

"Leonardo did it' Documentary being made for the National Geographic TV Channel

The American National Geographic Channel is currently preparing a TV documentary further promulgating the theory that the Shroud image was the work of Leonardo da Vinci. Barrie Schwartz reports that he has recently been interviewed in Los Angeles for this forthcoming film, and says that although he did his best to point out that the Shroud was already well-documented over sixty years before Leonardo was born, the producer is apparently such a devotee of the 'Leonardo did it' theory that this is the line that the programme will follow.

All this will no doubt be of great delight to Lynn Picknett and Clive Prince, whose 1994 book *Turin Shroud: In Whose Image?* has recently been reissued in paperback subtitled *How Leonardo da Vinci Fooled History*. As pointed out by Joe Marino, in Lynn Picknett's latest work *The Mammoth Book of UFOs* (New York, Carroll & Graf, 2001), she manages to include a lengthy footnote about Leonardo and the Shroud:

Our [i.e. Picknett & Prince's] own research revealed that the Shroud is indeed a fake, a masterpiece by none other than Leonardo da Vinci, who created it using a primitive form of photography, and using his own face as that of Jesus. So although it is worthless as a holy relic, the Shroud is a priceless photograph of the Maestro Leonardo. But of course the True Believers won't have any of it, even though they themselves have claimed that the image "behaves like a photograph" and that, if it were a fake - and obviously they don't believe it is - the only candidate for faking it would be Leonardo. To this day, they continue to overlook obvious clues on the image itself that demonstrate conclusively that it is a fake - the image is 6ft 8in (2m) at the front and 6ft 10in (2.05 m) at the back for example. (A projected image, like that of the Shroud can be any size.) And instead they have begun to see curious images in the weave of the cloth - including flowers, a hammer, nails - and, most ludicrous of all, a broom. Yet all there is to see, apart from the image itself, is the herringbone-style weave of the linen cloth.

The Picknett logic, math and much else may be flaky in the extreme, but no-one can deny a certain justice to her image of current Shroudedom.