AIWAV Meeting April 2025

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Our regular monthly meeting, always held on the second Tuesday of the month at Castello 925, took place on 8th April. It started with a brief chat about the upcoming Leadership elections - which positions will be available and that more information will be sent out to members this month with a Q&A session at May's meeting.

Those present were then very fortunate to be able to listen and engage with a presentation by member Leah regarding her Phd thesis subject - the study of which being what brought her to Venice. Leah started with an introduction to the history of Byzantium, centred on Constantinople. This segued nicely into the relationship, both cultural and political between Venice and that great city of the later Roman empire. It is impossible not to talk about this subject without referencing the Seige of 1204, part of the Fourth Crusade, where the Venetians 'encouraged' the French led crusaders to stop off at Constantinople where they subsequently sacked and robbed the city of many important art and architectural artifacts.

The talk then moved onto the relationship between Venice and the islands of the Aegean/Adriatic that have been part of the Serenissima on and off throughout her long history along with the effect of the Great Schism in Christian faith between the Catholic and Orthodox churches. This has led to very different stylistic and functional artistic elements in both religious faiths and Leah explained how her interest lies in the itinerant nature of the Greek artists of Crete, the influences on them from both East and West and possibly how the two artists she is focusing on are part of a continuum of evolving creative styles rather than the more accepted orthodoxy that the movement from Byzantium to Post Byzantium represents some kind of distinct, artistic revolution.

It was very cool to see various images of Venetian art and architecture in this context and to learn a little more about what you might see in the Chiesa San Giorgio dei Greci and its attendant museum - prompting a request to accompany Leah to the museum in future along with the upcoming El Greco exhibition at the Palazzo Ducale. The evening finished with a few people going for a meal locally to digest a fully immersive artistic evening.

Carlo Crivelli, The Lamentation Over the Dead Christ, 1485, Museum of Fine Arts Boston