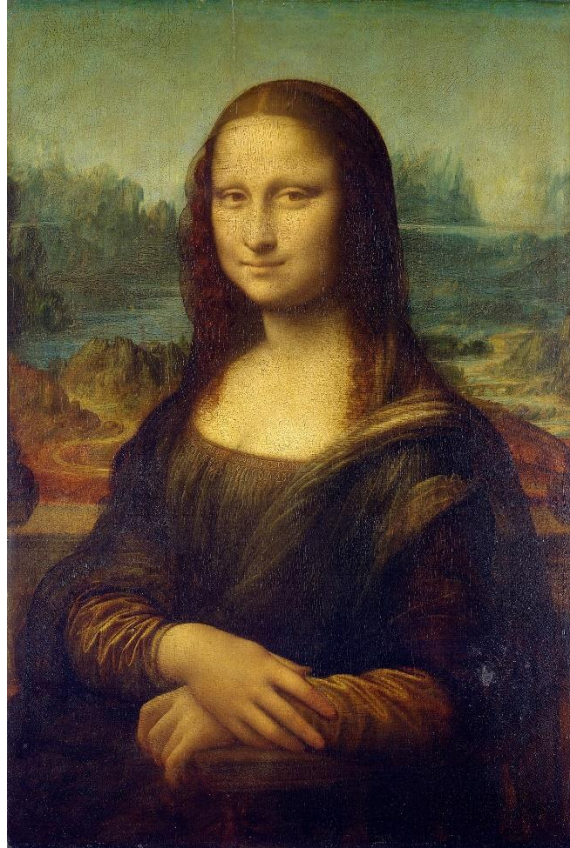


PARSHAT B'REISHIT
GENESIS 1:1-6:8
HAFTARAH I SAMUEL 20:18-42
27 TISHREI 5784/12 OCTOBER 2023



Mona Lisa
Oil on poplar panel by Leonardo da Vinci

THE ALLURE OF AMBIGUITY

1. ...בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים (Genesis 1:1)
This text cries out: “Expound me! [דְּרָשְׁנִי]” Do not think that this is a chronological description of the order of creation. (Rashi)
2. A beautiful maiden concealed secretly in her palace. Knowing that her lover is constantly circling her gate, she opens a little window, reveals her face to her lover and quickly withdraws, concealing herself. So it is with a word of Torah. She reveals her face to her lover and beckons with a hint, then swiftly withdraws to her place. Torah reveals and conceals herself, approaching her lover lovingly to arouse love from the one who seeks her.

3. At its best ambiguity allows an artwork to elevate beyond pure depiction, or a single viewpoint, and create a space where the perception of the viewer helps create the piece. Sometimes this creates a specific interpretation but just as likely it can make the uncertainty and quest for meaning a living part of the work. (Ian Matchett, “Ambiguity in an Art World Shaped by Capital”)

4. The vast majority of games are geared towards a kind of narrative finality that requires a very definite resolution. There's a structure of objective-completion-reward that necessitates closure: you have a task, you complete the task, and you get the reward. It's a closed process. Games with open endings, however, challenge this structure. An unresolved narrative contrasts with a completable, objective-based game. As a result, there's a dissonance inherent in games with open endings, a tension between the lack of closure on the one hand, and the traditional objective-completion-reward structure of video games on the other. (tomcat, “The Allure of Ambiguity: On the Power of Uncertain Game Endings,” gamespot.com)