



touch history

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Leonardo da Vinci: Machines in Motion promises intrigue and interaction for all ages

May 28, 2010, Bozeman, MT – The highly-interactive “Leonardo da Vinci: Machines in Motion” exhibit will open at the Museum of the Rockies at Montana State University in Bozeman on Saturday, May 29, 2010. This traveling exhibit includes 40 of da Vinci’s inventions, meticulously built from his technical drawings. Visitors can engage with and fully activate most of machines, setting them in motion.

The exhibit, which originated in Florence, Italy, brings together the largest exhibition of full-size machine replicas ever assembled, all constructed according to Leonardo da Vinci’s famous codices. The experience allows visitors to explore history, science, mechanics and physics, invention and innovation, and provides a combination of education and entertainment topped with the intrigue of da Vinci himself.

“Based on the popularity of the King Tut exhibit several years ago, we think Montanans will welcome the opportunity to see da Vinci’s work,” said Shelley McKamey, Museum Dean and Director. “This exhibit is a great fit for the Museum of the Rockies because of the unique hands-on opportunities it gives visitors of all ages.”

All 40 of da Vinci’s machines were built by a group of scientists and skilled artisans in collaboration with the Leonardo da Vinci Museum in Florence. The exhibit opened in Italy and has appeared in the United States but Bozeman is the first city in the Northwest to host it. After its appearance in Montana, the exhibit moves to Mexico.

“Bringing an exhibit like this to Montana is a very expensive proposition,” said McKamey. Although private fundraising covered some of the cost, ticket prices will rise to \$13 for adults, \$12 for seniors and \$9 for children through the run of the da Vinci exhibit. As always, Museum members get in free.

The exhibit is organized into four areas based on da Vinci’s beliefs of the relationship between humans and nature: earth, air, fire and water. The machines in each category relate to that particular element in some way. For example, the “air” category consists primarily of da Vinci’s flying machines. The construction of the

machines was based on the actual materials proposed by da Vinci and the tools that were available at the time each was designed.

Some of the more well-known machines in the exhibit include a revolving crane, a full-size armored car (large enough for several visitors to explore inside), a working robot, the bicycle, the printing press, the parachute and the machine gun.

Museum staff and volunteers will be demonstrating how six of the machines work. Demonstrations will be at 11 a.m., 2 and 4 p.m. on weekends through June 14, and daily through the duration of the exhibit that closes September 11, 2010. Every Friday during the summer the Museum will offer Inventor's Workshops for children focused on the exhibit.

According to the exhibit's text: "Perhaps more than anyone before him – and perhaps anyone since – Leonardo was a great scientist, engineer and artist all in one. He combined a scientist's passion for exploring how things work and an artist's ability to vividly illustrate his revelation. His machines designs were ingenious and visionary – often ahead of his time. They illustrate principles at the heart of machines today.

"Leonardo da Vinci surely would have been fascinated by today's technology, but he may not have been overly surprised. After all, he predicted much of it," McKamey observed.

"Leonardo da Vinci: Machines in Motion," was created by Worldwide Museum Activities (WMA) and organized by Evergreen Exhibitions.

About Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo da Vinci was born in 1452 in Tuscany, Italy. The archetype for the "Renaissance Man," da Vinci was a painter, sculptor, musician, architect, engineer and anatomist. He is most identified with his paintings: "Mona Lisa," "The Last Supper," and "Vitruvian Man." His thousands of manuscripts, collectively named the "Codices" contain designs that are the precursors of many modern machines and devices.

About the Museum of the Rockies (MOR)

The Museum of the Rockies is both a college-level division of [Montana State University](#) and an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit institution. Accredited by the [American Association of Museums](#), MOR is one of just 776 museums to hold this distinction from the more than 17,500 museums nationwide. The Museum is also a [Smithsonian Institution](#) affiliate and a federal repository for fossils.

MOR Mission

The Museum of the Rockies inspires visitors to explore the rich natural and cultural history of America's Northern Rocky Mountains. In partnership with Montana State University, the Museum reaches diverse communities with engaging exhibits, educational programs, and original research that advance public understanding of the collections.