

MonteCeceri

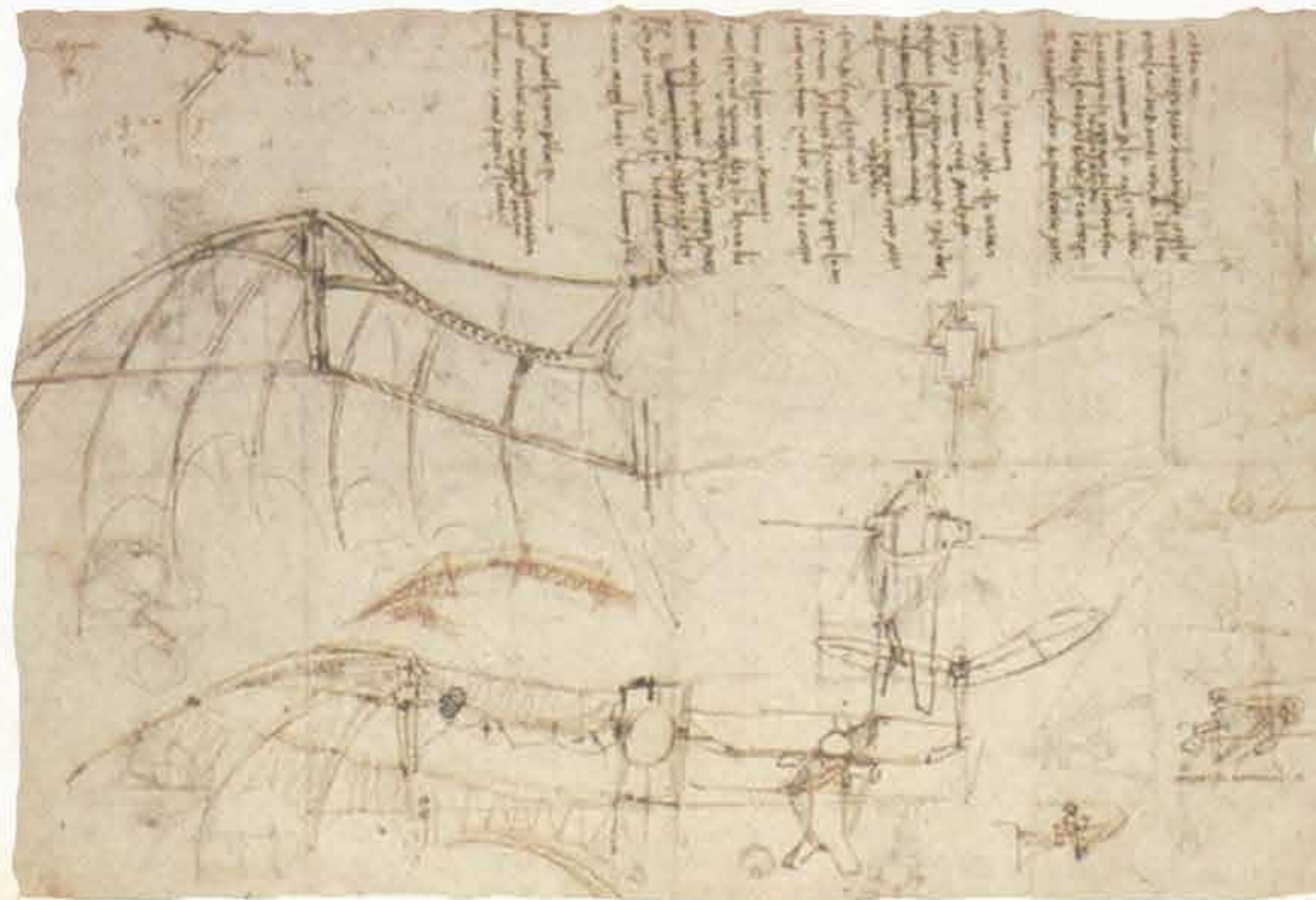
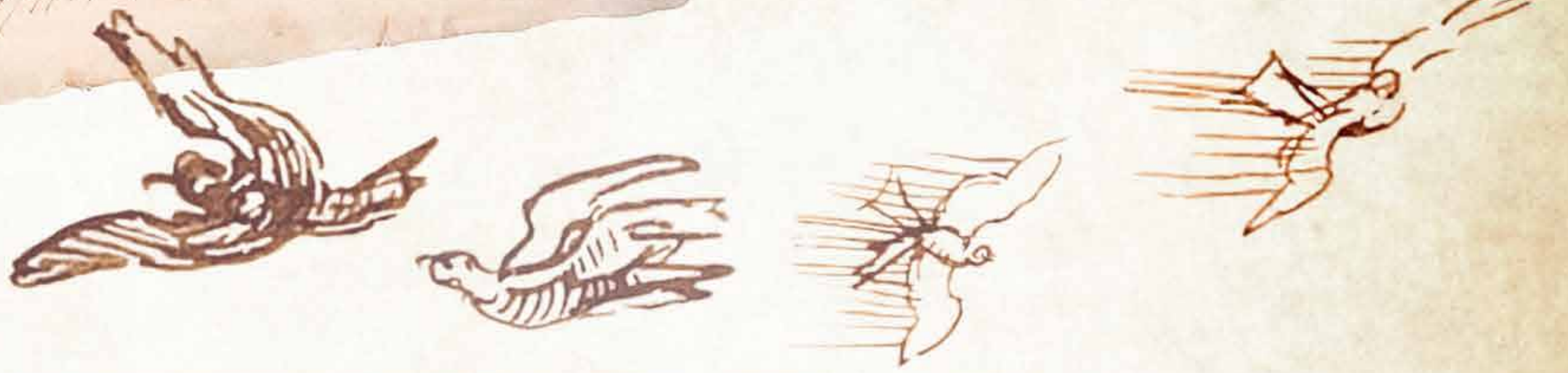
Piazzale Leonardo da Vinci

With a beating of wings,
Leonardo's greatest dream

Graphics by Arts & Altro PROJECT - Fabrizio Darmanin



There are many drawings by Leonardo of the flight of birds and schematics of mechanical wings capable of supporting a man's weight. Among the texts and drawings of his Codex "hides" the design of Leonardo's most advanced flying machine, consisting of two large skin-covered wings to be operated with pedals and levers named after the bird which he describes having observed: the "Red Kite": "a bird of prey I saw on my way to Fiesole".



Monte Ceceri has gone down in legend as the launch site for the "testing" of the "flying machine" conceived by Leonardo. More of a hill than a mountain, it so named because in the past it was frequented by swans; which, thanks to the protuberance on their beaks, Florentines called "ceceri" (from cece - meaning chickpeas). Tommaso Masini, also known as Zorastro da Peretola, was the courageous collaborator who, in 1505 agreed to pilot the device designed by his friend. Leonardo's fundamental insight was that air is compressible and thus exerts a resistance that can support a weight: "for these reasons man with his great, mechanical wings will be able to press against the resistance of the air and winning he will be able to subjugate and rise above her."

The machine, according to legend, seemed to glide for 1000 meters before landing abruptly in the area today called Largo Leonardo da Vinci near the curve of the Regresso. It was the first flight experiment to have been documented (by Leonardo himself) in the "Codex of Flight", a manuscript that can be considered as the sum of Leonardo's thoughts, not only on flight.

"For once you have tasted flight, you will walk the earth with your eyes turned skywards, for there you have been and there you will long to return."

"The human bird shall take his first flight, filling the world with amazement, all writings with his fame, and bringing eternal glory to the nest whence he sprang."

These are the two most famous quotes from Leonardo Da Vinci, on his greatest dream: flight.

