

November 15, 2011 Frame Posting

## *(Mona) Lisa's Niece*

Not much is known about *Mona Lisa*...  
the mysterious smiling  
woman that Leonardo da  
Vinci painted.



One of our gallery artists Cesar  
Santos believes  
*Mona Lisa* had a niece...

and he has painted her!

After investigating what the original frame would have looked like, it was discovered that no “original “frame is known. Several decorative frames have been used over the centuries, changing with the styles of the times. In 1909, the current frame a five inch wide, hand carved, 22kt gold, Renaissance-era frame was chosen. for her.

The client who purchased *Lisa’s Niece* wanted to replicate the *Mona Lisa* frame...affordably!

Three frames  
styles  
and two fillets  
were chosen.  
Each being  
modified to  
create a  
new profile.



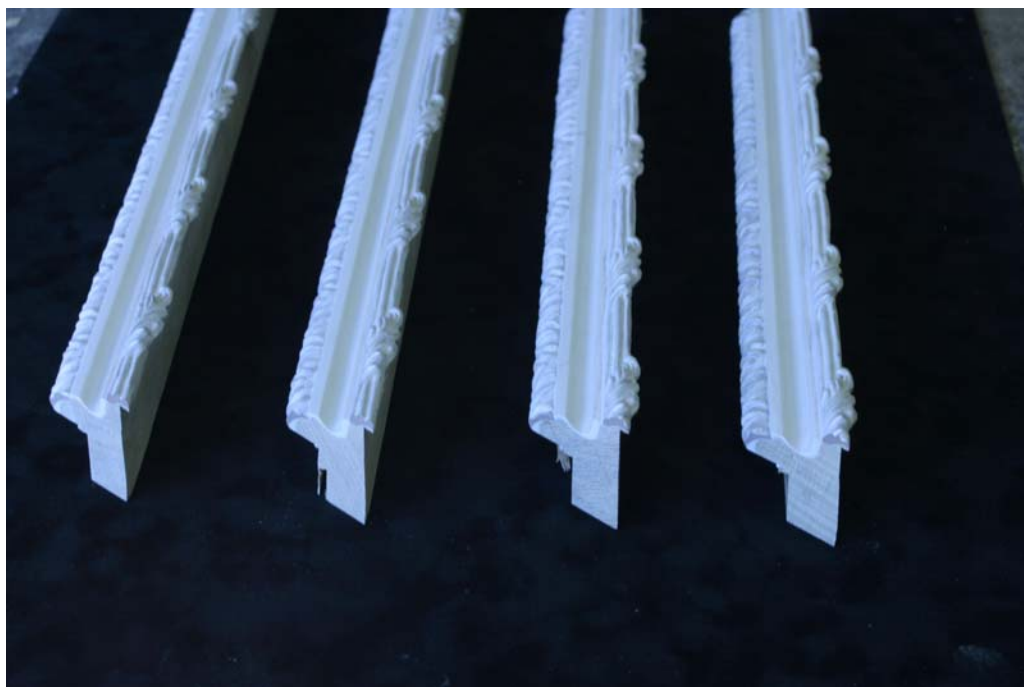


The inside gold Italian frame was ordered in white gesso.

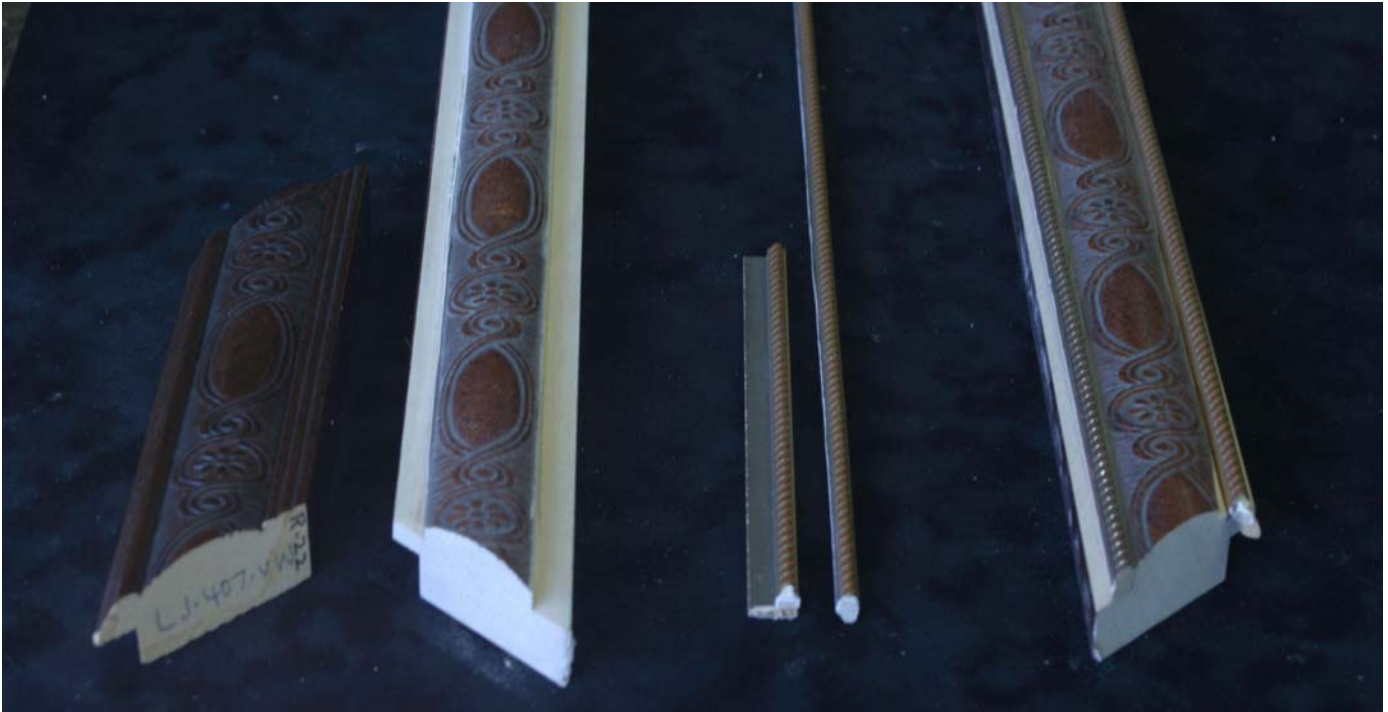
The outside edges were removed about 1/4 inch.

The table saw got quite a work out on this project .  
And I still have all my fingers!

The extra gesso between the top scrolls were carefully sanded giving a more defined edge to the profile.



The middle Victorian frame was cut, removing the inside and outside edges leaving only the decorative design. The rope and beaded fillet had their lip area removed. The rope and bead fillets were glued to the Victorian frame.



The new profile was cut to the proper thickness.

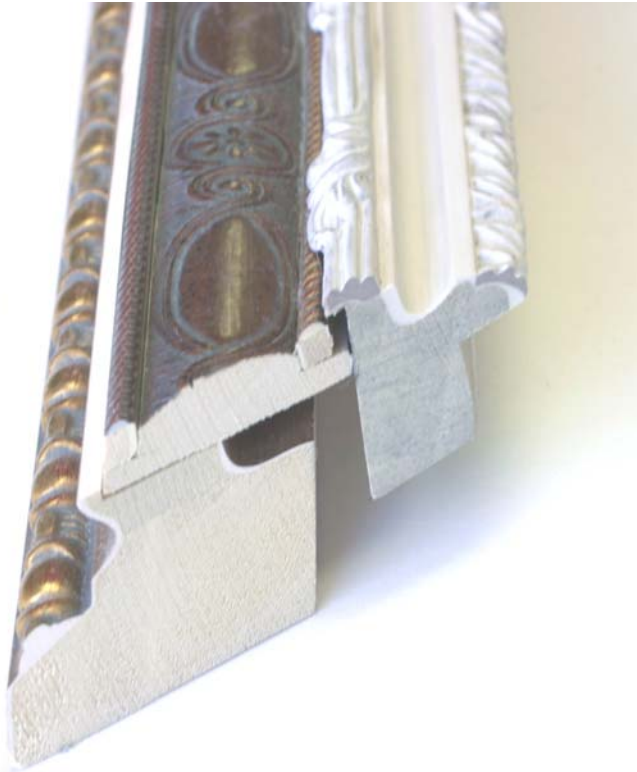


The outside gold Louis XV frame was turned on it's side and the top decorative element was removed. The moulding was cut down the center, reducing it's over all size by half.



The three new profiles were joined as individual frames





All three individual frames were joined and assembled...creating a 3" wide, 2" tall affordable "Renaissance-era" frame!



The new frame was sprayed with red primer



Then painted with yellow ochre.

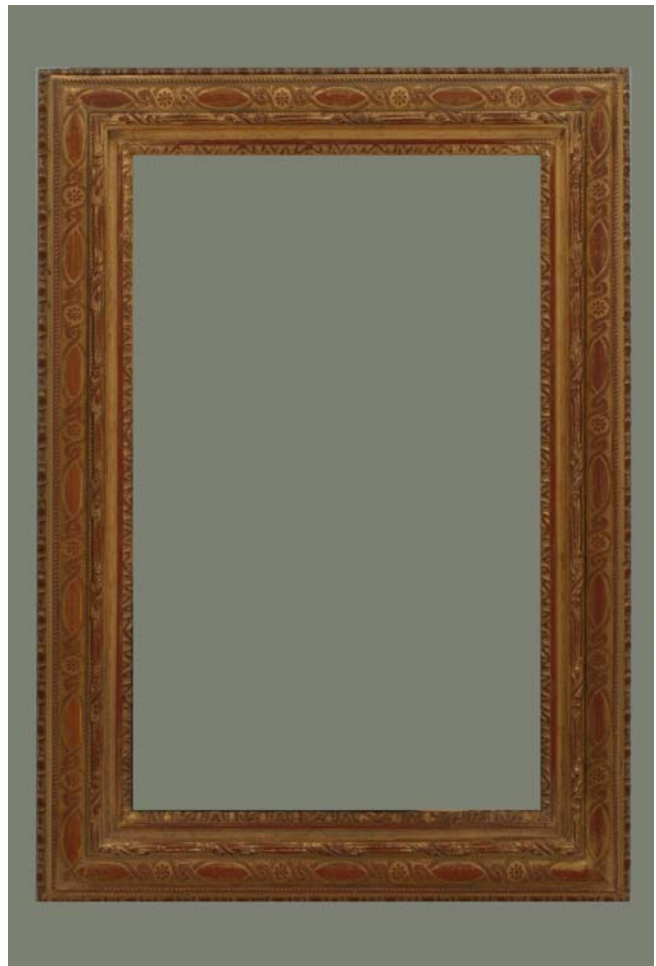


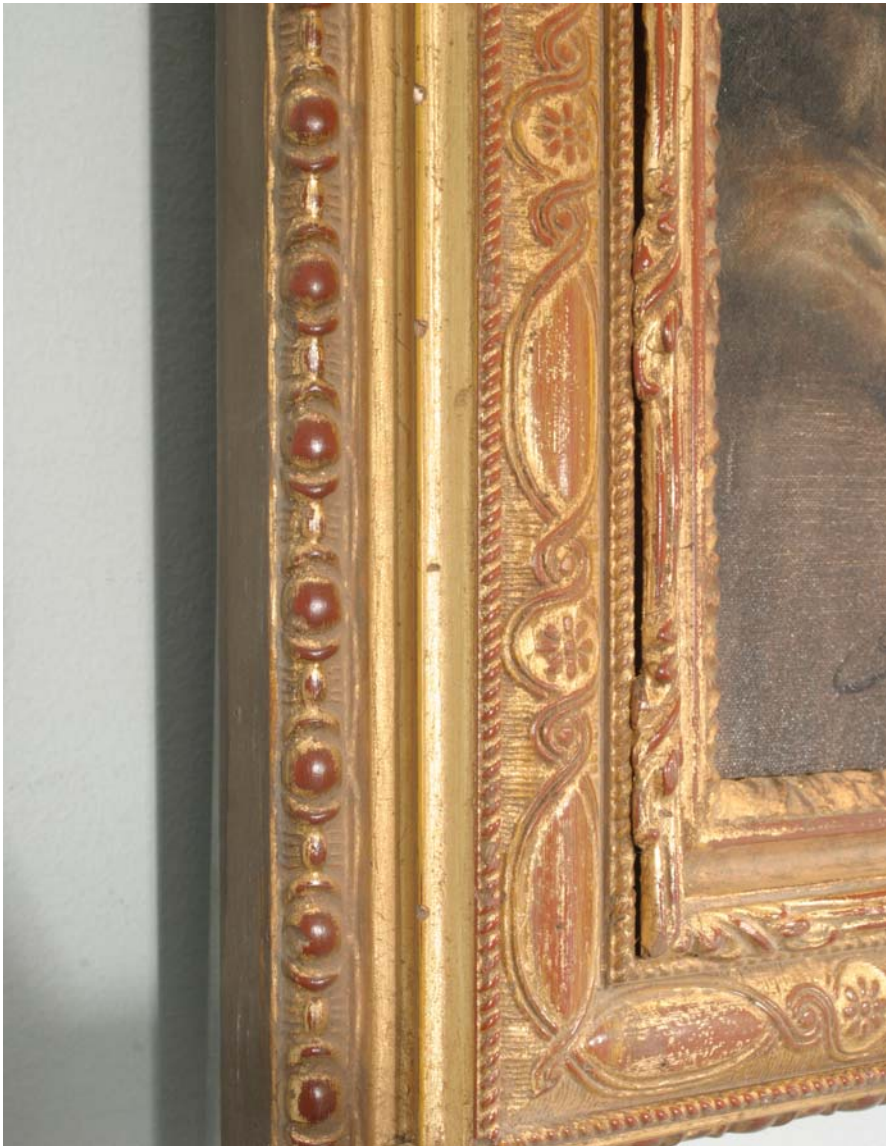
Both paint layers helped to imitate the different clay colors of the original frame.

The frame was then gilded with Composition gold. Giving it a bright new look.



Paints, shellacs, and waxes were used to tone the gold down. Chain, a razor blades and an awl were also used. All these steps helped age the frame, back “five hundred years.”





The original five frames became one beautiful new frame.

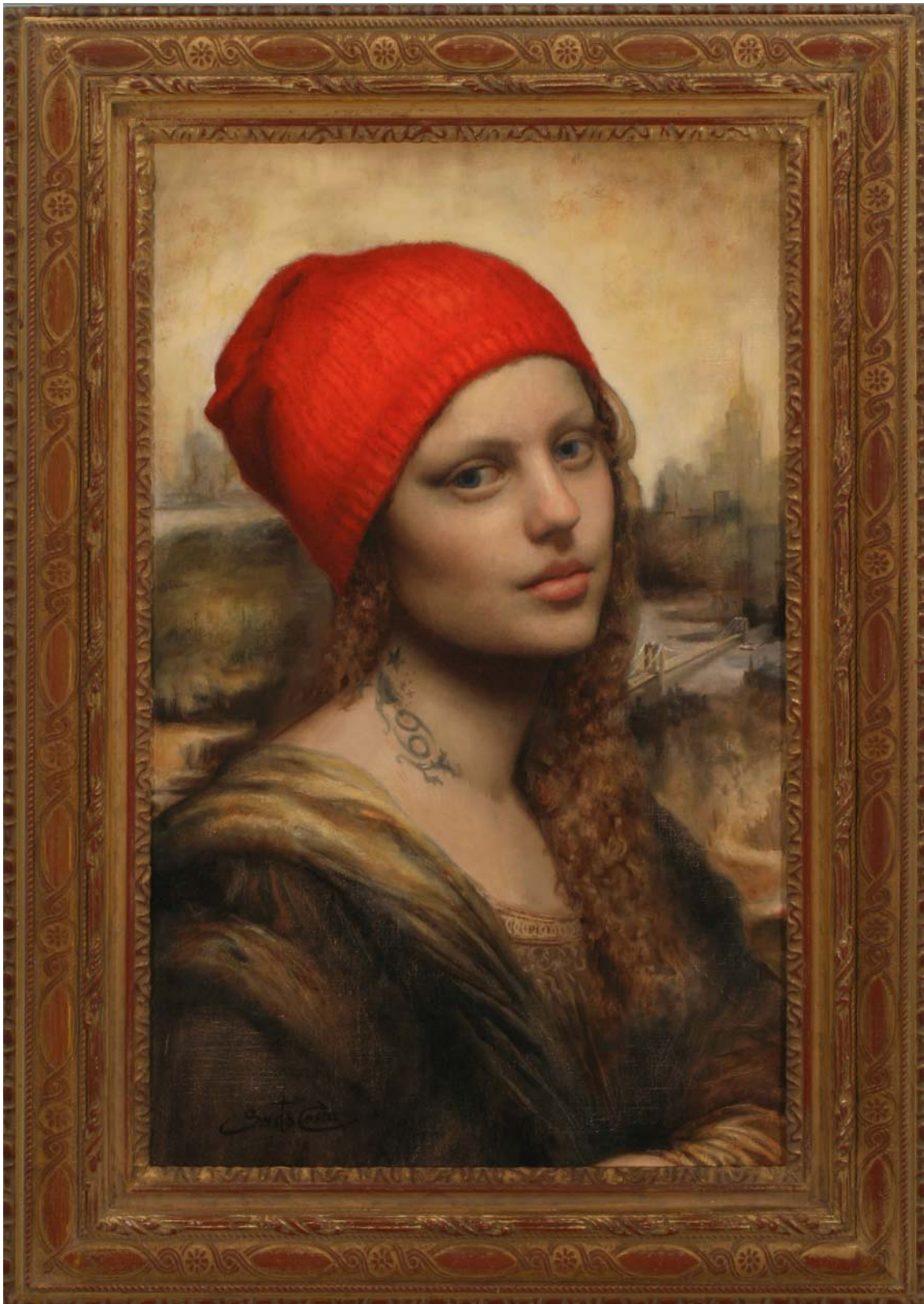
The new profiles blended.

The details were enhanced.

The different elevations gave dimension.

All contributing to the beauty of the frame.

The painting was installed in the new frame.  
The client was thrilled with their “Renaissance-era “  
frame!



We decide to do a side-by-side comparison with the *Mona Lisa* photo we had been using...



...Now we know why she is smiling!