

Short Subjects

500 Year Old Da Vinci Sketch Now a Real Handbag

Luxury handbag maker Gherardini brought Leonardo Da Vinci's sketch to life.



An Italian leather goods company has started manufacturing a purse that the artist, sculptor and scientist Leonardo Da Vinci sketched on a piece of paper over 500 years ago. According to The History Blog, luxury handbag maker Gherardini has produced a limited edition of Da Vinci's purse, which historians say was sketched around 1497.

The original design was filed away in The [Codex Atlanticus](#), a 12-volume book of notes, theorems and drawings that Da Vinci is believed to have amassed between 1478 to 1519. Along with the purse, there are drawings of weaponry, notes on botany, a few math problems and even a few ideas for flying devices.

They're calling it the Pretiosa (Italian for precious), mainly because of its detailed decoration and handcrafted construction. Each calfskin bag is adorned with hand-sewn embroidery and carries a hand-etched brass handlebar. There are only 99 in existence, and while we don't know what the price is going to be, we'd suggest saving your money and maybe finding someone who works for the company and taking them to a lovely meal. The bags went on sale in March 2012.

In case you're not sold on the idea yet, take a look at the creation of the bag in this [Youtube video](#).

Rare Roman Helmet found in Britain

Archaeologists think it may have been worn by native Briton who fought for Romans.

A rare Roman cavalry helmet dating from Emperor Claudius' invasion of Britain nearly 2,000 years ago was unveiled on Tuesday after painstaking restoration lasting nearly a decade.

The so-called Hallaton Helmet was found in 2001 by Ken Wallace, a retired teacher and a member of a local archaeology group, during the excavation of an Iron Age shrine at Hallaton in Leicestershire, central England.

At the time, archaeologists joked that



they had unearthed a fairly modern "rusty bucket." In fact what they had found was a treasure of considerable importance, which experts said pointed to the close

relationship between Roman invaders and some native Britons.

"The helmet doesn't seem to be damaged, so it could have been taken in battle but I think that's not terribly likely," according to Peter Liddle, community archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council. "I think two things are the most likely — this belonged to a Briton who has fought in the Roman Army and got back home in one piece or it was a diplomatic gift from the Romans to a local ruler to cement an alliance," he added.

The [Guardian newspaper](#) estimated that the helmet was worth 300,000 U.K. pounds (more than \$460,000), and reported that the wearer of the helmet would have "shone in the sun like a god."

The remains of the helmet had to be lifted from the site in a soil block and transported to the British Museum where experts spent years piecing together hundreds of fragments in a process likened to a 3D jigsaw puzzle.

Marilyn Hockey, head of ceramics, glass and metals conservation at the British Museum in London, said the project was one of the most challenging of her career. "It's wonderful to be able to coax something like this out of the soil and to allow it to show itself off again," she said.

What Hockey discovered was a helmet built of sheet iron, once covered with carefully crafted silver sheet decorated in places with gold leaf.

The helmet's bowl features a wreath, symbol of military victory, and the scallop-shaped browguard shows the bust of a woman flanked by lions and other animals. The cheekpieces depict a Roman emperor on horseback with the goddess Victory flying behind. Beneath his horse's hooves is a cowering figure, possibly a native Briton.

It is the only Roman helmet found in Britain with the majority of the silver-gilt plating surviving, and one of only a handful ever discovered.

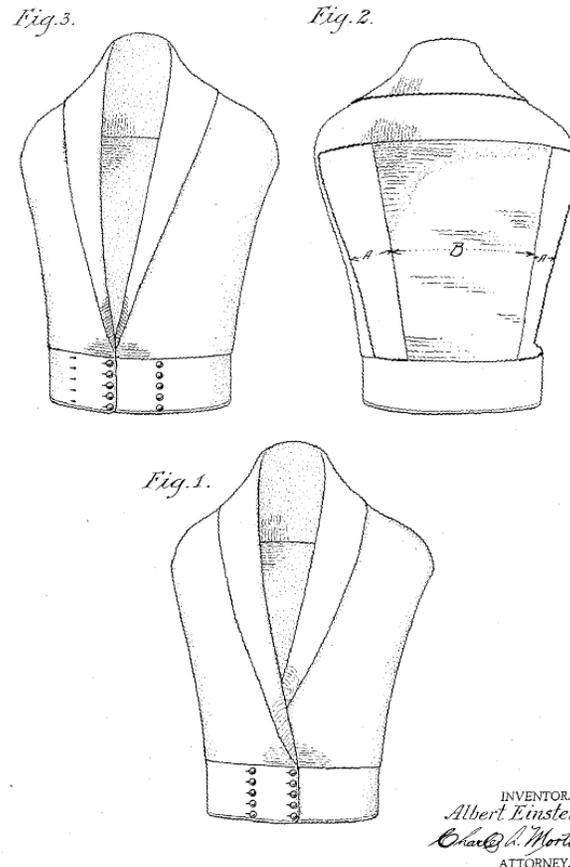
The Hallaton Helmet will be displayed permanently at [Harborough Museum](#) in Market Harborough, Leicestershire when it reopens in 2014, alongside the other finds from the Hallaton Treasure.

This May Not be *That* Albert Einstein's Patent

Earlier reports that Einstein was a genius at fashion design may be in error.

For several years there has been a persistent rumor, in both the print media and online, that Albert Einstein – yes THAT Albert Einstein – may have secretly longed to be a fashion designer.

We know for a fact that he was involved in inventing things in between his



work in physics. There were the eight refrigerator patents he developed in the 1920's with his buddy Leo Szilard that they sold to the German branch of General Electric. There were the compasses he patented in 1926 and 1935, the Einstein-Goldschmidt hearing aid he co-developed with Rudolf Goldschmidt. He and Dr. Gustav Bucky filed a US patent in 1935 for a "light intensity self-adjusting camera."

We know all of these belong to Albert Einstein the patent examiner, who later became Albert Einstein the eminent physicist, and all those inventions are consistent with his family background, running an electric-machinery factory.

But is it likely that he would have been moonlighting as a blouse designer a year later? At left is the patent drawing for "an ornamental design for a blouse" filed July 2, 1936. The garment's defining qualities are its side openings, which also serve as armholes, and its adjustable front buttoning system.

From the patent filing it is not clear whether this is indeed THE Albert Einstein, the description states he is a German living in "the Borough of Manhattan, county of New York". The Social Security Death Index lists five other candidates, two of whom are from New York City as cited in the design patent. Einstein resided in Princeton, New Jersey beginning in 1933 when he joined the Institute for Advanced Study. His 1935 camera patent correctly cites that as his home.

The drawing has the name on it, but it does not seem to match the one on the camera drawing. It certainly does not allow for a definitive comparison with known script or print handwriting of the scientist. Albert may not have been a fashionista after all.

Shoe Manufacturer Wins Trademark Lawsuit

Courts rule that unique color of shoe sole deserves protection.

The bright red soles on French footwear designer Christian Louboutin's high-heeled shoes are so distinctive they deserve trademark protection, a U.S. appeals court has ruled.



A three judge panel at the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New York recently reversed a lower court's finding that a single color could not be trademarked in the fashion industry.

Paris-based Louboutin, whose pumps have been worn on many famous feet, sued rival Yves Saint Laurent in April 2011 in

Manhattan federal court over what he claimed is his signature use of lacquered red on shoe soles.

In August 2011, Manhattan federal judge Victor Marrero denied Louboutin's request for a preliminary injunction that would have prevented YSL from selling pumps with red soles. But in its ruling, the appeals court panel said Louboutin's long-standing use of the red sole was "a distinctive symbol that qualifies for trademark protection."

However, Judges Chester Straub, Jose Cabranes and Debra Ann Livingston limited Louboutin's trademark to shoes where the sole stands out in contrast to the rest of the pump. The finding would allow Yves Saint Laurent to produce a monochrome red shoe with a red sole, the opinion said.

The opinion based its reasoning on a 1995 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Qualitex Co. v. Jacobson Products Co.* and on the Lanham Act, which governs trademark law. The *Qualitex* decision left open the possibility of defending a single color trademark on the grounds that its use, under certain circumstances, is uniquely associated with a brand, the appeals court said.

Yves Saint Laurent has argued that Louboutin's red sole trademark was obtained fraudulently and is seeking to cancel it. However, they also claimed victory because shoes that are red all over aren't protected.

Judy Garland's Screen-worn Wizard of Oz Dress

Screen-worn version of iconic gingham dress sells at auction.

Judy Garland's blue and white gingham dress from "The Wizard of Oz" sold for



\$480,000 at a Beverly Hills auction on November 10th 2013.

Julien's Auctions said the price for the pinafore dress and white puffy-sleeved blouse that Garland wore throughout the 1939 film classic was in line with estimates.

But it was well below the sky-high figures paid last year for Hollywood costumes worn by Marilyn Monroe and Audrey Hepburn, and a similar dress worn during tests for "The Wizard of Oz" that fetched \$910,000 in 2011.

Auctioneer Darren Julien said the price difference was due to the fact that only a few test dresses were made for "The Wizard of Oz," while there are about seven versions of Garland's signature gingham pinafore.

The buyer of the Judy Garland dress, made by MGM costume designer Adrian, was not identified.