

ART APPRECIATION

The Art Appreciation group has existed in many different formats since it started in March 2019.

Over the autumn and winter months we decided to try out a Zoom format and for those that attended, it worked well. However, in April we decided to try out a live session in a new venue at Lower Holker Village Hall. A few old faces returned but sadly several who had been regulars didn't make the group presentation of St Ives artists.

The May meeting was a coach trip to Leicester Art Gallery to see several of their permanent collections which are of international status. The German Expressionist collection comes from a wartime friendship and the vision and commitment of curators and directors with more recently received bequests and gifts. A whole room with interactive displays and print guides supported the clearly presented groupings of artists who come under the general umbrella of German Expressionism. What seemed to stand out so clearly was the overwhelming gloom of the era that all the artists were living through. Agony, suffering and despair featured in many works, as well as lighter themes such as coastal landscapes for those artists who were able to find country and seaside retreats, away from the economic and political instability of pre World War One Germany until 1937, when Hitler confiscated many works by artists who he considered to be against the prevailing ideology of National Socialists. This exhibition was known as the Degenerate Art Exhibition. The other significant collection was a room donated to Picasso's ceramics. This was donated by Richard Attenborough.

Having driven through a succession of downpours on our way, the weather cleared up and we were able to have a quick lunch in the sun.

Our next port of call was the Ikon Gallery in Birmingham, which was hosting the first ever exhibition of Carlo Crivelli, an Italian Renaissance painter of religious and devotional work.

Several of the works had been panels of altarpieces but with new framing, they were able to stand alone. The Church in the fifteenth century was the main patron for artists but whilst Crivelli's work always makes reference to religious events or saints, a defining feature of his work was the marriage of real life and sacred life.

The arrangements with Heron travel were impeccable, and although it was a long day it was both enjoyable and stimulating. A good day was had by all.