

Leonardo da Vinci's Horse Is Created, After 500 Years

Continued From Page B1

stood near a 17-foot-tall clay model of Antinous, a pleasure-loving figure in the court of Hadrian. Antinous will be cast in artificial marble and sent to the Peppermill Hotel Casino in Reno, Nev., said its creator, Gail Demi Wilday, as she scraped a bit of clay from the giant's toe.

But everything in the foundry building was dwarfed by the clay model that was the basis for the snorting bronze horse on the lawn outside.

Ms. Wilday pausing in her work, said the power of the horse lay in its history. "It shows how the dream world can become a reality," she said. "When I stand under the head and look up, I just want to cry, it's so overwhelmingly beautiful."

The open house at the foundry is scheduled to last all weekend, with a Renaissance fair being staged by local merchants, who are promoting this slowly reviving city as a haven for the arts. Earlier this year, the Dia Center for the Arts announced plans to convert an old printing factory at the other end of town into a gallery that will be larger than the Museum of Modern Art.

In the throng surrounding Leonardo's horse, which was ringed by gold rope, reactions ranged from abstruse analysis by art aficionados to spontaneous outbursts from children.

Nina Akamu, the sculptor who built the eight-foot clay model that was enlarged to make the giant final bronze, described the two years of research that went into the final version. The main resource was a trove of Leonardo's drawings that surfaced in Madrid in 1965, but only a few of those were directly related to his plans for the Milan horse, she said. One of the key drawings was one inch across, and to get from that to a full-size sculpture required a lot of artistic license, Ms. Akamu said.

"This is not a recreation of a Leonardo da Vinci drawing," she said. "It's a tribute, an homage, a synthe-

sis."

Giangaleazzo Visconti di Modrone, a representative from the City Council of Milan, shaded his eyes and stared up at the horse, which is captured in mid trot, with one hind leg and one foreleg suspended in the air, nostrils flared, eyes glaring.

He said he recently viewed some of Leonardo's red-pencil drawings at a Venice exhibition. "It is very well made," he said of the sculpture. "It has the same strength, the same lines."

Nearby stood a patron of the project, Frederik Meijer, 79, who owns a chain of warehouse-style supermarket and retail stores and created the public sculpture gardens in Grand Rapids that will house the \$2.4 million copy.

He said the value of monumental works of art lay in their permanence. "I've got 121 stores and 80,000 employees, but our gardens and this sculpture will outlast all of that. The horse will be here 5,000 years from now. That's as eternal as you can get."

Although the foundry will only cast two 24-foot horses, they will make smaller bronze versions — ranging from 8 feet high ones costing \$380,000 to 5 inch ones for \$750 — to raise money for Leonardo da Vinci's Horse, Inc., which will support Renaissance studies and similar art projects.

Mona Scalzo, who grew up around the corner from the foundry and now lives a few miles away in Fishkill, said the sculpture was going to help elevate the reputation of Beacon. "Beacon is similar to New Jersey," she said. "It doesn't get any respect. But now everyone around the world will know us."

Three young girls from Poughkeepsie gawked at the horse while their father took pictures. Jacqueline Slater, 11, said of Leonardo: "He's the one who painted 'The Last Supper.'"

Her little sister, Meghan, 7, quickly corrected her: "No, that was Leonardo di Caprio."