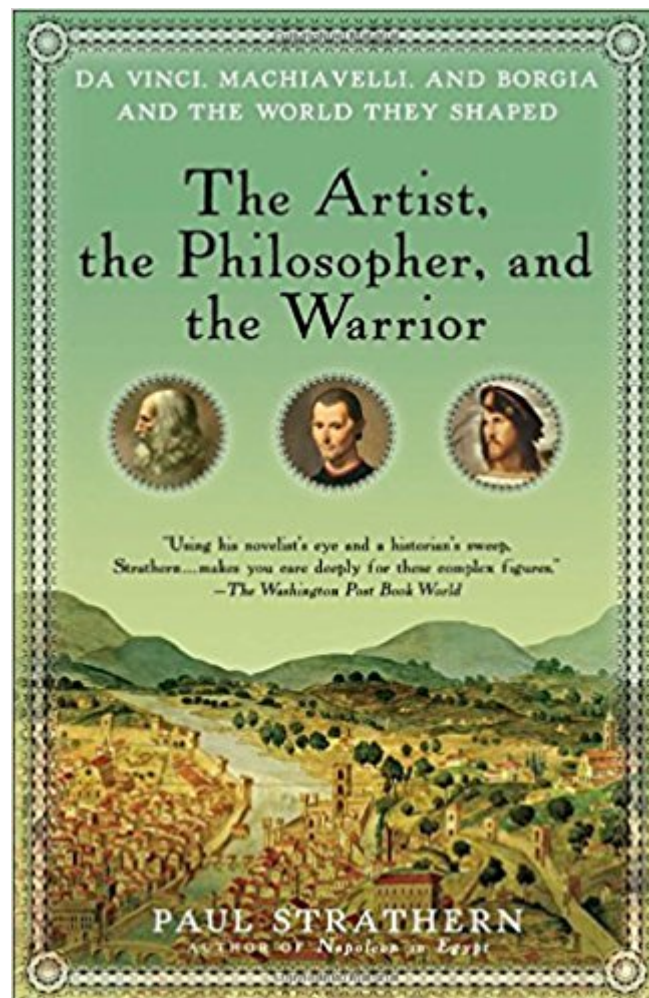


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The Artist, The Philosopher, And The Warrior: Da Vinci, Machiavelli, And Borgia And The World They Shaped



Synopsis

Leonardo da Vinci, Niccolò Machiavelli, and Cesare Borgia—three iconic figures whose intersecting lives provide the basis for this astonishing work of narrative history. They could not have been more different, and they would meet only for a short time in 1502, but the events that transpired when they did would significantly alter each man's perceptions—and the course of Western history. In 1502, Italy was riven by conflict, with the city of Florence as the ultimate prize. Machiavelli, the consummate political manipulator, attempted to placate the savage Borgia by volunteering Leonardo to be Borgia's chief military engineer. That autumn, the three men embarked together on a brief, perilous, and fateful journey through the mountains, remote villages, and hill towns of the Italian Romagna—the details of which were revealed in Machiavelli's frequent dispatches and Leonardo's meticulous notebooks. Superbly written and thoroughly researched, *The Artist, the Philosopher, and the Warrior* is a work of narrative genius—whose subject is the nature of genius itself.

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Customer Reviews

Book DescriptionThe Renaissance was a child of many fathers--none more important than the three iconic figures whose intersecting lives provide the basis for this astonishing work of narrative history: Leonardo Da Vinci, Niccolo Machiavelli and Cesar Borgia. Each could not have been more different. They would meet only for a short time in 1502 but the events that transpired, would significantly alter their perceptions--and the course of Western history.In 1502, Italy was riven by conflict, with the city of Florence as the ultimate prize. Machiavelli, the consummate political manipulator, attempted to

placate the savage Borgia by volunteering the services of Da Vinci as Borgia's chief military engineer. That autumn, the three men embarked together on a brief, perilous, and fateful journey through the mountains, remote villages and hill towns of the Italian Romagna--the details of which were revealed in Machiavelli's often-daily dispatches and Da Vinci's meticulous notebooks. In a book that is at once a gripping adventure story and a trenchant analysis of how men make history, *The Artist, the Philosopher and the Warrior* limns each man's personality, their interactions, and the forces that shaped their world. Superbly written, meticulously researched, here is a work of narrative genius--whose subject is the very nature of genius itself. [A Look Inside The Artist, the Philosopher, and the Warrior \(Click on Images to Enlarge\)](#) [More from The Artist, the Philosopher, and the Warrior: Timeline of Events \[PDF\]](#) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Despite the convoluted title, this latest from award-winning British novelist and historian Strathern (*Napoleon in Italy*) is simply a good, straightforward history of Renaissance Italy during the turbulent decade around 1500, with emphasis on several important players. Pope Alexander VI, though not in the title, is the central player. Famously corrupt and ambitious, Alexander aimed to enlarge the Papal States and his family's influence, and his son, Cesare Borgia, led papal armies in three cruelly successful campaigns. The leading diplomat of wealthy but feeble Florence, Machiavelli worked hard to fend off Borgia, but admired his brutal realism, portraying him as the ideal ruler in his classic, *The Prince*. Both men knew Leonardo da Vinci, and Borgia employed him as a military engineer. However, da Vinci exerted no political influence, so the author's digressions into his art and ingenious (but mostly unrealized) inventions stand apart from the narrative. Readers will reel at this meticulous popular account of Renaissance tyranny, corruption, injustice and atrocities. 8 pages of color illus., b&w illus., maps. (Sept. 29) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In short, an enjoyable read. Some facts may warrant further research, but 'speaking' generally, very worthy of the price of a nicely-preserved used book. Nice general introduction to 3 of the most significant historical figures of the Italian Renaissance.

When learning about the three subjects -- Da Vinci, Machiavelli and Borgia -- one often reads books only about one of the subjects, even though the other two are very much intertwined with the others.

In order to fully appreciate and understand any of these three men and how their actions not only affected the world they lived in (and in turn have affected Western Civilization since their existence), one must understand how their actions were also affected by the other two. The interplay between these three men makes them totally interconnected both to their actions on civilization, both in their time and since, as well as how they themselves reacted to within their own lifetime. This book connects this aspect in a way that is much easier to understand when reading about the men individually. A unique perspective as well good reading.

I hadn't realized that all three of these people that have had so much influence were living in the same area at the same time. A fascinating view of a slice of history written in an engaging fashion.

The author does a thorough job of interweaving the major events of the lives of Leonardo da Vinci, Cesare Borgia, and Machiavelli, against the backdrop of Italian Renaissance politics. I originally bought this book prior to visiting Italy. However some of the other purchases I made at the same time were easier reading, and I couldn't get into this one. After watching a series on the Borgias on Netflix as well as seeing many of the places mentioned in the work, I finally read it. This is a good basic history of many of the major events and people of Florence during the high Renaissance, and if I return to Italy, I will read it again. I have tried to read Machiavelli's *The Prince* a number of times and didn't find it all that engrossing. Now that I know more about the Borgias, I have a better context for understanding *The Prince* and plan to tackle it again.

ok

This book was just too dry for me. I read about Leonardo Da Vinci and learned facts I had not read before considering his life. Just could not get far after I read the next section as it is written in such a dry manner, could not keep my interest.

I like good history and I love fictional history - but this is neither, a lot of presumptions and conjecture which just don't work.

Everyone is familiar with the genius of Leonardo da Vinci; most have a passing familiarity of Niccolo Machiavelli, less perhaps with Cesare Borgia - but a very few, I would warrant, know that the paths of these three important figures were, for a few tumultuous months in the early 16th century, closely

intertwined. Strathern details not only the political intrigue that led these giants of their time to work together, but also holds them up as examples of the "new man" that marked the beginning of the Renaissance. In the early 1500s, Italy was broken into several competing principalities and was preyed upon by its larger and more powerful neighbors, particularly France. Cesare Borgia (and his father, Pope Alexander VI) sought to create a power base for their family in the Romagna, and perhaps to make the Papacy an inherited (rather than an elected) position to be held by their family. Machiavelli and the Florence he represented had other designs: maintain the Florentine republic and protect it from the twin threats of the Pope and the French. Between these erstwhile political rivals (and sometimes collaborators) is Da Vinci, whose patronage in Florence was perhaps the result of Machiavelli's influence, and whose mechanical and engineering skills were much sought after by Borgia. The history of these three minds, their influence on events and the rapidly changing intellectual and political climate in Italy makes for fascinating reading. Beyond the interpersonal drama of these men, however, is their role as metaphor for broader changes taking place in Europe: nation states were emerging (hence the power and threat of France and the designs of Alexander VI), and the way in which people understood politics was also being reexamined. In fact, Strathern argues that much of *The Prince* is influenced by Machiavelli's interactions with and observations of Cesare Borgia as he manipulated, bluffed and fought his way to power. It is history that reads like fiction. Thoroughly researched and skillfully written, it is a fascinating examination of a crucial point in European - and world - history. Highly recommended.

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