

AUTHENTICATION
IN ART

AiA Art News-service



THE ART NEWSPAPER

Mona Lisa like you've never seen her: Louvre to use VR for first time in Leonardo fifth centenary show

Museum officials say they still hope to include Salvator Mundi in major autumn show

GARETH HARRIS

17th June 2019 10:39 BST



Still from *Mona Lisa Beyond the Glass* Courtesy Emissive and HTC Vive Arts

Visitors to the blockbuster Leonardo da Vinci exhibition at the Musée du Louvre in Paris this autumn will be able to see the Mona Lisa as part of a virtual reality experience. The project, entitled *Mona Lisa: Beyond the Glass* and on view from 24 October to 24 February 2020, is the museum's first VR work, marking the 500th anniversary of the Renaissance polymath's death.

Curators at the Louvre produced the new piece in collaboration with the company HTC Vive Arts. New research throwing light on the artist's techniques underpins the VR experience, which will also focus on the identity of the sitter, a subject of intense speculation over the centuries. The work will also be available as a home version on digital subscription.

According to a project statement: "Visitors will have the rare chance to be immersed into the world's most iconic painting, stepping behind the glass to access the intriguing portrait up close in an entirely new, transformative way." It remains unclear however if the work *Salvator Mundi*, a painting of Christ that sold for \$450m at Christie's in New York in 2017 as a work by Leonardo, will be included in the anniversary show. Earlier this year, Louvre officials said they hope to show the wood-panel painting in the forthcoming [exhibition](#). A Louvre spokeswoman says: "There is nothing new on this subject: the Musée du Louvre has asked for the painting for its exhibition and is waiting for an answer from the owner."

The exhibition will include the five Leonardo paintings in the Louvre's collection, including *The Virgin of the Rocks* (around 1483-86) and *La Belle Ferronnière* (1490). "The fifth centenary of the Italian master's death is a unique

opportunity for the Louvre to bring as many as possible of the 14 to 17 paintings now attributed to Leonardo, according to specialists, to join the five large paintings in the Paris museum,” says a statement on the museum website.