

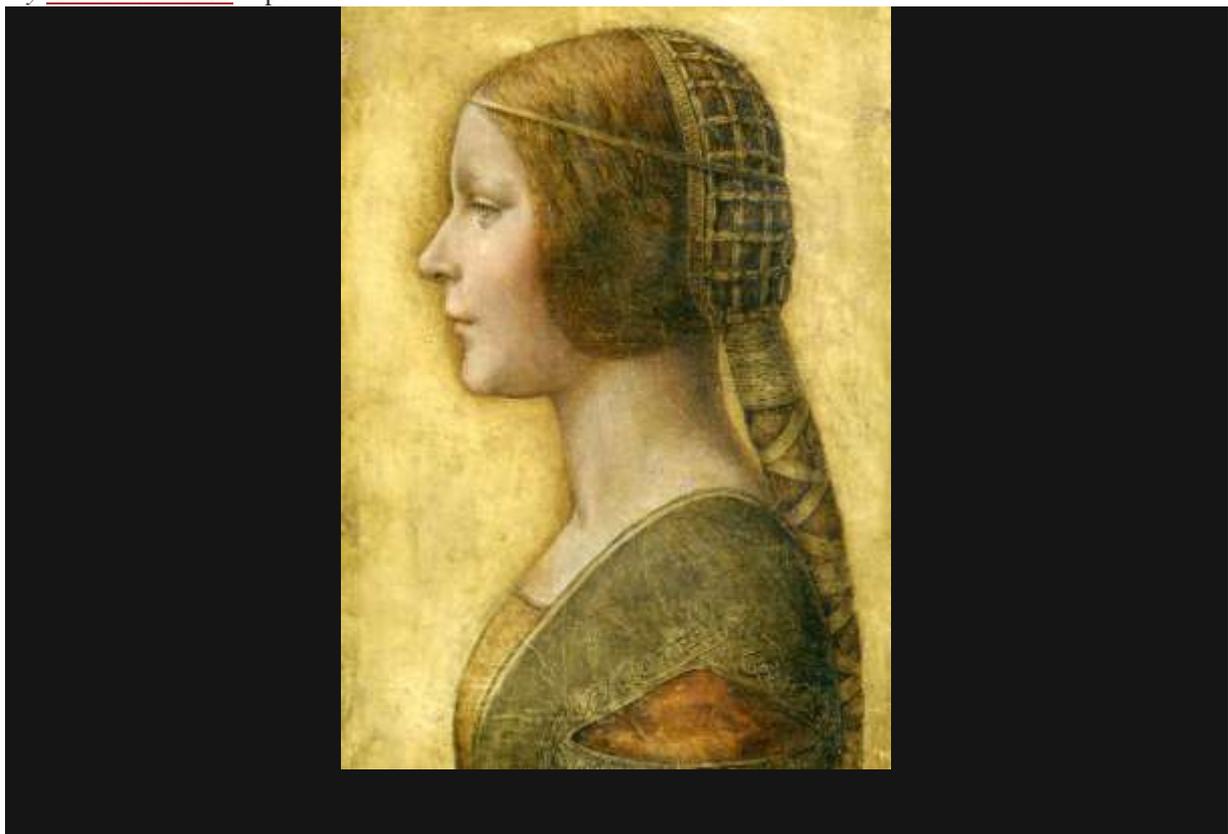
AUTHENTICATION IN ART

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The Bolton News

£500 reward for identifying woman in puzzling portrait

By [Neil Brandwood](#) Reporter



AN international art mystery involving Leonardo da Vinci and America's National Gallery could be solved by...a checkout girl from Bolton Co-op.

And there's a £500 reward for anyone who can help track her down.

The man behind it all is former lawyer and now art writer Greg German. He contacted [The Bolton News](#) from his home in South Carolina in the hope that our readers may be able to help him.

He is trying to establish whether the young lady in the painting is the work of da Vinci or infamous Bolton forger Shaun Greenhalgh.

Explaining what inspired his quest, he said: "I was at the bookstore in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. and purchased a book called "A Forger's Tale" by Bolton resident Shaun Greenhalgh. Mr Greenhalgh describes a drawing that he allegedly made back in the late 1970s which is now being hailed by some as an original work by Leonardo da Vinci.

"A noteworthy da Vinci scholar and Emeritus Professor of Art History at Oxford wrote a book about the drawing after having run numerous tests on it. He authenticated it as an original drawing by Leonardo da Vinci.

"In Mr. Greenhalgh's book, he makes a very convincing case about having made the drawing himself. His book came out after the Professor's, and now we have a bit of a quandary. Who created that drawing?

"Mr. Greenhalgh claimed to have based his depiction on a cashier named "Sally" who worked at the Bolton Co-op in the late 1970s. I have also seen the name "Allison" used."

Mr German said Sally/Alison would have been a teenager when she was working as a cashier.

He is hoping she comes forward herself or former colleagues will be able to help trace her.

So eager is he in his search that he is offering a £500 reward to anyone who can help him solve the mystery.

"If she exists or existed, and that can be established by clear and convincing evidence, such as a 1970s-1980s era photograph, then that would certainly bolster Mr. Greenhalgh's claim. If I don't find hide nor hair of her, then that would lend credence to the Professor's authentication.

"I cannot believe that nobody else has made this effort."

In the hope that it may help jog people's memories, Mr German asked his sister and a friend to sketch what the woman in the painting would look like 40 years later.

"It's a mystery," he said, "a cracking good one at that, and I want to solve it."