This book on The Lady with an Ermine is the first to examine in depth the painting technique of Leonardo da Vinci and reveals the secrets of the creation of his paintings. One key to this work is the unprecedented discovery of a true small ermine hidden beneath the visible animal that we see today. We also discover that the first intention of the Master was to paint a classic portrait, without any animal. Probably at the instigation of the Duke of Milan, Leonardo may have altered its composition and later added an ermine then unsatisfied transformed it again. Is it not strange that in 1493 the first poem that describes this portrait does not mention the ermine, as this is an important element. This book provides an answer. Thanks to a revolutionary new technique, Pascal Cotte is able to analyse layer by layer all the superpositions of the brushstrokes. It is thus possible to reconstruct the whole story, all its genesis. From plank of wood, through all superimposed layers to the final appearance. Everything is analyzed rigorously and methodically. It also enables to reveal important details about the construction of the painting, the wanderings of the painter, his hesitations, his errors and changes. With pedagogy and respect for the reader, Pascal Cotte takes us on a tour quite exciting with simple and clear explanations. All these findings were previously invisible with traditional equipment of laboratories of museums. The author uses a new scientific method of analysis of pictorial works he invented and named L.A.M. for Layer Amplification Method.
We believed we knew everything about the painting of Leonardo da Vinci, and we thought that his paintings were painted all at once, thought and structured, and that could not be changed from the initial project. Nevertheless a new technique of scientific analysis questions everything. We were misled, not only on the method but also on the technique. Leonard is indecisive, maniac about precision and perfection, he constantly improves his paintings again and again.
The old techniques of analysis of painting allow to see through (X ray) and under the layer of the painting (Infrared). The new technique that is explained and used in this book allows to study deep inside the layer of the painting and to peel it like an onion. Thanks to this technique we can show 25 unpublished discoveries hidden since 500 years.
An educational book

Leonardo da Vinci – red chalk studies of interlace motifs – Royal Library, Windsor (inv. n° 1233v)

The painting’s peregrinations 1498-1946

Amazing elements of the costume
The discovery of Leonardo's fingerprints

THE SECRETS OF LEONARD DA VINCI
A Prestigious Reading Committee

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David Bull
Senior Consultant, former Chairman of Painting Conservation, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. - Fellow of the international Institute for Conservation - Author of the comparison between The Lady with the Ermine and Ginevra de' Benci in the publication "Two paintings of Leonardo", Artibus et Historiae. N° 25, 1992 pp 76-82.
A NEW VIEW OF ART OF HISTORY

The stages of the construction
The book

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The author

Pascal Cotte is an optical engineer, a photographer and a specialist in signal processing of the image. He has founded several companies in the fields of electronic, information technology and the manufacture of special scanners. He founded Lumiere Technology in 1989, and in 2005, with Jean Penicaud, he has founded the Multispectral Institute (LTMI) which today is the leader in scientific analysis of paintings. Pascal Cotte is the inventor of the first high definition multispectral camera that digitized Mona Lisa at the Louvre Museum in October 2004 and The Lady with an Ermine in September 2007 in Krakow, Poland. He has digitized over 2,000 masterpieces in private and public collections. He is the author of several patents, publications on digital processing on images, and scientific studies on famous paintings. His work has led to art historians support and demonstrate the hypothesis that the drawing on parchment La Bella Principessa, is an original work by the hand of Leonardo da Vinci. His exhibition, Secrets of Mona Lisa, promoted by Grande Exhibition, has been seen by over 6 millions visitors worldwide since 2007.