell'oriuolo di Mercato Nuovo, che ha le braccia schiodate in modo che, alzandole, suona l'ore con un martello che tiene in mano: il che fu tenuto in que' tempi cosa molto bella e capricciosa' (It is also by him the *putto* for the clock of the New Market place [in Florence], a figure with articulated arms, so that, by raising them, it strikes the hours with a hammer – a device that was then much admired as a beautiful and whimsical thing).

OFF-LIMITS FOR LEONARDO

A special double issue of *UCLA Magazine* published in the Spring of 1997 to celebrate the retirement of Chancellor Young and to welcome the new Chancellor Dr. Albert Carnesale from Harvard, makes no reference whatsoever to our program of Leonardo Studies nor to the Elmer Belt Library of Vinciana. (See in particular p. 86: 'University Library'.) And this is of course good because the protagonists in the section on 'The Future at UCLA' are made to look like clowns and jerks.

THE LEONARDO TURKEY PRIZE

A major news channel in America has established a special award reserved to American citizens for their ultimate achievement in stupidity – a Golden Turkey comparable to the Oskar of the Academy Award. If the *ALV Journal* were to establish such an award, its first Leonardo Turkey Prize would certainly go to a top paleontologist of Harvard University for having publically praised whoever had decided to change the name of the Codex Hammer back to that of Codex Leicester.

THE COLUMBUS PRIZE

On the 12th of October of every year the City of Florence celebrates Columbus Day with a solemn ceremony in the Salone dei Cinquecento in Palazzo Vecchio to host the long-established Columbus Prize organized by the local chapter of the International Rotary Club. This year the prestigious prize will go to Professors Franco Bassani (University of Pisa: Physics), Franco Cardini (University of Florence: History), and Carlo Pedretti (UCLA: Art History and Leonardo Studies). The present and last volume of the *ALV Journal*, is planned to be ready for the occasion.

SINGAPORE, A STOP OVER

The Leonardo exhibition presently at the Museum of Science in Boston (see pp. 266-7 above) is to be taken to Singapore, where it is scheduled to open at the local National Museum of Art on October 1, with Carlo Pedretti meeting the press, and with a screening of his film 'Portrait of a Genius: Leonardo and the Codex Hammer' (1981). Future stops include Seoul, Tokyo and the British Columbia.

A LEONARDO BRIDGE FOR NORWAY

An actual-size reconstruction of the bridge that Leonardo planned for Sultan Bajazet II in 1502 to span the Golden Horn at Istanbul (*ALV Journal*, VI, 1993, pp. 200-21) will be built in stone at the periphery of Oslo for the highway 'Europarei 18'. The idea came from Vebjorn Sand, a young Norwegian artist who was able to persuade the proper authorities and secure the necessary sponsorship to undertake the bold project, now planned for completion in 2000 A.D. Entrusted to the Center for Design, Architecture and the Built Environment of Oslo, the project was prepared by Dr. Fredrik Torp, an architect of the Telje-Torp-Aasen Arkitekter A/S of Oslo for the City of Ås, while a reduced-scale version of the same bridge was being planned by Professor Knut Selberg of Selberg Arkitektkontor A/S of Trondheim, to be built in wood elsewhere. The stone bridge will have an arch span of 240 m for a total length of 340 m and will be 40 m high, precisely as indicated by Leonardo. It will be built of blocks of granite in strict accordance with the technology of Leonardo's time. Vebjorn Sand had this idea when he visited the 'Leonardo Broar' exhibition in Stockholm in 1994. In front of the large-scale model of the Leonardo bridge he stood in awe 'as if in front of something from outer space'. The construction represented for him the 'archetype of all bridges, the bridge *par excellence*'. He quickly realized that art and science could be brought back together as they were for Leonardo – the best way to celebrate the beginning of a new millennium. One comment is in order. Sand's idea was triggered by an exhibition promoted by the Armand Hammer Center for Leonardo Studies at UCLA under the patronage of King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden. Those at UCLA who still see in the study of Leonardo a 'problem of narrowness' (see *ALV Journal*, VIII, 1995, p. 250) have now something to ponder – and to regret. Indeed, a new Chancellor has come too late. He inherits the wind.