

SEMIÑAR REPORT

'EXPLORATION OF AN IMAGE'

L. D. C. Library
L. L. T. Bombay.

YUNNAM NABACHANDRA SINGH ✓
VISUAL COMMUNICATION, NO 856130.

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requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF DESIGN

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By

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Introduction

The aim of this study is to understand various possibilities of an image and its large spectrum of representiveness. An image is not just an image per se. Apart from the figure itself and its meaning there are other factors like the illustration technique, the style of illustration, the printing process are which add to the dimension of the image.

Alongwith the development of various tools, the nature of the image has also undergone change. The photographic images, produced by using fine lenses and light sensitive emulsions are different in tonal values as compared with brush-rendered images. Air compressors with air brushes have brought in fine-finished images whose texture is entirely new. The images produced

on Computers have a different quality altogether. Over the year various tools and materials have been used by artists and designers to create various visual images.

When the images are used for conveying specific information, the art form is normally called illustration. However, art and illustration can never be separated entirely. Illustration relies heavily on traditional art, skill and techniques, when we say visual art, it is always associate with painting, sculpture and other visual images. It is assumed to have less commercial value and richer in Aesthetic Value. If we transform the painting to illustration it serves the purpose in various areas.

Illustration is commonly taken

to mean art in a commercial context and social and economic influences therefore dictate the form and content of the illustration.

Illustrators have always been eager to grasp the opportunities offered by the development of new mechanical aids to improve their skill and widen the scope of their work. In fact, illustration has been always defined to be analytical and descriptive drawing - particularly in the field of Science, topography, medicine and Architecture.

But the scope and meaning of illustration is fast changing. Illustration is being recognised as art too. In this study, an attempt has been made to study an image and style, techniques and process.



An Image

The chosen image for an exploration is the well known painting 'MONA LISA'. This painting is considered as Leonardo da Vinci's most beautiful painting, A Renaissance masterpiece and one of the greater work of art of all times. Its fame derives in good measure from hundred of copies, some dating back to the sixteenth and seventeenth century, and thousand of reproductions thereof.

The painting is known in Italy as 'La Gioconda' and in France as 'La Joconde'. In English speaking countries, the painting is known as the 'Mona Lisa'. The painting is painted on a 30x21 inches, popular panel, is unsigned and undated.

There is no reference to this work in Leonardo's extensive



note books and there are no known preliminary studies for it. Most scholars agree that it is one of Leonardo's later work which he began when he was more than fifty years old. Born in 1452, Leonardo painted the Mona Lisa towards the end of his career between 1503 and 1507.

The Figure

The Lady's dress is unusually plain for a gentlewoman and does not conform to contemporary fashion. The hair is not artfully styled out, instead, simply parted in the middle and hanging down in tightly coiled curls. And there is not a simple piece of Jewelry on it. Only the position of the crossed hand seen to signify upper class politesse.

An Italian word Contrapposto is often applied to a pose in which one part of a body twists in a different direction from the rest. The portrait Mona Lisa is a refined variation upon the classical contrapposto.

The woman is seated in a wooden chair that faces toward the spectator's left. Her left arm rests on the arm of the chair and her right hand extends

across her torso and gently clasps her left hand. Her torso is turned to the left and her head is turned even further to provide a three-quarter view of the face.

The technique

Leonardo has masterful use of the Technique Stumato an Italian word used to describe the smoky almost imperceptible shading from light to dark in order to create self contours and the illusion of relief. Leonardo's skillful use of contrapposto and stumoto were so influential that, by the end of the sixteenth century, there were scores of lesser artists who imitated the same style.

The mysterious smile is of course the most famous and tantalizing thing out of the face. The Sfumato renders indistinct the corners of the eyes and lips and thus heightens the mysterious ambiguous expression.

The background Lanscape

The fantastic landscape in the background is obviously invented. It is a barren, desolate environment of Jagged rocks, Spiky mountains, and winding rivers. The imaginery landscape is entirely a creation of the Artist, because similar treatment is employed for his other work 'Virgin of the Rocks' Taking the command of the skillful hand it is no wonder to create any sort of combination between the background and foreground.



Copies of Mona Lisa

Later in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries the painting has been copied by various other artists. Examples of the copied images are compiled here. These are simple iconic images. Later work done in Nineteenth century are very different than the earlier ones. The aim of this documentation is to analyse how an image is explored by various artists and designers and to look the state of mind towards such image explorations.



Copies of Mona Lisa



Copies of Mona Lisa



Substitute by another image

At the beginning of nineteenth century and onwards, thousands of copies and reproductions of Mona Lisa have been produced. The image has been commercially exploited in virtually every part of the world. Due to major technical breakthroughs in 1820, when the development of photography and other modern scientific tools came about, the image has also changed.

The Designer, Illustrator and Photographer have never allowed the painting to remain quietly in the art gallery as a masterpiece work of art. They have worked on the image using various 'new' techniques.



For example, Rick Meyerowitz
recreate image 'Mona gorilla'.



So many other images have been produced using the resemblance of Contropposto pose of Mona Lisa. Bill Birch's painting 'Mona Lisa' in 1977 and David Dragon's Mona Lisa in 1978 are also done on the same manner.

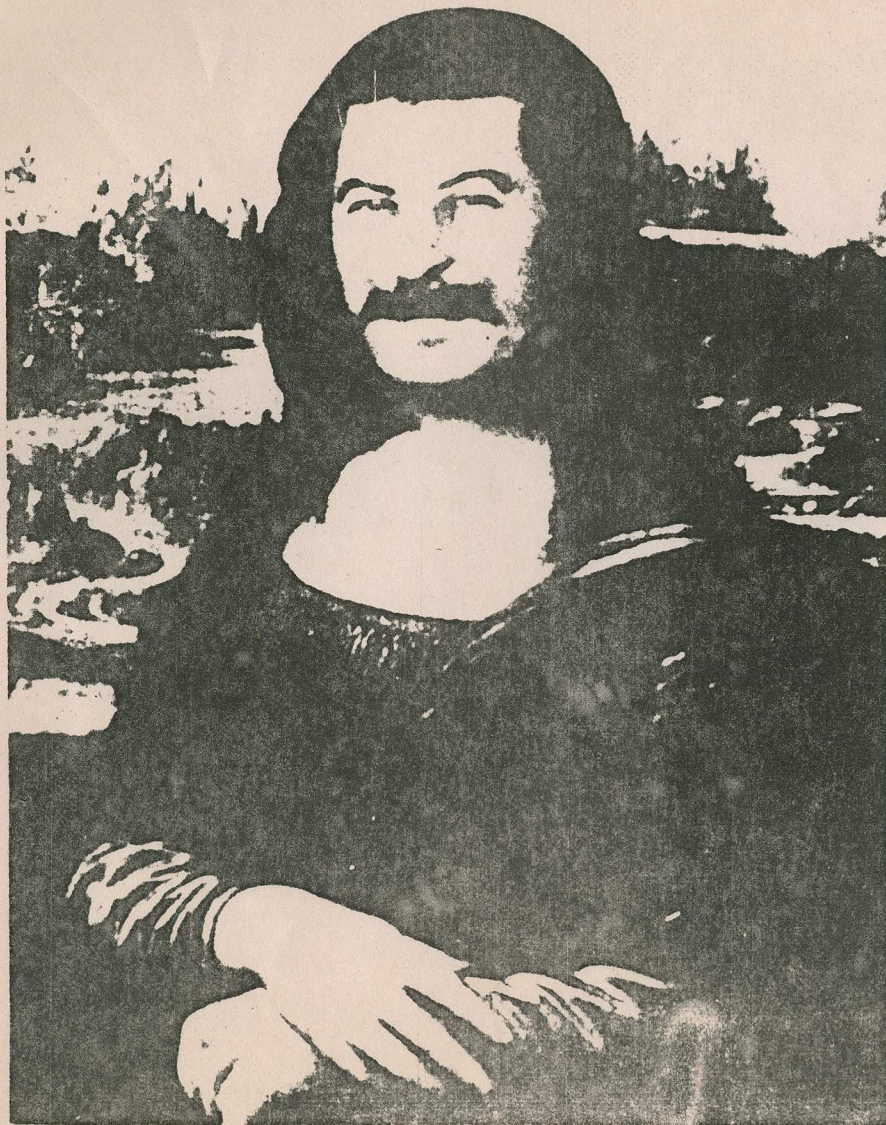


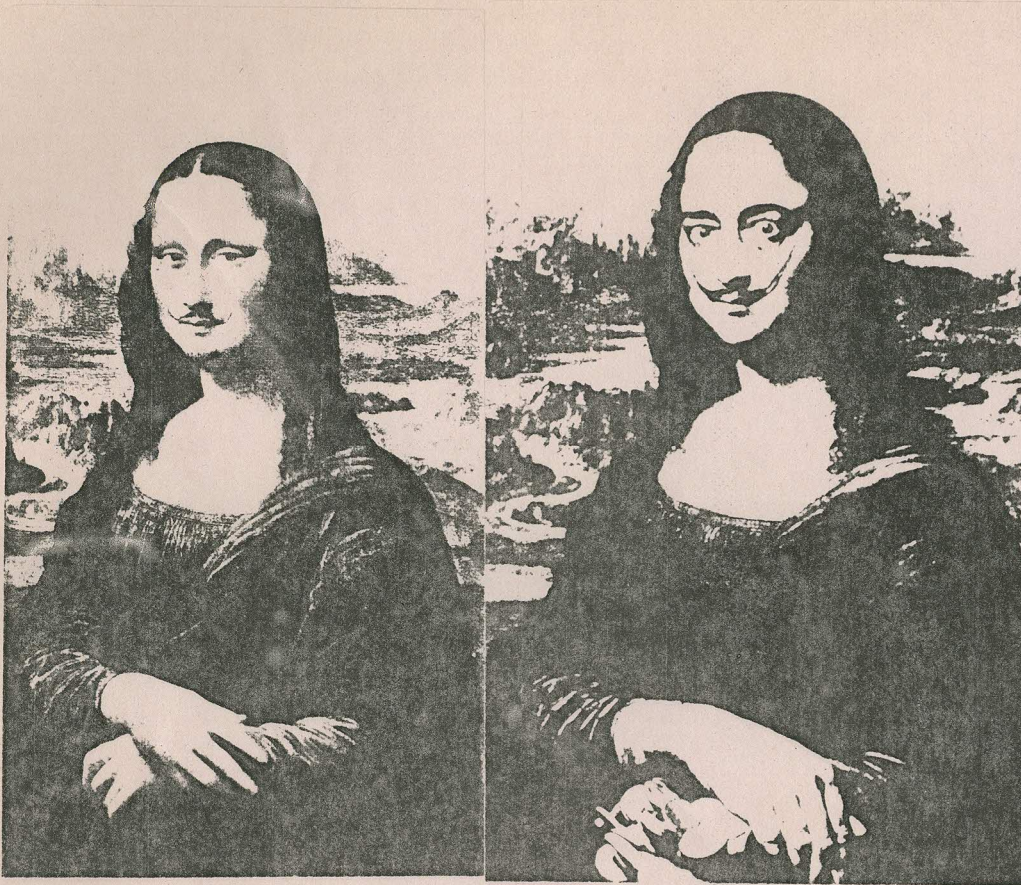
Image manipulation (photo montage)

Photomontage technique has been used to recreate interesting images. Where in the original face has been replaced by a new face by photographic manipulation.

This familiar photographic technique is used to create ambiguity of the image. The image manipulation techniques been extensively used on the painting Mona Lisa. Few of the examples are photomontage image done by Marinus in 1965, 'Stalin as Lisa'



and later in
1977 the image produced by Alfred
Gescheidt entitled 'Jackie
Kennedy Onassis as Mona Lisa.



Essence of Femininity

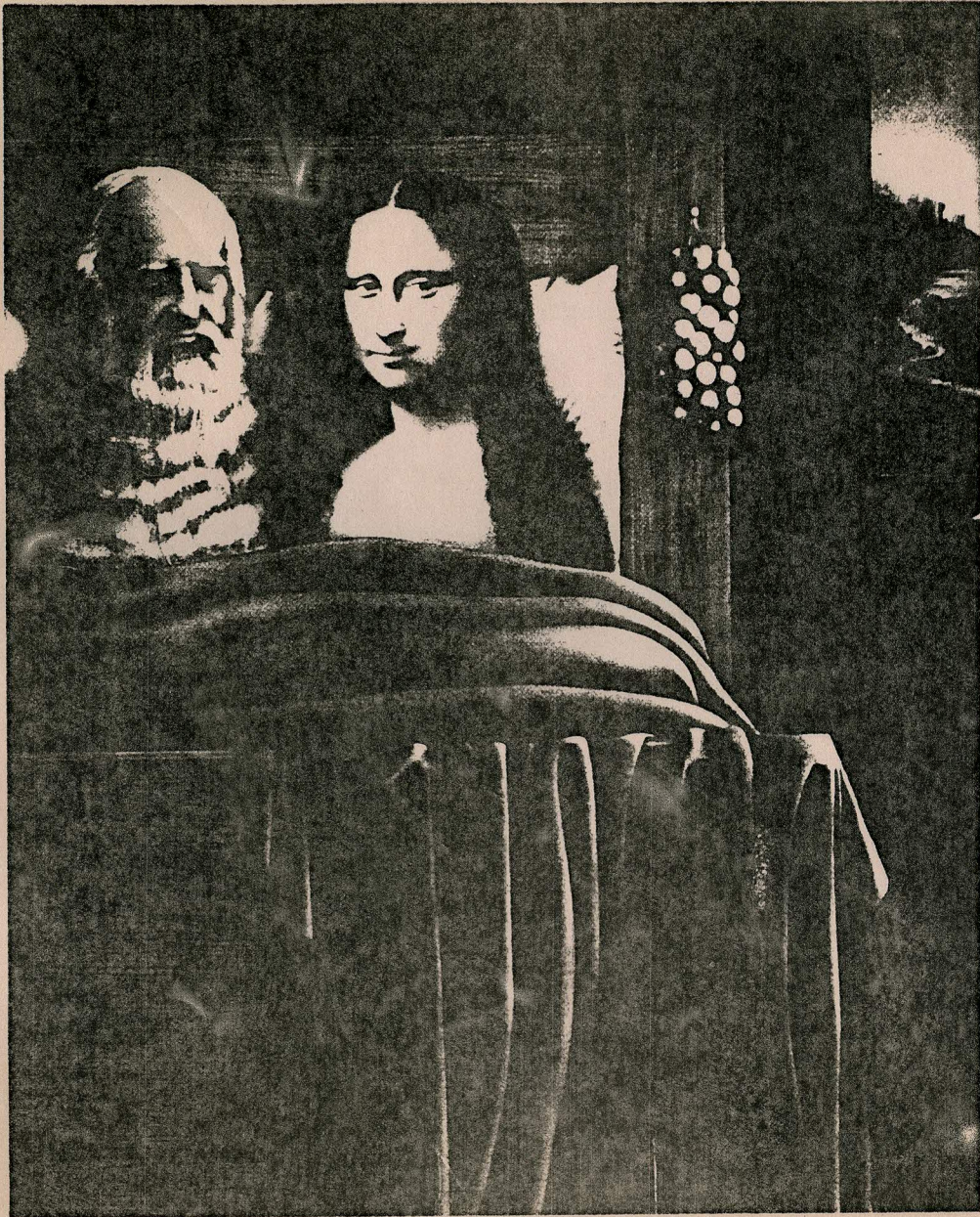
One of the well known Dadaist Marcel Duchamp in 1919 took a reproduction of the Mona Lisa and drew a moustache and goatee on it. Below the image Duchamp printed 'L.H.O.O.O' which when pronounced in French constitute an obscenity.

The image has attracted a passionate following among French and Italian artists and designers, who copied the painting or made variation on it. A few examples of variations done by illustrators and artists on the image Mona Lisa are listed here.



Essence of Femininity

The painting 'Mota Lisa' done by
Siskov in 1973



Essence of Femininity

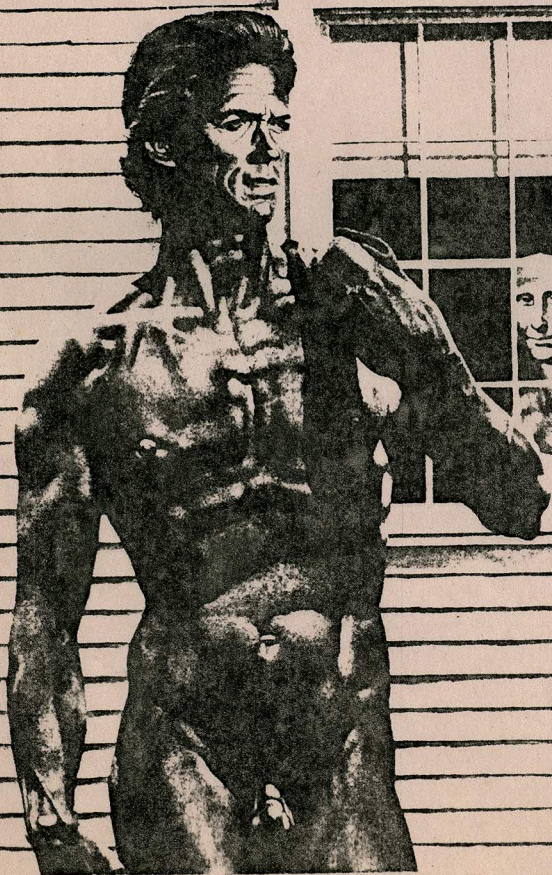
The painting done by Graham Dean
'Mona and Leo' in 1974.



later Chester Browtons' Painting
entitled 'A Chip of the
Old Block' in 1974.



'magazine cover design' 'Lui Magazine' done by graphic designer parlo calia in 1977.



Chris Brown's painting titled
'Mio nome e Pelos' in 1978.

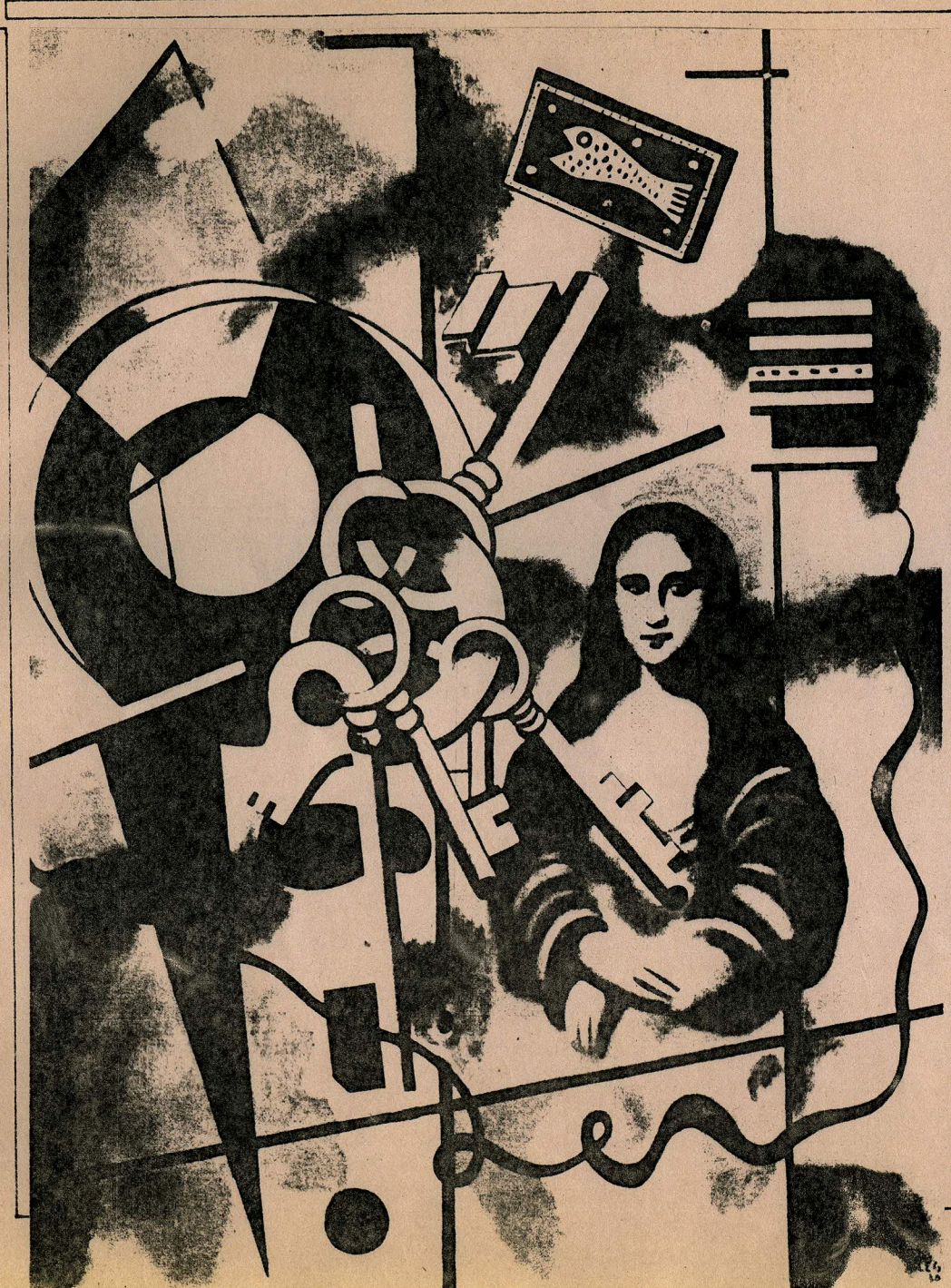


Fuzzy (Abstract) image and Mona Lisa

In the long track of art movement, the image of Mona Lisa have been explored repeatedly by various Dadaist, Surrealist, Cubist and American Action painters and Pop Artistes.

Marcel Duchamp, a dadaist, wanted to demonstrate that any ready-made object could be considered as a work of art. In the spirit he drew a moustache on a reproduction of the Mona Lisa and exhibited it in Paris in 1920, with the obscene caption LH000.

Salvador Dali's painting Imperial Monument to the Child Women in 1929 is adopts of the image Mona Lisa in surrealistic style. The dream like image portrays the obsessions and complexes of the subconscious.



The painting title 'Goconda with Key' is done by a Cubist artist, Fernard Leger in 1930. Leger achieved unity and equilibrium only by reconciling sharp construction of colour, form and objects the colours are pure and vivid and at this violent. Composition with lisa and key may be his insight vision.



American Pop Artist Jasper John's created the lithograph print 'Colour Numerals figure 7' in 1969. John meticulously painted figures, numbers map, target and star and stripes of the United States. The prominent elements of the litho print number seven and the image of Mona Lisa are in Red colour.



There are few other examples of the same category. Die Grune Lisa in 1964 by Paul Wunderlich,

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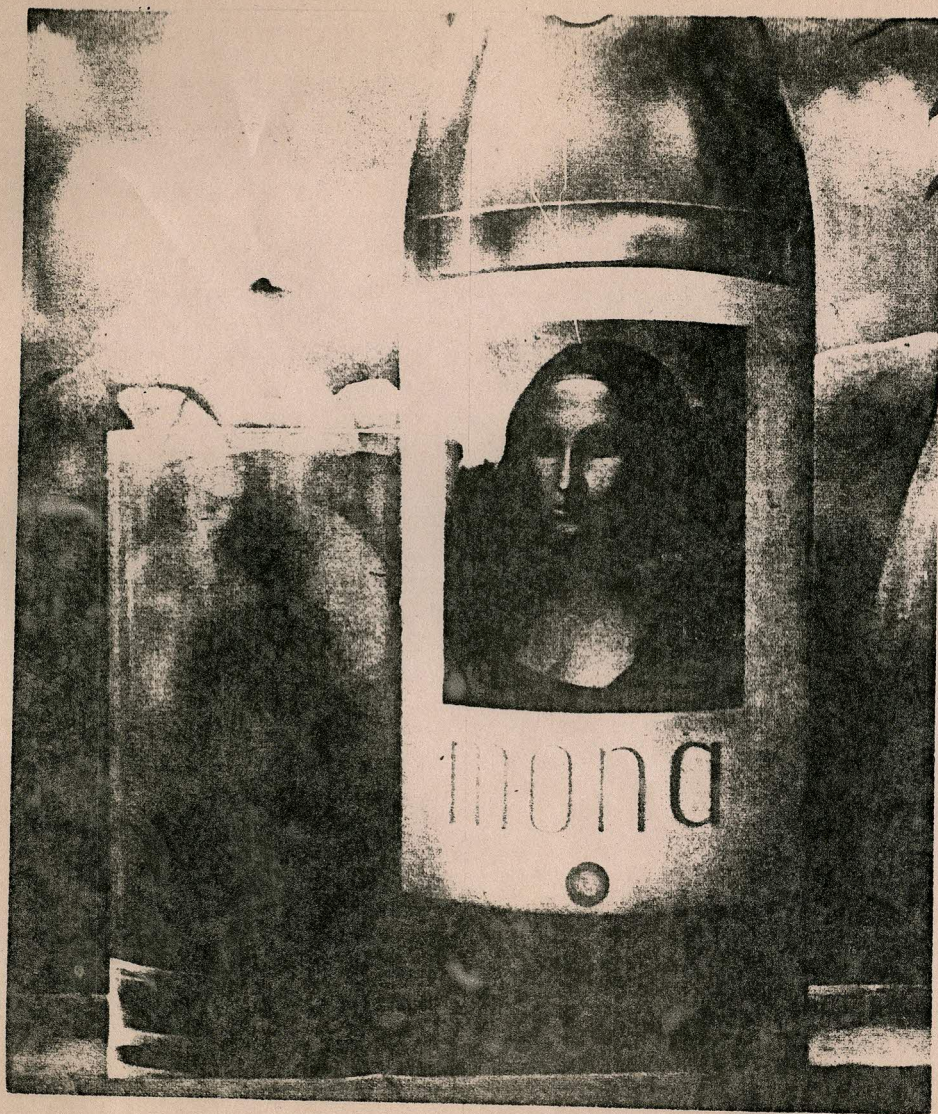
Bandage Mona Lisa in 1970 by
Clive Barker, Magrita Lisa in
1974 by Terry Pastor, Mona Lisa
III in 1975 by Peter May.



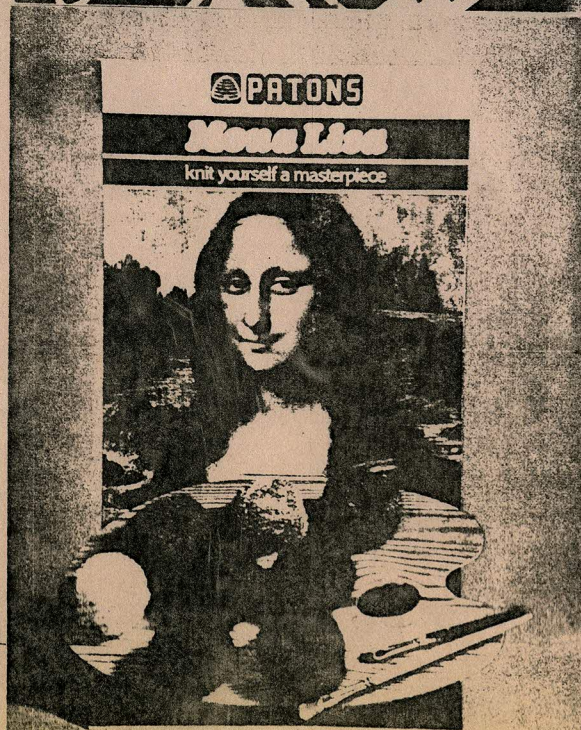
Graphic representation

The image Mona Lisa also have been commercially exploited for the purpose of advertisement in calenders, magazines, posters, hoardings etc. Few of the examples are:-

Graphic magazine cover in 1973
by Jean Lagarri



Just another
product in 1974 by Nick Mycock



magazine covers



and illustration for magazine



Beauty Parlour in 1978 by Bill Dare.



Product, Mona Lisa boot
in 1978, by Richard Baldasin



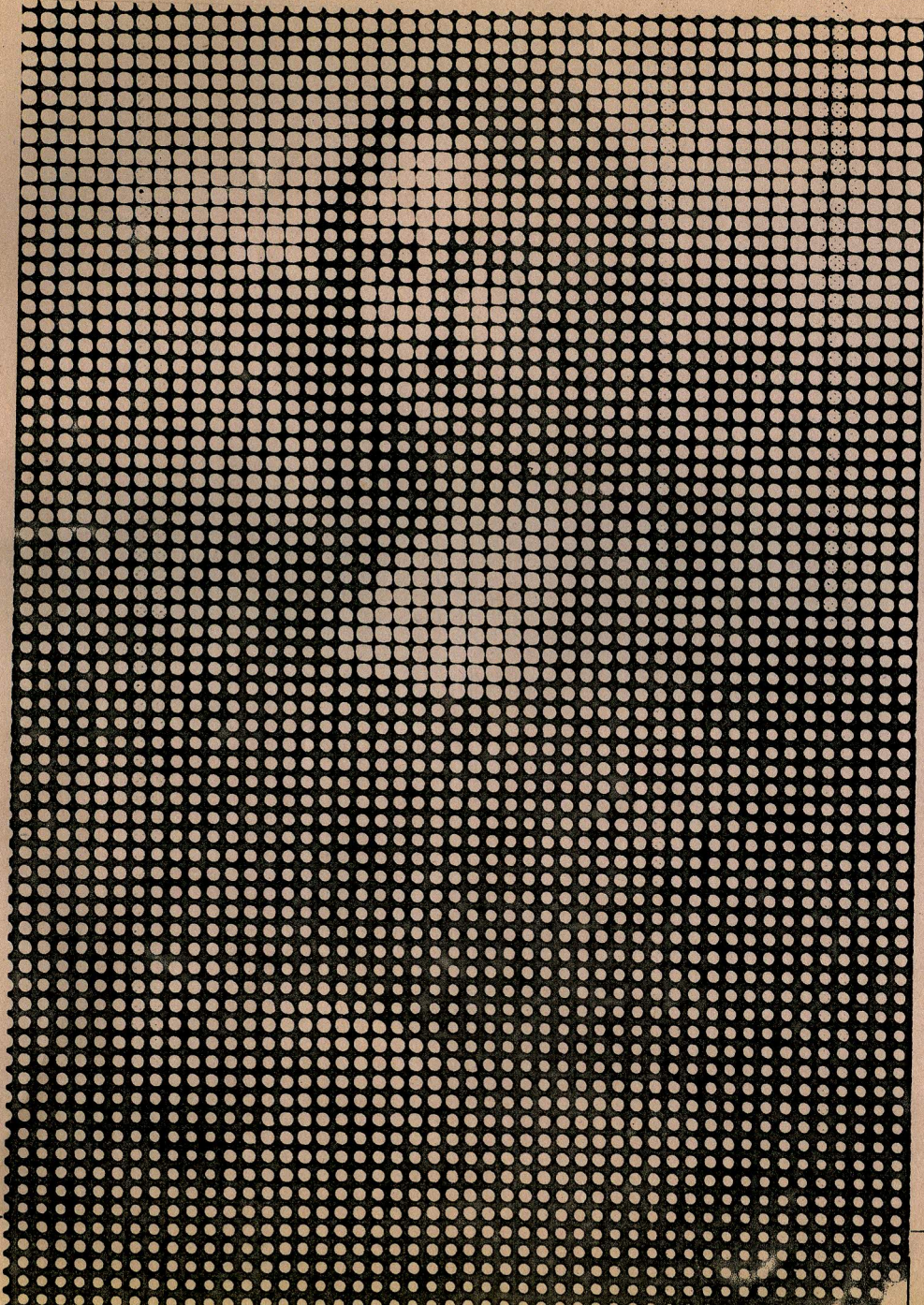
'Punk' magazine cover design
in 1977 by Millor Ringna,

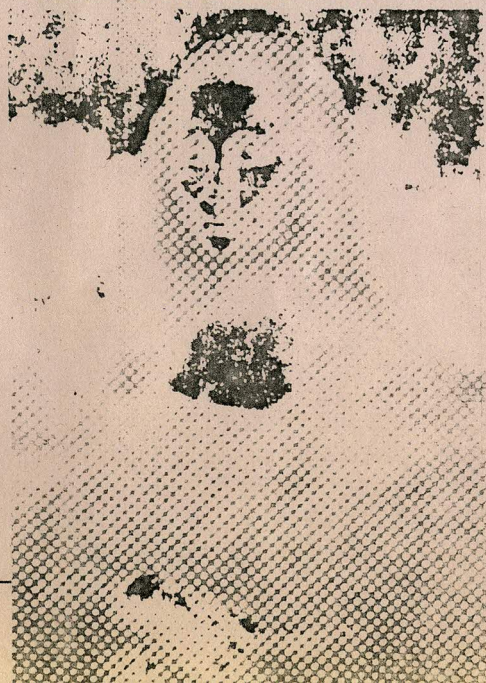


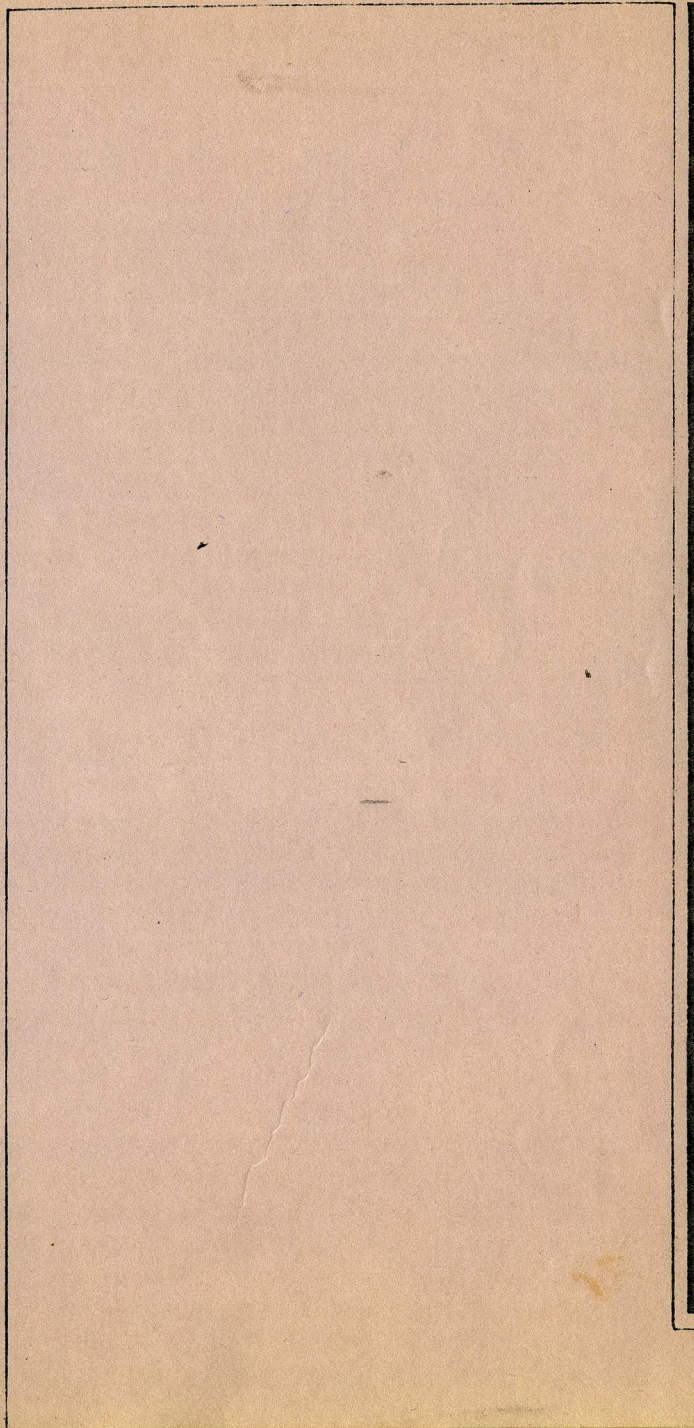
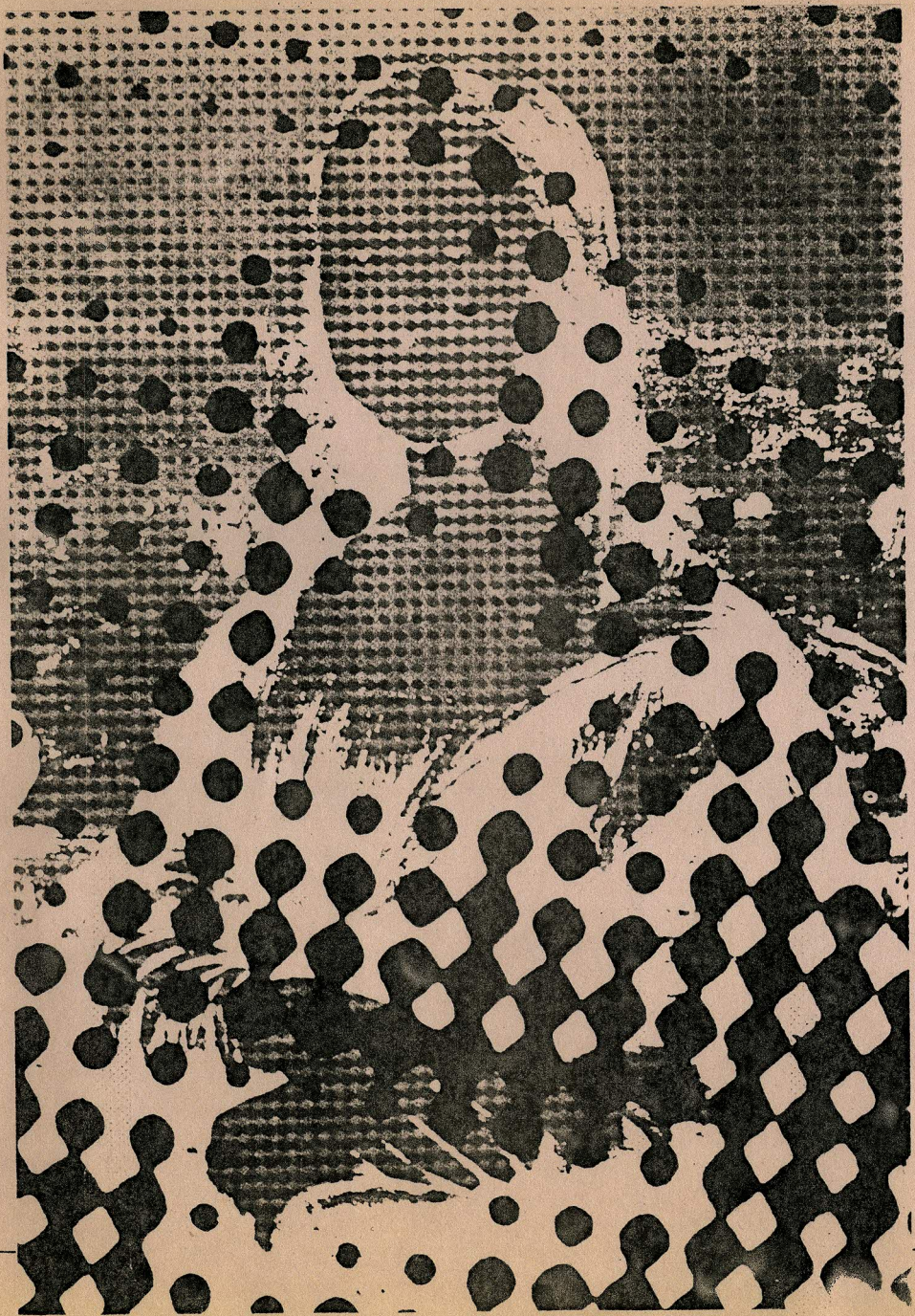
Cross eyed Mona Lisa in 1979 by
J.V.C. Advertisement.

Reproductional Techniques

Japanese designer Shigeo Fukuda produced many images of Mona Lisa by using various screen in printing process. The images are produced with the help of modern printing processes. Few of the examples are compiled here.









An attempt has been made here
by me to visualise the
image of Mona Lisa as would be
projected by various contempo-
rary Indian illustrators and
cartoonists like R.K. Laxman,
Mario Miranda etc. following
their personal style and tech-
niques.



An effort has been linedup here with the command of brush, following the style of R. K. Laxman. Fast and swift work with the mood of urgency.



Likewise of the Mario Miranda-
A seriousness in work with
total involvement. The lines
with patience and deep
concentration.



Highly stylized, self oriented
painful lines of thought.
Heavily impressive modern
format, that is the style of
Micky Patel.



An easy going lines; using the time factor in modern days especially beneficial work of caricature, an expressive lifestyle of Badlekar.



An illussionary, dreamy and
fantacytical style of lines,
using bright colour to portray.
Imaginary state of oblivion
with Milon Mukherjee.



An oldies - Typical Indian style with poetic and rythemic sense of lines usually practised during the day of Chavda and others.



Combination of secondary colours manipulating the style of painting, the free movement of Brush is the style of Ramkumar.



Personally stylized - Broken
lines are composed through
the translucent colours.
The drawing tactics of
Sanat Surti.

Conclusion

Thus it can be seen how an image can undergo transformation by introduction of various techniques, styles and processes and how the meaning of the image changes due to such manipulations. An image is not just an image. Behind the image many factors are involved. We can look at an image as an artist, as a designer or as a printer or photographer and derive different meanings from the same image which might lead to further exploration of the same image.

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