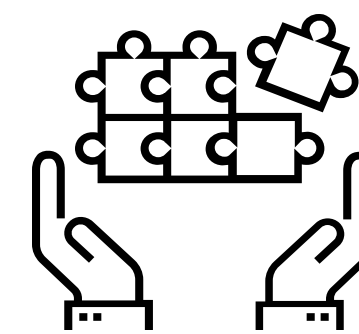


SOW
Engagement
Connection

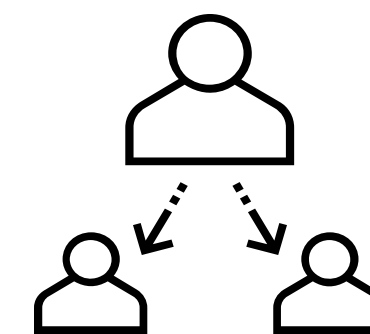
The young producer programme has been established to build the skills of young artists into audience focussed art producers, whilst increasing the relevance of cultural opportunities for young people, particularly those based within March. 20Twenty Productions supported two young producers to develop and deliver programmes of activity whilst working towards the Gold Arts Award.

Young producer Nicola Baxter was commissioned to develop her ongoing artistic themes into a co-produced series of workshops across Easter half term with a group of young people identifying as female. Tagged and Filtered was a series of workshops developing photography skills through the exploration of identity, selfies, online safety and engagement to inform a new interactive digital exhibition. This mentoring project was to develop Nicola's work further through an audience focussed approach.



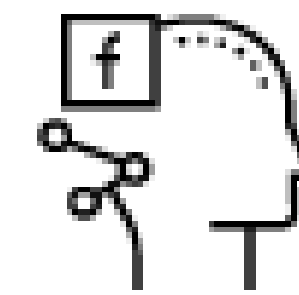
13

PARTICIPANTS
aged 13-25



240

ENGAGEMENTS



18

ONLINE
CONTRIBUTORS

TAGGED AND
FILTERED
PROJECT

Young Producers Programme

MarketPlace has been working in Partnership with 20Twenty Productions C.I.C who use creativity and participation to build essential life skills in young people and provide mentoring and career opportunities for them within the creative sector. The Young Producers Programme saw 20Twenty Productions identify and support two young artists to develop leadership skills through codesign activity for and with young people.

"I've always been interested in that threshold between online space and real space but it's really hard to get valuable engagement with people online. They don't want to join in stuff if they don't know what it is.

I started it originally as part of Peterborough presents – they take selfies and interact with the exhibition in real life and encourage them to share and use hashtags for a record and they might get involved online later on. I was trying to do a similar thing here but meeting them in person, then sharing stuff online."

- Nicola Baxter, Young Producer



Due to national lockdown restrictions, a short recruitment drive was undertaken for the workshops to take place daily, online throughout the Easter holidays. 20Twenty productions posted 7 times on Facebook about the project, engaging interactions from 7 different people and promoting activity to their audience of 1100 followers.

The workshops would have an am and pm session and covered a different daily theme within the context of online engagement and content generation; accompanying activity were daily selfie challenges on the project's Facebook page which resulted in a further 22 young people engaging with activity from the 75 people following the account.

Workshop themes included:

- Cyberbullying
- Hashtags
- Identity through make-up and style
- Beauty standards and filters
- TikTok dances
- Art analysis
- Using and applying apps to images
- Current affairs and making scrub bags for nurses

"They are more drama and music based, they've been enjoying it. Most of them said oh we didn't take art for GCSE because they thought it would be full-on and wasn't sure they would be good enough."

- Nicola Baxter, Young Producer - reflecting upon their visual arts experience

Delivering in an online space compared to an the in-person workshop has identified learning and planning in delivering activity with young people in digital workshops. Identifying and supporting participation needs can be harder as it's easier for participants to disengage and not participate.

"One thing that's limiting is in person if they aren't engaging as deeply or meaningfully you can have more of a one to one with them whereas some of them...for example in the session we did with the make-up, one participant didn't feel comfortable so rather than dm-ing me to let me know she just left the call. If I'd have known that I'd have encouraged her to join in in her own way, to do whatever feels comfortable and that there is no pressure if you're not feeling it that day. It's definitely a learning curve."

- Nicola Baxter, Young Producer - reflecting on the new skills needed to manage participation online

Maintaining flexibility in online delivery saw the workshop structure change. The plan was for setting a morning challenge for participants to complete off the Zoom and return together to share in an afternoon session. Instead, they took on activities together as a group, as they were suggested. Adapting to suit the delivery needs of the group has meant double the number of activities and creative challenges set whilst providing space for young people to lead their own learning.



This level of flexibility enabled young people to influence the content and feel valued in their contributions. Enabling the young people to share skills and knowledge with each other has enabled Nicola to consider how their experiences and the skills they have in turn shared with will inform her artistic output.

"I've prepared certain things, there have been other times they've individually taken a bit of leadership."

- Nicola Baxter, Young Producer

Creating a safe space for young people to feel confident to co-produce content also enabled them to have meaningful discussions about the topics being explored. The benefit of a Zoom workshop series meant that the young people could feel safe in their own spaces, feel secure in knowing they could leave at any time, which meant more active participation.

"Nicky responded to COVID with some excellent and engaging online workshops for teenagers which came just at the right time. It enabled young people to express themselves and not to feel constricted by other people's ideas of what they should do and who they should be."

- Katherine Nightingale, Creative Director, 20Twenty Productions CIC



"They're younger and used to having that online presence - they've got straight into doing it and we're doing it together. The workshops are even more interesting than how I'd planned it. If I'd done a workshop in person I'd have had more control over the outcome as I'd have bought all the materials and equipment. Improvising has allowed the outcomes to be more varied."

-Nicola Baxter, artist

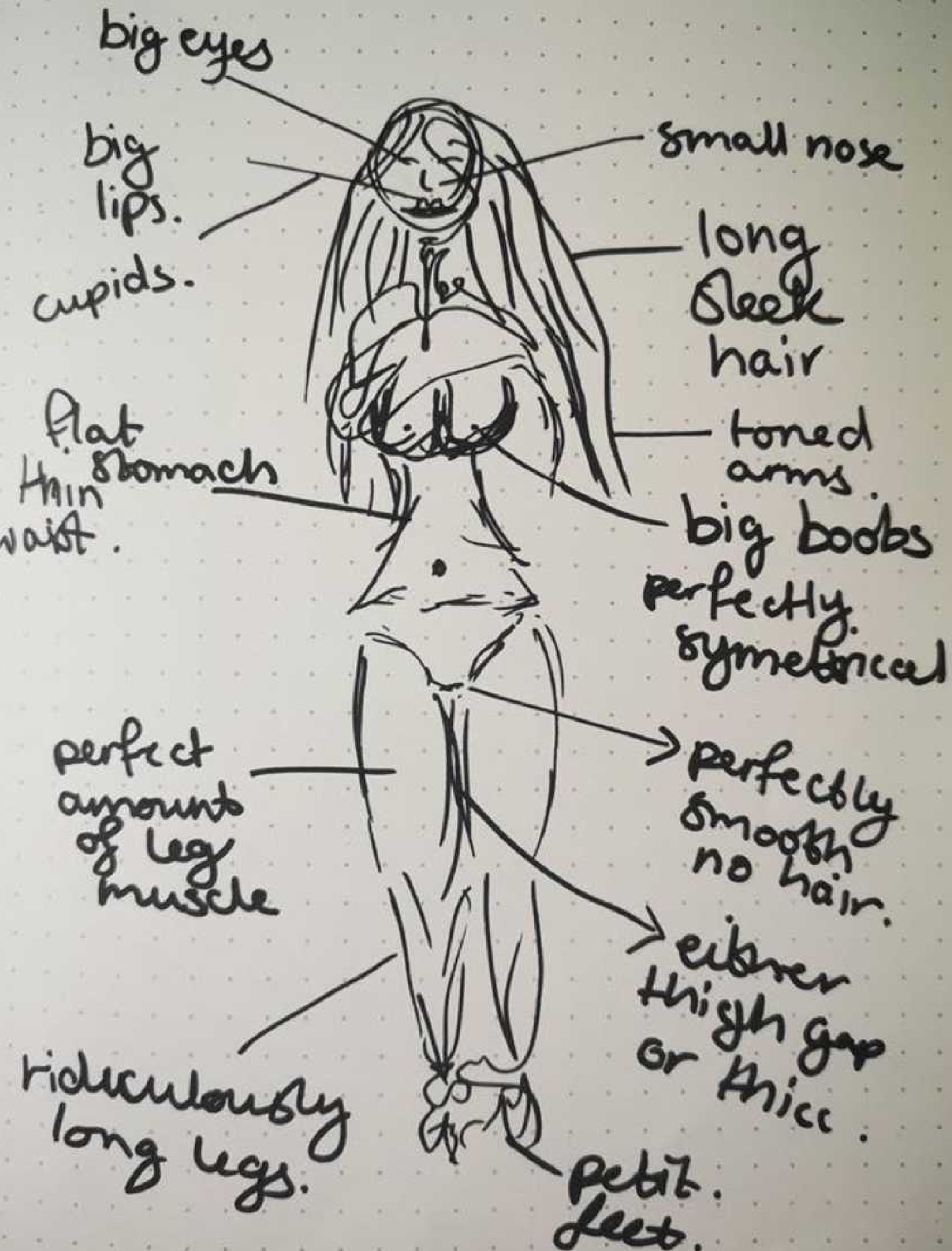


"Some of them do know each other in the core group of attendees, yet they've never met me in person but they're having open, challenging discussions. For them to be so open about it is a real achievement."

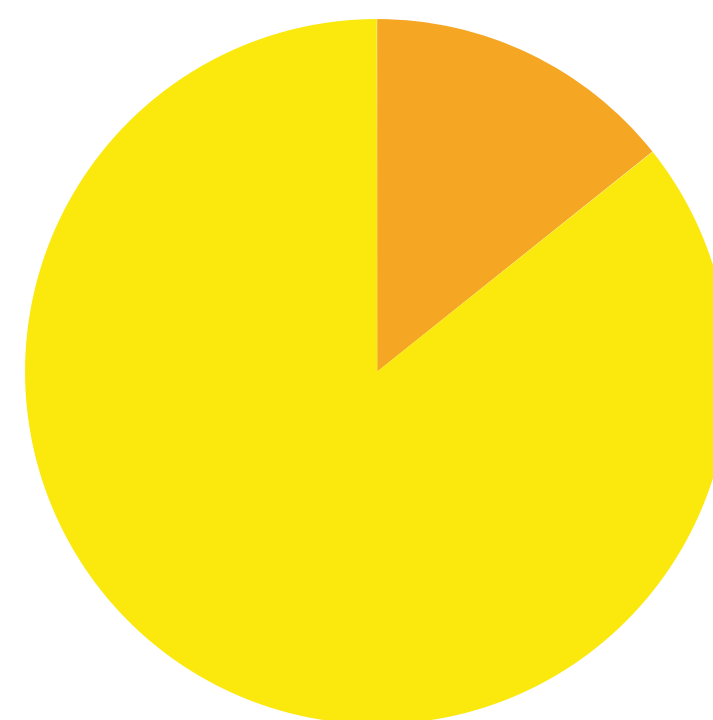
- Nicola Baxter, artist

The ability to leave if challenged too much out of their comfort zones was difficult to manage when they weren't yet confident or comfortable to express why. Managing the group required multiple devices and communication methods to remind them of attendance and ensure they could all access the zoom sessions without any issue. Monitoring and maintaining engagement levels through online workshops was a learning point for Nicola.

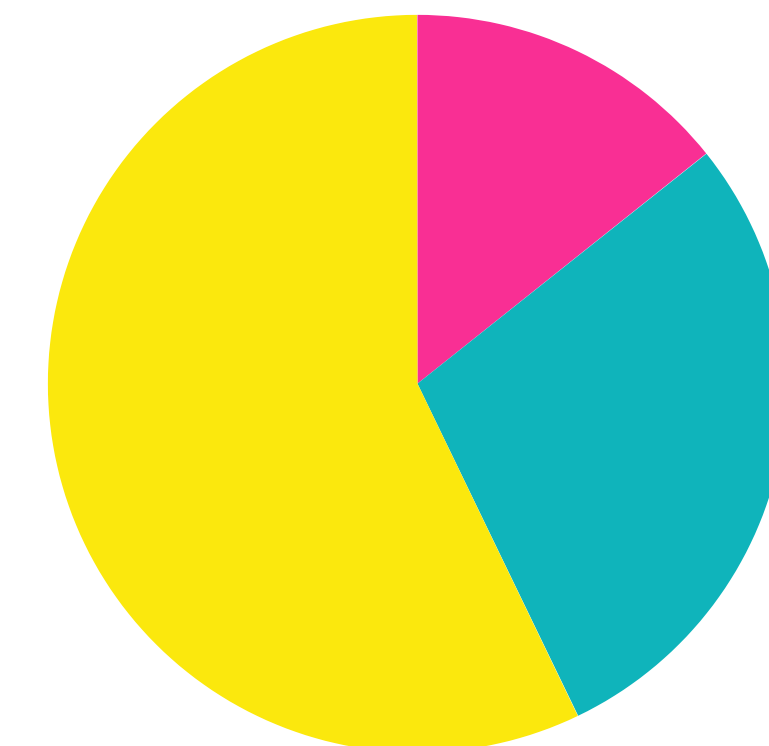
Young people are often perceived as being social media savvy as they are digitally native. However, as they should be 13 before having their own social profiles they have lower digital and emotional literacy in these landscapes. Exploring and elevating the visual and creative potential of these platforms and apps they can use empowered them to have a different relationship to art and culture.



Attendee cultural confidence and impact



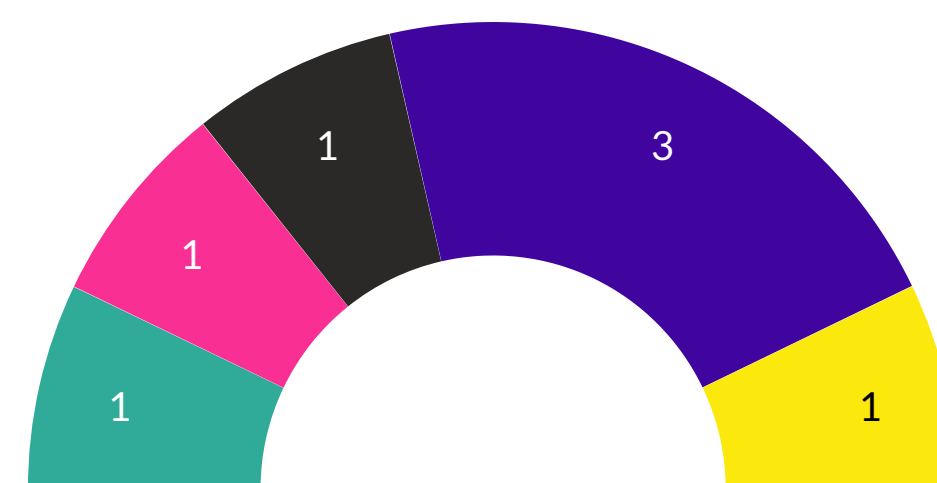
On a scale of 1-6 how important is it for you to be creative?



On a scale of 1 - 6 how engaged with the activities would you say you were?

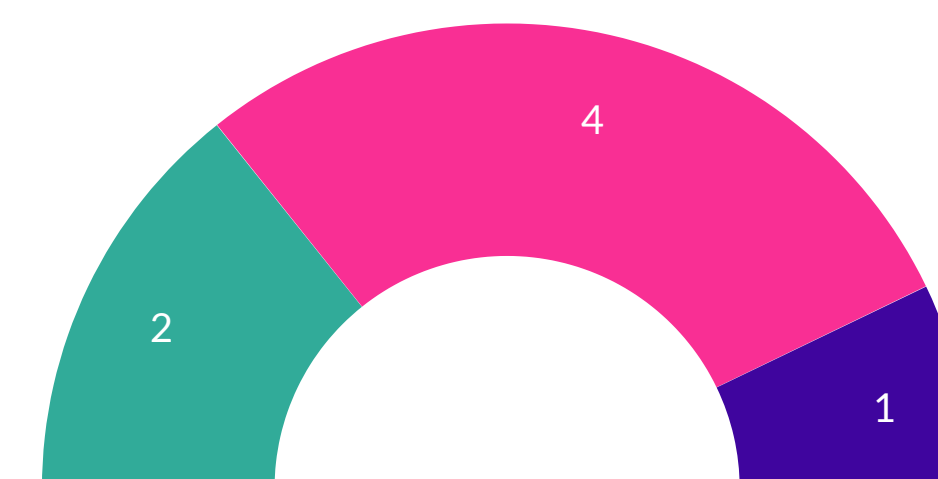
Attendees placed high importance on being creative, with high levels of engagement, which is unsurprising for a self-elected sign-up activity, promoted online. The group already have high aspirations from higher education, drama school, run their own businesses, teaching, travel and visiting galleries and museums. The depth of engagement and the well being gained from being a part of something with other people is a reflection upon the quality of the offer. None of the attendees had participated in an online workshop before, and the technical nature of this, alongside new people was the source of anxiety for one regular attendee, however, the continued attendance resulted in improved confidence in this individual.

Taking part made me feel..



Inspired (14.29%) Anxious (14.29%)
 Creative (14.29%) Part of something (42.86%)
 Supported (14.29%)

This project was..



Different (28.57%) Interesting (57.14%)
 Fun (14.29%)

How, if at all, has the project inspired you?

"It has made me start some creative projects I otherwise would have put off for longer."

- Emma

"It's made me less self-restrained in talking about creativity and giving my opinions".

- Mignonne

"To do more art and it's helped me talk to my friends." - Skye

"Kickstarted other art projects. Talking to other participants about their art projects has inspired me to start painting and doing cross-stitch etc. I have also been involved in the creative selfie project that has been running alongside the workshops. This has boosted my confidence." - Suzy

"It has inspired me to believe in myself." - Lucy

"Has encouraged me to be more free and fun with my creations." - Rose

Golden Moments

The group universally stated that being a part of something, feeling supported, and enabled to undertake activity in front of others in a space free from judgement was the highlight of the workshops.

Unlocking creativity and providing a space to play were key factors in the enjoyment levels of the sessions.

"The best part of the project was feeling apart of a close tightknit group and just letting loose and having fun in these stressful times." - Lucy

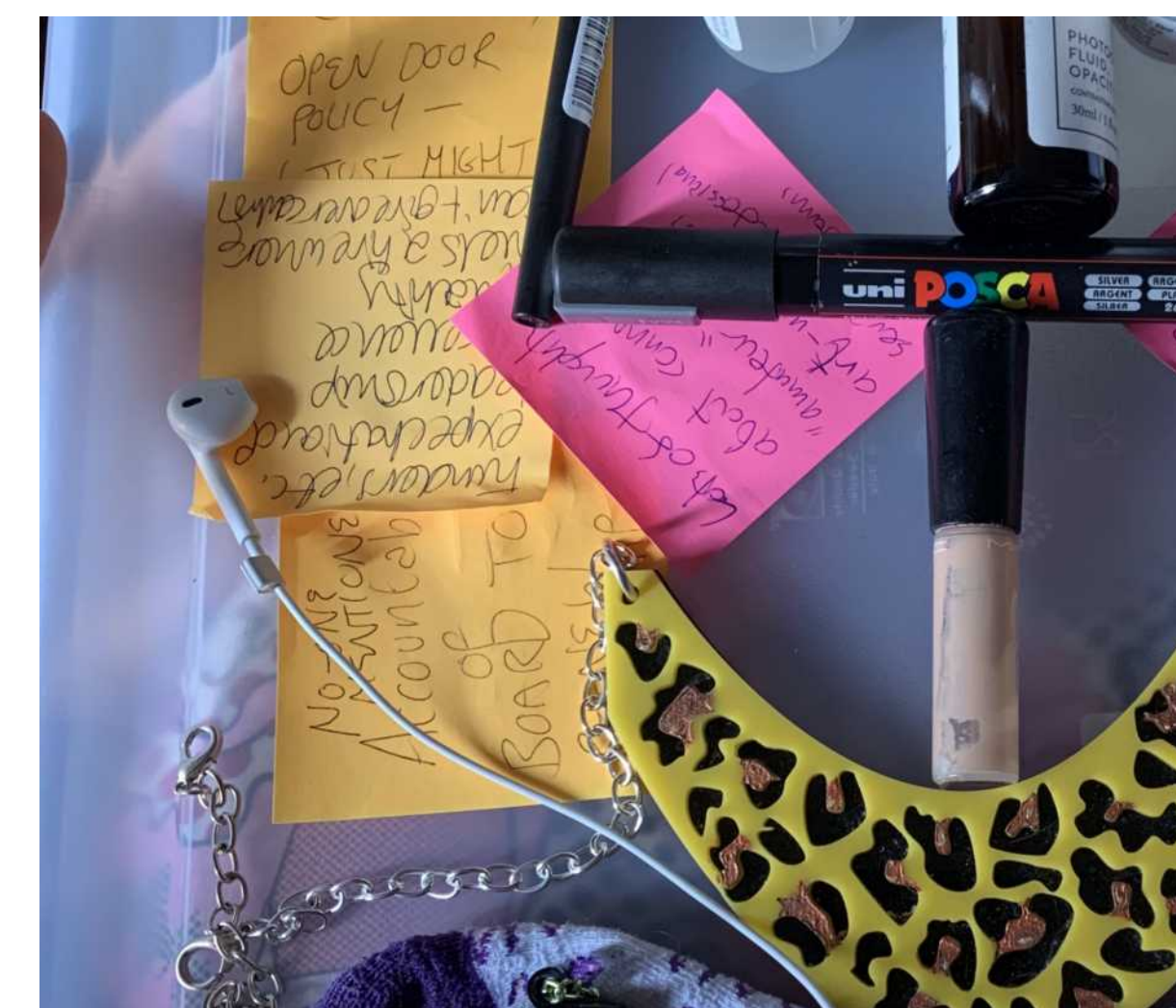
"Everyone talking to each other about their works - it was great that everyone was able to share as they were more comfortable than they may have been physically in a group of strangers."

- Rose

"The workshop I liked best was the makeup one because I feel like no other person has ever encouraged us to present ourselves and express ourselves through makeup." - Nia

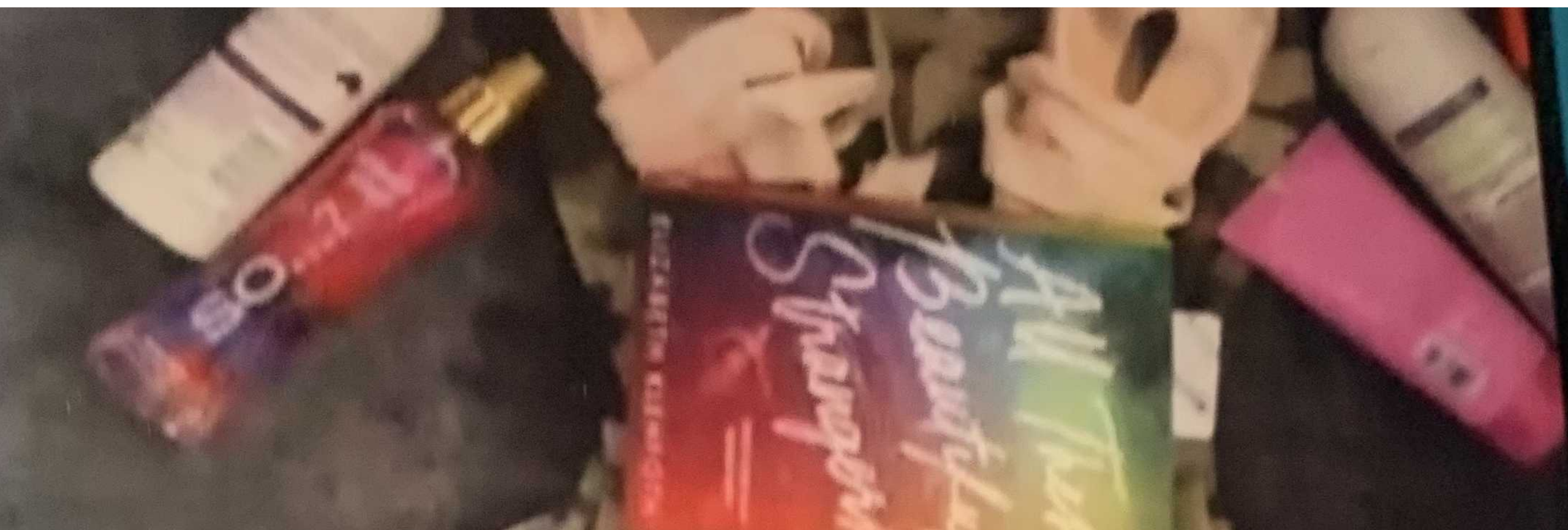
All participants universally stated they would continue to use the skills they had learned in the sessions. The themes explored with practical skills and digital discoveries enabled the participants to also learn something about themselves.

"I learned to love myself just the way I am and not change myself for anyone." - Lucy

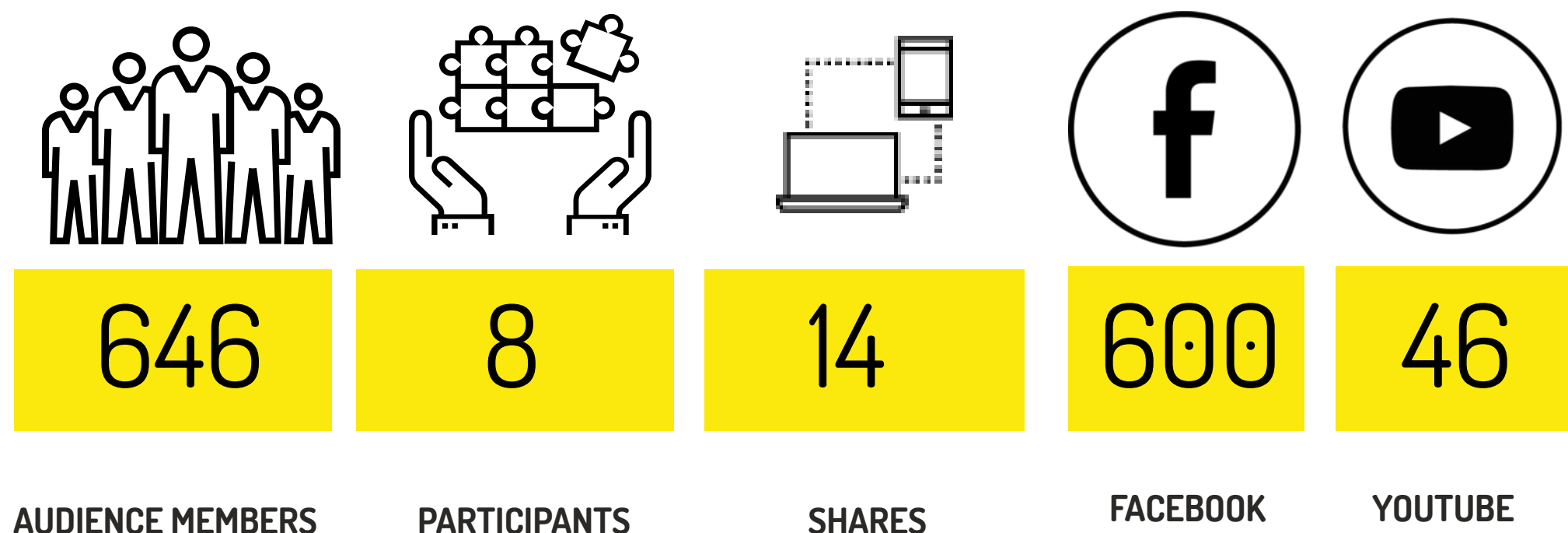


"The selfie challenges every day have kind of encouraged me to take more pictures, especially editing them and kind of take the opportunity to capture moments I wouldn't already capture. I was inspired by the workshops that there was more than just one way of taking a picture and there is one more than just one definition of art."

-Nia



Viral



Young Producer Libby Ward was the second commission in this partnership. Libby has a BTEC in performing arts and had been a performer with the Connexions youth group in March. Libby's proposal was a theatre in education offer exploring mental health issues in local schools. This project plan changed in response to the pandemic and through inspiration from a shift to digital productions.

"Pre-pandemic had the idea of creating a piece with young people and it went up in flames when the pandemic hit. I watched loads of digital performances and thought why can't I do the same thing, making it safe and sure the cast couldn't mix, with every performing on their own."
 - Libby Ward, Young Producer



Working with a youth theatre group, Libby developed the script and production of a series of filmed monologues responding to life during a pandemic.

This resulted in a Facebook streaming of the final film to an audience reach of 600 on the 20Twenty Facebook page, and the film continues to be viewed on YouTube.

Libby received mentoring from a theatre-maker through the Library Presents programme of theatre in libraries. This provided script writing support and professional directorial and production support to realise the piece as a film.

"I knew I was going to do something online, wanted to see how young people could do it, it's always professionals. I did research and so I took part in an online performance with a Peterborough company and going through that process from start to finish made it easier for me to see what did and didn't work." - Libby Ward, Young Producer

The show was co-produced with the young cast who had roles tailored to challenge their skills, and was consulted throughout the script and production development, ensuring feedback could be talked through. Managing the project and production with young people had its challenges from changing school schedules, mental health and production lighting needs for filming.

"Filming was one of the most hectic part of my life, ensuring two adults in the room every time for safeguarding, filming at different points around online school and for different light, everything changes - with school at random times or exams, mental health taking a toll and having to be as flexible as possible without destroying the schedule."

- Libby Ward, Young Producer

Supporting a young producer to make work with and for their peers enables more honest and authentic art experiences. This was particularly important as young people managed their own transitions with lockdown life.

"As a young artist we could grow together as a group, I was honest and said this is the first time I've done something like this. They were more comfortable telling me they didn't like it, some of them are older than me, and it meant more open communication. They weren't afraid to say they couldn't perform today, I haven't learned my lines can I do it tomorrow."

- Libby Ward Young Producer

Creating opportunities for young people to be creative on their own terms made a positive impact on their sense of wellbeing.

"They all thought it was a positive experience. It was something more cast and director group; they could mould the script and never had that experience. It gave them a purpose during the pandemic, kept everyone busy and doing something. There was a sense of pride when we saw the Facebook viewing figures it's more than you'd get out of an audience at the town hall."

- Libby Ward, Young Producer

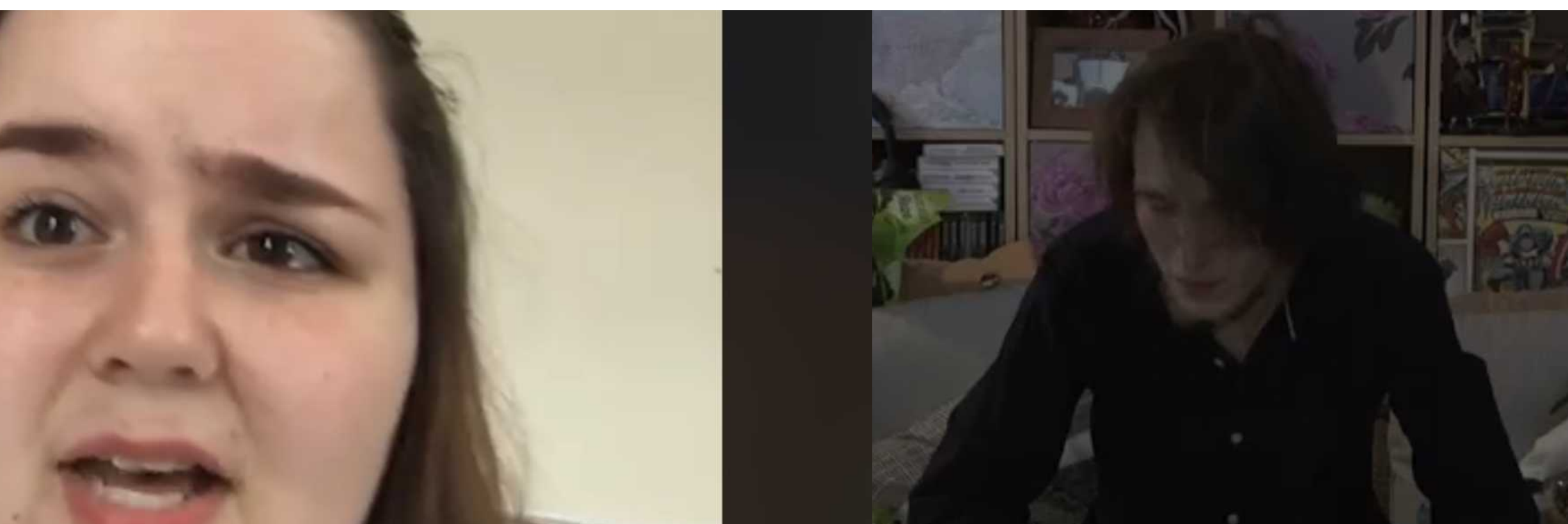
The completion of Gold Arts Award as part of the offer was to develop the skills and ambitions of Libby who used the qualification to support her University application.

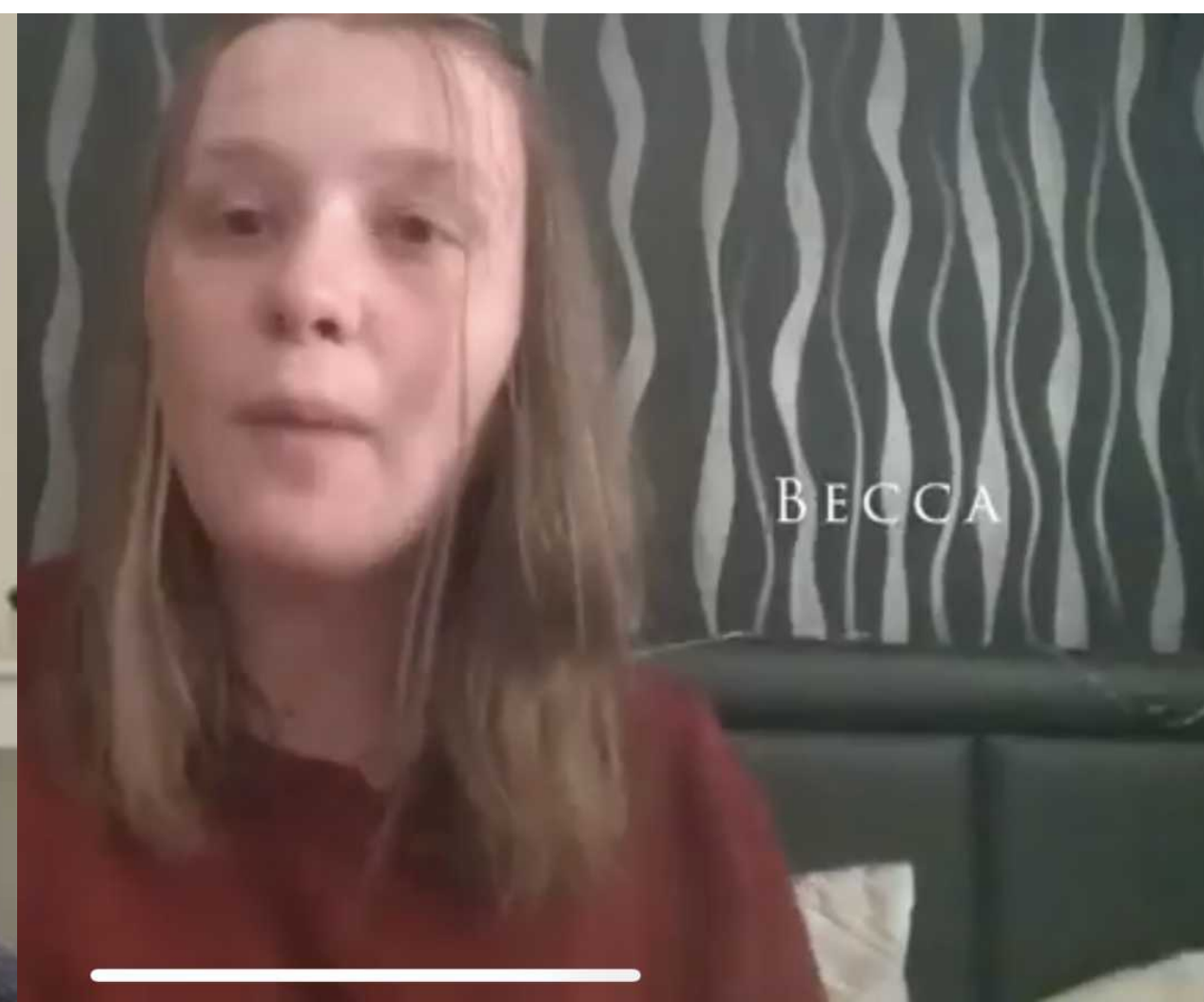
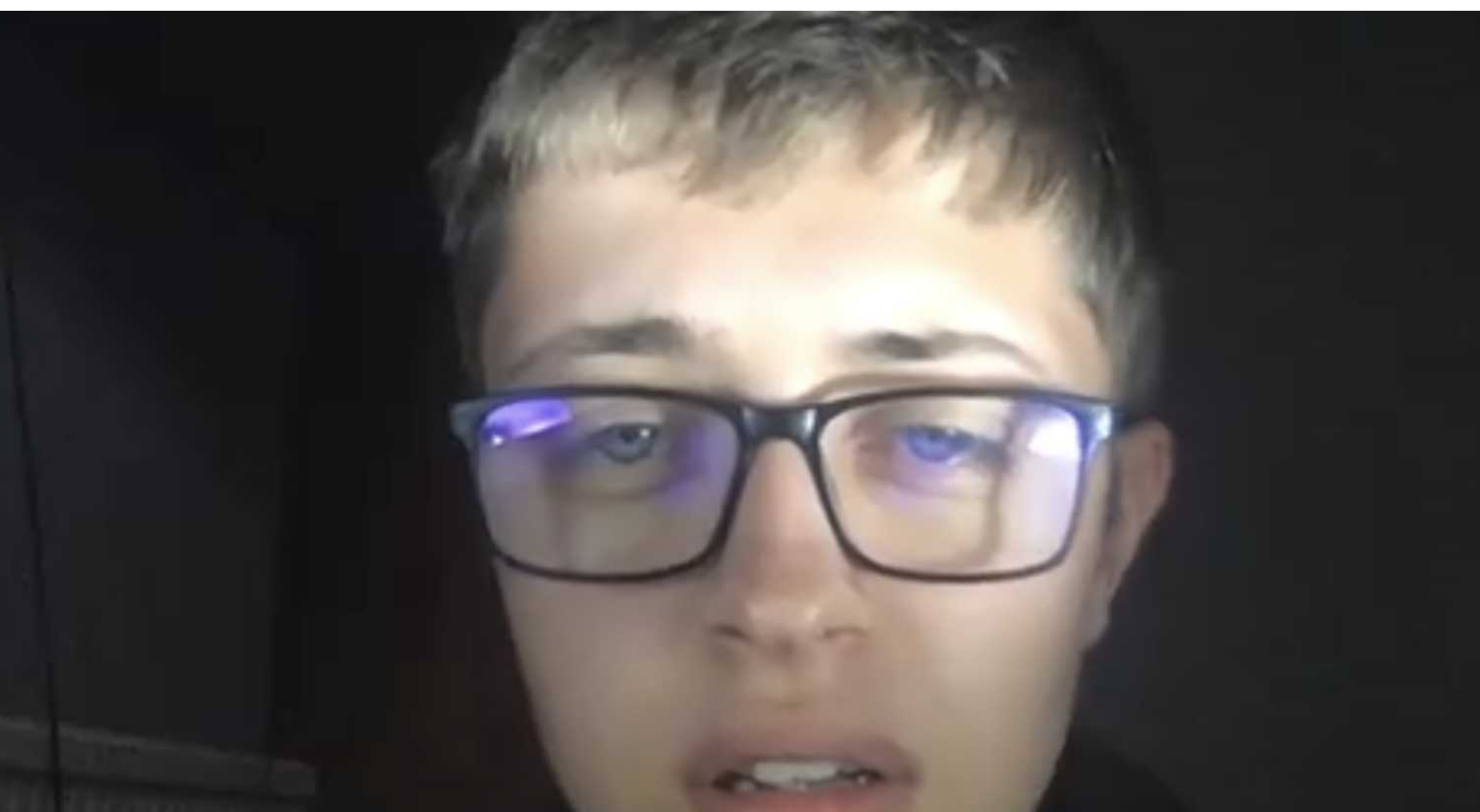
Developing young talent and youth cultural experiences through this model will feed into programme aims of raising youth aspirations and building the arts infrastructure through supporting the leadership development of emerging talent.



"I've learned more practical skills in terms of writing a script and managing people and a project than doing a level 3 performing arts at college; 16 UCAS is not enough recognition. It developed me a lot as a person - when university commented on it 'why are you putting this on your CV when you're doing science.' I told them science would be nowhere without creativity. It shows I can take the lead on my own projects, and I can create something from start to finish."

- Libby Ward, Young Producer





Of the initial preview audience, 28% completed a survey reflecting on the film. Of those that completed the survey, 88% were watching in support of one of the performers.

The audience for this piece of work came from a supportive network of those that had participated and therefore had high levels of cultural capital due to actively viewing other theatre performances online.

As the performers are a youth theatre group they are already actively engaged with arts and culture and have supportive families enabling them to pursue developing performance skills. This project enabled them to challenge and develop their skills in new ways through the digital delivery and output process.

However, the final piece could be used as a catalyst for conversations on the impact of lockdown and the pandemic on their wellbeing with other young people. This could enable the young producer to develop a TIE programme as part of her original proposal and increase the legacy of the work.

Rolling out digital outputs to a wider less engaged arts audience would enable other young people to experience their peers participating in such activity and feel motivated to get involved themselves.

Audience Feedback

The film either met or exceeded all expectations from the audience:

- 68% felt completely absorbed by what was happening
- 50% felt that it had made them think differently
- Everyone agreed it felt good to be sharing in the experience watching it air on Facebook
- 50% felt curious and inspired by the work
- 83% felt it was something new for this area and 50% felt it was something new to them
- 83% strongly agreed that art and culture is an important part of their lives
- 83% had watched theatre online this year
- 100% felt that there should be more opportunities like this for young people

Next steps

The Young Producers Programme has shown that investing in and supporting the skills of young artists to co-design with their peers creates a mutual sharing of skills and knowledge and increases the relevance of arts and cultural opportunities for this age group.

Art made by young artists for and with other young people creates authentic and positive engagement opportunities. Digital outputs from the body of work produced in this programme could be rolled out to a wider less engaged youth audience.

As one of the young producers completes their Gold Arts Award, this model has the potential to create a long term arts infrastructure by supporting young creative leaders and raising aspirations and ambition within a creative career.

Continuing this model in partnership with 20Twenty Productions enables clear pathways to support young people through creative opportunities locally. This will enable a new network of young arts and culture advocates to emerge and a pipeline to develop young cultural leaders. This has the potential to feed into or complement the Creative Collective model. As a companion model of The Creative Collective, it would ensure a youth voice in local programming and art production.

The biggest challenge from the project delivery was the open call out for participants through online channels. This is an issue for any open call out events that takes place online as attendees can participate from across the country. Whilst this enriches the experience for the participants, it doesn't meet the funding criteria of audience members from areas with low levels of engagement.

Managing the recruitment of active young people requires more targeted approaches through schools and young carer networks to ensure local young people with traditionally low arts engagement are participating. Establishing and promoting this as a supported cultural pathway for young people through local schools would help develop an appetite and audience for this type of programming and co-production of creative opportunities by and for young people.

“Having opportunities like the Young Producers Programme to be able to offer to young people in Fenland is rare, we were delighted to be able to support Libby and Nicky to develop their creative ideas. When COVID knocked us all off-kilter this really pushed the artists to think outside their comfort zones.

As an organisation that facilitates opportunities for young artists we learn so much from them, and this programme was no exception.

Thanks to MarketPlace for enabling all of us to continue to grow and learn.”

- Katherine Nightingale, Creative Director, 20Twenty Productions CIC

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Photography credits to:

- Participants and artists from the projects



We Are Frilly is founded on the principles of process-driven participatory practices that extend from co-designing on a project level, strategic planning and cultural accountability through creative evaluation.

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