

Table 3: Themes- Ingredients, mechanisms, outcomes and engagement preferences of digital arts and culture for mental health in young people

	Themes	Description	Exemplary Quotes	Participant (pseudonym, age, sex, ethnicity, occupation)
Benefits of Online	Flexible engagement	Can be accessed regularly, remotely, and on demand	However, the important thing is having something that you can just access when you need it.	Alex, 20, non-binary, White, student
	Diverse content	Content from around the world and from different global cultures and period of history	You don't have to go to the place. You can watch it whenever you want. You can watch something in a different country that is at a different time[zone]. It has added value.	Jake, 24, male, White, employed full-time
	Stories and depth of commentary	More detailed descriptions of the humans behind the art and an increased depth and breadth of commentary.	I liked that online people can take you through and explain things a little more as I felt more connected to it. I liked knowing why paintings were made.	Mia, 20, female, White, student
Engagement preferences	Regular	Regular engagement with frequency and timing managed by the individual to help them form a routine and add structure to their day	The more you're doing it regularly the more your anxiety doesn't build up again so it's good to keep using it.	Layla, 20, female, White, student
	Familiarity	Introduction at an earlier stage	We should promote [online cultural content] more in schools. Not everyone has parents that are interested in culture. Getting them interested from an early age could help them develop a lifelong interest which in turn would benefit them.	Abi, 20, female, White, student
	Not therapy 'for mental health'	Can be put off by content marketed as being therapy specifically for mental health and wellbeing, such as 'mindfulness'	Personally I don't find mindfulness really helpful. Perhaps if it was something more general that I was interested in that was targeted in mental health I would be interested.	Layla, 20, female, White, student
	Substantial	Engaging with substantial deep content (rather than brief content or clips)	The content helps me to be calm. It's about zoning out of your mind-set and calming down	Alex, 20, non-binary, White, student
	Optional contribution/ co-production	Optional interaction with the content and co-production opportunities	Enhancing the content can be more fun and also more informative. You wouldn't just stare at the picture but be more involved or more absorbed. A lot of culture has been lost through this. Some people there are now taking action and taking ownership of their heritage. I see this as very positive. It is them turning over information which is commonly perceived as true.	Jo, 24, non-binary, White, student
Ingredients	Human Stories	Engaging stories about people who they could relate to. Stories about people facing challenges such as not fitting in, mental health difficulties or facing transition. Importance of diversity and historic context in being able to transcend time and place and provide a sense of perspective	How they overcame challenges is important, just as much as hearing about their success. I don't think it's helpful to hear about good things about someone as it's not an accurate perception of their life. Even if they have been really successful they will have had challenges at some point and it's important to hear about that.	Layla, 20, female, White, student
	Alternative viewpoints	Viewpoints of different people (need not be 'live') from a wide variety of people, not necessarily famous people or professionals.	Both expressing your views and hearing other people's views is helpful. It is also good to have diverse views... Most of the time, your social circle shares the same views as you but I think it's also good to hear opposing views so you can question your own views.	Jake, 18-24, male, White, employed full-time
	Diversity	Need for representation of a variety of people from different places and periods in history with representation of different ethnicities, gender identity and sexual orientation	Sometimes when I am in a museum like the Ashmolean and I see fewer people around Asian and Indian art, it feels personal. Representation in art is important as it shapes how you perceive it. I always feel really moved when I see representation of Indian people because it is so rare. It's easier to find online. We feel connected to art and artists that represent things that we can relate to. I remember my brother was once so affected by seeing a painting with south Asian people in it that he took a picture of it.	Nina, 20, female, Asian/British, student
Mechanisms (through Human Connection)	Relatability	Importance of being able to relate to people in stories (eg artists) on a human level	The hook could be just everyday information about people. How other people live and day to day life. Its immediately relatable to me because that's my life.	Luke, 22, male, White, employed full-time
	Reflection	Using the opportunity of engaging with other peoples experiences and viewpoints to reflect on your own internal experience	Sometimes hearing what others are feeling helps you to think about your own thoughts and feelings and helps you to empathise with others too.	Kate, 21, female, White, student
	Perspective	Using the opportunity of engaging content from different global cultures and periods of history to bring a sense of perspective to ones own personal struggles	It helps relate it to yourself and in some way either empathise with the people at the time or give you some kind of perspective in your life. For example, looking at [cultural] things like the plague and thinking of other people that have experienced a similar kind of pandemic and thinking we will be okay. It's not the end; knowing it has happened before.	Kate, 21, female, White, student
	Exploration and discovery	The feeling of exploring and getting 'lost', as one would in a gallery, allowing serendipitous discovery of lost or hidden stories or other content	I like the journey of hunting something down and searching it myself rather than instantly finding it or being handed it really easily.	Abi, 20, female, White, student
	Learning	Learning applied to both art and culture but also about the way other people respond to challenges	It's about learning new things. I'm a quite curious person. I get to see things that I don't normally see.	Alex, 20, non-binary, White, student
	Creativity	Being inspired to be creative oneself or witnessing creativity in others that you connect with	Creativity can express things in a way that therapy can't always do.	Abi, 20, female, White, student
	Escapism	Being able to use stories to imagine being in a different context	I find that it is a form of escapism. When you watch a play you are watching other people's lives and perspectives.	Nina, 20, female, Asian/British, student
Outcomes	Reduce negativity	Disruption of negative thought patterns by engaging with different stories and viewpoints that differ from your own	I tend to think in black and white and have polarising thoughts. Doing these things gives me another way of thinking.	Alex, 20, non-binary, White, student
	Lift mood	Engaging with arts and culture can serve to increase positive affect	I just think we need to see more content that makes us happy and smile to lift our mood in that moment, and just be a remind that we don't have to feel sad or stuck in the mind-set we are in.	Abi, 20, female, White, student
	Calming	Feelings of calm and help with insomnia	Dark emotive imagery can be calming. It can show darkness that perhaps the artist felt or that others relate to and feel that you are not alone in sometimes having those feelings. You step out of yourself, which helps to make things that are currently going on in your life not seem so bad.	Nina, 20, female, Asian/British, student
	Proactivity	Feeling more proactive to do something creative or motivated for social activism	If you have done something nice it can be uplifting and inspire you to do other things that day. It can make you feel more motivated and proactive.	Eve, 21, female, White, student