

Leonardo's cellar dissection studio opened

November 14 2006

The underground chamber in Florence, Italy, where Leonardo da Vinci dissected human corpses and animals has been opened briefly for scientific exploration.

The chamber beneath Santa Maria Nuova hospital was where Leonardo did his work that preceded his detail anatomical drawings in 1505 and 1506, Italy's ANSA news agency said.

UCLA Professor Carlo Pedretti, a leading Leonardo scholar and a member of the group granted access to the chamber said it features three huge ceramic tanks, and as yet, no one has been able to figure out what the Renaissance genius used them for.

Leonardo later went to conduct human and animal dissections in Milan and Pavia, and is believed to have worked on 30 humans in total.

In Florence, Leonardo wrote that he dissected a man who claimed to be 100 years old, as well a 2-year-old boy.

The report didn't indicate how long the scientific team would have access to the basement facility.

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