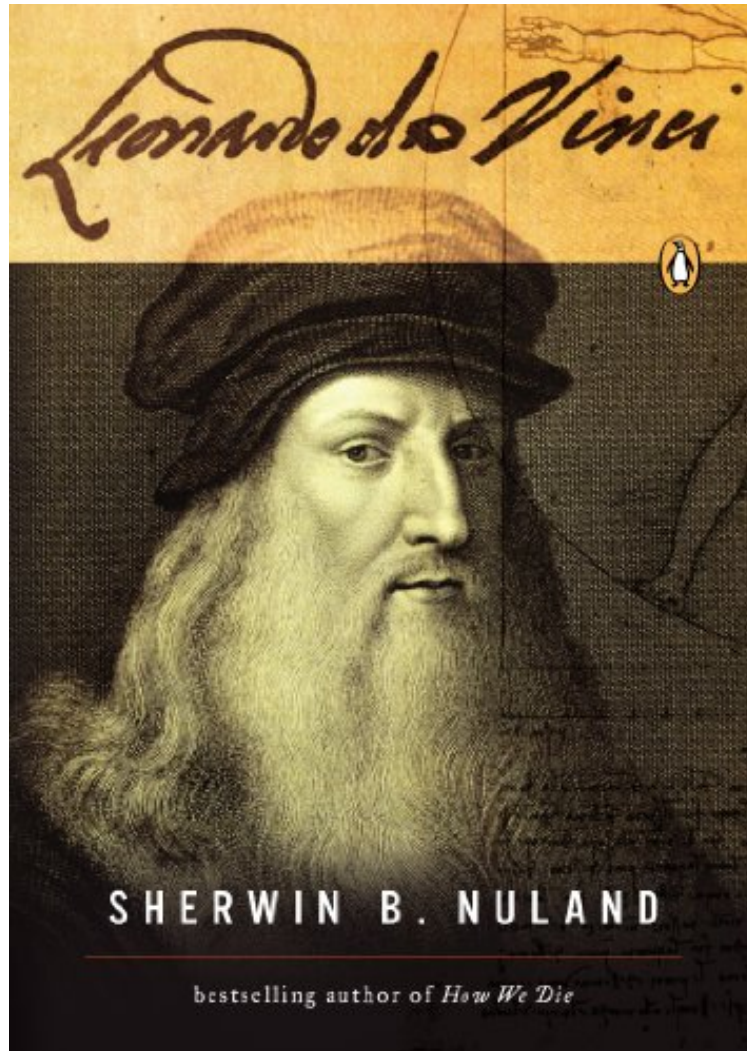


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Leonardo da Vinci: A Life (Penguin Lives Biographies)

Von Sherwin Nuland

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Von Sherwin Nuland : Leonardo da Vinci: A Life (Penguin Lives Biographies) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Leonardo da Vinci: A Life (Penguin Lives Biographies):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Weit mehr als "nur" ein da Vinci BuchVon A. Ch LanzDas Buch beschreibt das Leben und Wirken da Vinci's eingebettet in seiner Zeit.Wer also "nur" eine reine Biografie von Leonardo Da Vinci von Geburt bis Tod mit Listung seiner Werke (kann man die behaupt vollstndig listen ?) sucht, wird sich hier schwer tun.Wer allerdings darber hinaus den Menschen da Vinci in seiner gegeben Zeit, den politischen Irren und Wirren, den moralisch-gesellschaftlichen Zwngen

und Erfordernissen, und natürlich nicht zuletzt der allgegenwärtigen katholischen Kirche und ihren Dogmen kennen lernen möchte, ist hier genau richtig. Auch wenn es für mich persönlich erstaunlich, ja sogar beinahe schmerzhaft war, lernen zu müssen, dass da Vinci durch opportunistisch sein konnte - und wohl auch musste. Insgesamt vertiefte sich nach Lektüre des Buches meine Hochachtung und mein Respekt vor diesem Ausnahmemenschen noch mehr - trotz oder auch gerade wegen seiner nicht verschwiegenen menschlichen Schwächen. Trotzdem kann ich keine vollen 5 Sterne geben, weil: 1) auf Grund der Struktur das Buch recht schwerfällig zu lesen ist. Zumindest ich musste mehrmals zurückblättern, nachschauen, das zuvor Gelesene noch einmal in den richtigen Kontext stellen, etc. Die Wirkung mit Fortgang des Buches recht ermüdend auf mich; 2) bei längeren Phasen der Text selbst sehr schwerfällig fließt; und 3) das Mit- und Gegeneinander von da Vinci und seinen zeitgenössischen Künstlern zwar mehrmals angerissen, aber niemals vertieft wird. Insbesondere das sehr spezielle Verhältnis des alten da Vinci zum jungen Michelangelo wäre sicherlich ein paar Seiten und Ausführungen mehr wert gewesen.

Kurzbeschreibung The life and work of the great Italian Renaissance artist and scientist Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) have proved endlessly fascinating for generations. In *Leonardo da Vinci*, Sherwin Nuland completes his twenty-year quest to understand an unlettered man who was a painter, architect, engineer, philosopher, mathematician, and scientist. What was it that propelled Leonardo's insatiable curiosity? Nuland finds clues in his subjects' art, relationships, and scientific studies as well as in a vast quantity of notes that became widely known in the twentieth century. Scholarly and passionate, Nuland's *Leonardo da Vinci* takes us deep into the first truly modern, empirical mind, one that was centuries ahead of its time. From Publishers Weekly: Say what one will about Edna O'Brien's ravishing clip job of Joyce, Peter Gay's moderate Mozart or Edmund White's microcosmic Proust, the editors at Penguin Lives have a knack for matching up free-thinking meditators and their subjects. A surgeon and a writer about medicine, Nuland (*How We Die*) uses much of his brief book, limited in size and scope to the series's quick-take, authorially inflected format to explain the prodigal da Vinci as pioneering anatomist. The first 11 pages detail Nuland's personal obsession with da Vinci; the later pages describe da Vinci's concern with human and animal anatomy, and review the bibliographical jumble of his surviving notebooks and papers. Nuland's da Vinci is tireless, perhaps sublimated, in his intellectual and artistic activity, finishing few canvases (one the *Mona Lisa*, another *The Last Supper*) and almost nothing else during a long life largely financed, sometimes erratically, by patrons who indirectly supported an expensive retinue of friends, assistants and servants. He emerges as a compulsive investigator of geometry, optics, hydraulics, architecture, sculpture, painting, botany, biology, military mechanics and the flight of birds. Moving from city-state to city-state in Italy, encountering ruler after ruler who sought to harness his gifts. Yet perhaps unforgivably, given the series's promise of New Yorker profile-like effervescence, da Vinci as personality slips away; what we get is a clean condensation of the facts. Only the final chapter, "Matters of the Heart and Other Matters," injects some of Leonardo's own fervor, in an in-depth look at one of his abiding obsessions, the structure and function of the human heart. Nuland's account is solid, but lacks enough of the flourish that its subject so effortlessly achieved and, that, on a much smaller scale, the Lives series seems to strive for. 4 illus. BOMC, QPB, History Book Club selections. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist: Leonardo has profited from the notion that he was a peerless genius and suffered from a reputation for never completing his undertakings. The bad rap against him is borne out by the lack of his finished masterpieces in all the kinds of places where the works of, say, his younger contemporary Michelangelo bulk large. But Leonardo's unfinished masterworks--paintings such as the *Mona Lisa*, which he considered incomplete and never surrendered to its commissioner, and his scientific notebooks, of which only a third are known to survive--confirm his towering intelligence. Nuland, surgeon-author of *How We Die* (1993) and *The Mysteries Within* [BKL D 15 99], elegantly sketches Leonardo's life of constant employment by noblemen eager to enjoy the prestige he reflected on them and of even more constant curiosity, which drove him to become the greatest anatomist before Vasari. Indeed, he was better than Vasari, for he pioneered methods of anatomical rendering and made discoveries that weren't repeated until as late as the twentieth century. A scintillating addition to the Penguin Lives series. Ray Olson Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved