

## Science analyses Mona Lisa's smile

By AP

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS -- The mysterious half-smile that has intrigued viewers of the Mona Lisa for centuries isn't really that difficult to interpret, Dutch researchers said yesterday.

She was smiling because she was happy -- 83 per cent happy, to be exact, according to scientists from the University of Amsterdam.

In what they viewed as a fun demonstration of technology rather than a serious experiment, the researchers scanned a reproduction of Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece and subjected it to cutting-edge "emotion recognition" software, developed in collaboration with the University of Illinois.

The result showed the painting's famous subject was 83 per cent happy, nine per cent disgusted, six per cent fearful and two per cent angry. She was less than one per cent neutral, and not at all surprised.

Leonardo began work on the painting in 1503, and it now hangs in the Louvre in Paris.

The work, also known as La Gioconda, is believed to have portrayed the wife of Francesco del Giocondo. The title was a play on his name and means jolly lady.

Harro Stokman, a professor at the University of Amsterdam, said he and his fellow researchers knew the results would be unscientific -- the software isn't designed to register subtle emotions, so it couldn't detect the hint of sexual suggestion or disdain many have read into Mona Lisa's eyes.