

LEAD ARTIST

Jiahao Ji

CURATOR

Catherine Li

ART THERAPIST

Kavisha Dharia

WORKSHOP CO-FACILITATOR

Tracey Griffin

WORKSHOP COMIC ARTISTS

Alisha Lucia Davidson

Han Gunji

Sharon Lin

Anna Onni

Paula Sánchez Amador

Mo Morrell

WITH THANKS TO

National Lottery through Arts Council England

South East London Mind

Arts Network

Entelechy Arts

Mind in Kingston

Lewisham Arthouse

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Karl Xinghao Liang, installation technician

Aaron Anthony Marsh

Dien Berziga

Shellz Xiao

With sincere thanks to everyone above for their generous support, expertise and contributions to the development and delivery of *Healing Panels*.

For further information or arrange a group visit, please contact us at healingpanels@gmail.com



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



HEALING PANELS

CO-CREATE COMICS AS A SELF-CARE APPROACH

12–22 June 2026

Lewisham Arthouse

Healing Panels: Co-create Comics as a Self-care Approach is a free public exhibition and workshop programme exploring how comics, visual metaphor and art therapy can support self-care, reflection and the expression of mental health experiences.

The exhibition presents a series of single-panel comics co-created through artist-researcher **Jiahao (Jill) Ji**'s PhD research at Kingston University London. Working with people who have lived experience of mental health challenges and neurodivergent experiences, including anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, ADHD and autism, the project explores how visual metaphor and drawing can give form to personal experiences and open up new ways to express and understand them. The works were developed through a previous series of workshops led by Ji in collaboration with Mind in Kingston and Fusebox.

Alongside the comics, the exhibition includes selected research publications by Ji, introducing the theoretical context behind her co-creative method, a graphic novel documenting the co-creation process, and eighty hand-drawn sketches created by participants in previous workshops. The method has been developed through three years of doctoral research combining elements of Art Therapy and Narrative Therapy, particularly the stages of externalisation, deconstruction and reconstruction. These stages support participants to look at their experiences from a different perspective, to explore the stories they tell about themselves, and to imagine

new possibilities. Visual metaphor is central to this process. By turning feelings, challenges or inner experiences into images, participants are invited to give shape to what may feel abstract, hidden or hard to describe.

As part of the public programme, four live participatory workshops invite visitors to explore comics as a gentle form of self-care, reflection and creative expression. Open to all, the workshops offer a supportive space for people who may be navigating mental health challenges, as well as anyone interested in using drawing and storytelling to reflect on personal experience. Led by Jiahao Ji with Art Psychotherapist **Kavisha Dharia** and invited comic artists, each session will guide participants in creating their own short visual narratives.

Through the exhibition and workshops, *Healing Panels* creates a welcoming space for Lewisham's local communities and wider audiences. The programme opens up conversations between artists, art therapists, local organisations and the public, while exploring how visual storytelling can support everyday care. It moves creative and therapeutic tools beyond the clinic, into cultural spaces where they can be shared more openly.

The exhibition and public programme are curated by **Catherine Li**.

This programme is generously supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England.

ABOUT THE LEAD ARTIST

Jiahao Ji is a third-year PhD researcher at Kingston University London. Her research focuses on narrative and metaphor therapy through the development of a co-creative visual intervention method. She has led over 20 workshops in collaboration with charities including Mind in Kingston and Fusebox, as well as therapists across the UK, China and Australia. Her work has been presented at four academic conferences and has received recognition for its innovation and therapeutic potential.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Catherine Li is a South East London-based curator whose practice centres on site-specific exhibitions, public programmes, participatory art and curatorial publication. She approaches curating as a means of cultural creation and critical exchange, developing exhibitions as platforms for research, innovation and community-building. Li currently works in the Public Programme team at University of the Arts London and is Chapel Curator-in-Residence at Brompton Cemetery. Alongside these roles, she continues to curate exhibitions, publications and public programmes independently.

ABOUT THE ART THERAPIST

Kavisha Dharia is an art therapist and freelance graphic designer whose practice is shaped by an interest in creativity, emotional expression and the relationship between image-making and lived experience. Her training in Art Psychotherapy and counselling has informed her understanding of therapeutic boundaries, transference and reflective practice. Alongside her therapeutic work, Kavisha continues to work as a designer with organisations and small businesses across areas including mental health, care, sustainability and women's empowerment, bringing together visual communication with an empathetic, people-centred approach.

ABOUT THE WORKSHOP CO-FACILITATOR

Tracey Griffin is a practitioner whose work is shaped by both lived experience of the mental health system and her professional

practice supporting others. Her journey with art therapy approaches began through her own healing process, where creativity became a way to understand trauma, self-discovery and recovery. Tracey is passionate about using art-making as a supportive tool for processing difficult experiences, helping people recognise their strengths, abilities and inner resources. Through her work, she hopes to continue creating spaces where creativity can support healing, insight and connection.

ABOUT THE WORKSHOP COMIC ARTISTS

Alisha Lucia Davidson is an artist and illustrator currently based in South London. Her work is bold and empowering, focusing on themes of gender, the body and mental health. She has created zines and comics on many subjects, from an addiction to WebMD, to a fear of sleepovers, to somatic healing. Alisha primarily works with traditional mediums such as ink and acrylic gouache for her comics, before printing them with a risograph printer.

Han Gunji is a comic artist, illustrator and tattoo artist whose work uses comics to express personal narratives and process difficult feelings. Their long-form comic An Opening explores navigating the world and the self as a neurodivergent Asian trans person going through physical and emotional transitions. Han attended the Royal Drawing School's Drawing Graphic Narratives course, where they developed tools and techniques for visual storytelling and reflective image-making. They are interested in the healing qualities of artistic self-expression and have completed CPCAB-certified Level 2 and Level 3 counselling training, which they hope to bring into dialogue with their artistic practice.

Sharon Lin is a participatory artist specialising in illustration, comics and animation, with a particular interest in food and mental health. Her project A Cookbook for Sad People explores how cooking and illustration can come together to support mental health, and has been exhibited in multiple venues, including FUSEBOX Kingston. As part of her practice, Sharon has also collaborated with organisations such as the Foundling Museum, where she facilitated Play with Your Food, a series of crafting workshops that used hands-on making to create a playful environment for people to come together and socialise.

Anna Onni is a trainee dramatherapist currently studying on the MA Drama and Movement Therapy programme at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. Originally from Singapore, she moved to Lewisham in September 2025. Before training as a dramatherapist, Anna worked as a drama educator for five years. Finding visual languages and ways of telling stories is central to her facilitation and artistic practice, which includes co-created comics, illustration, zine-making workshops, live note-taking, writing and teaching. Current themes in her work include mental health, re-imagining queerness and climate grief.

Paula Sánchez Amador is a visual artist based in South East London. Her comic art brings together screenwriting and drawing to create stories and visual worlds inspired by everyday life. Her practice explores themes of home, belonging, nature, grief and mental health. Alongside her own work, Paula runs creative workshops that combine drawing exercises with storytelling prompts, encouraging participants to reconnect with their imagination and develop their own illustrated zines.

Mo Morrell is an illustrator and artist from South East London. They enjoy making short stories in the form of comics, often exploring psychology and moral questions. Mo graduated from London College of Communication in 2024 and has since worked freelance supporting art classes. They have also worked part-time as a Study Assistant at UAL, providing 1:1 support for students with disabilities.

PUBLIC PROGRAMME

There will be four free participatory workshops led by the artist-researcher and art therapist, with support from invited comic artists:

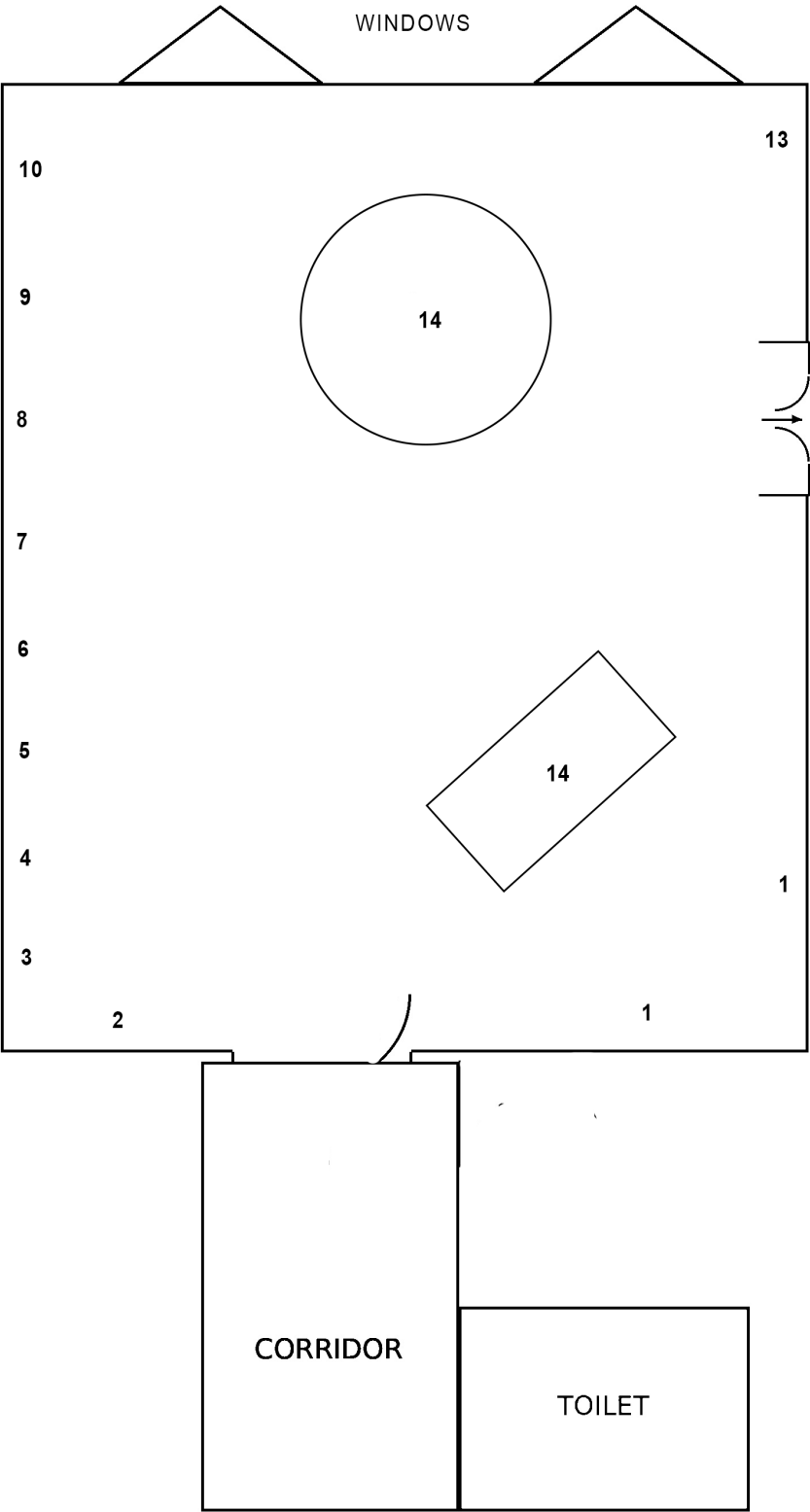
Saturday 13 June, 2–4pm
Sunday 14 June, 2–4pm
Friday 19 June, 2–4pm
Saturday 20 June, 2–4pm

Booking is essential. Please scan the QR code to reserve your place.



FLOORPLAN

	In what scene?			What happened before? (Reason)			My experience of it
	Relationship between you and the metaphor			What is going on?			My feelings about it
	How I interact with my metaphor			What will happen next?			



1
Workshop Archive (2023–2026)

Participant Drawings, Notes, and Comic Pages

This work brings together over eighty sheets of original material created by participants across more than twenty comic-making workshops conducted as part of this research project.

Produced during collaborative storytelling, drawing, and discussion activities, these pages document the diverse ways participants explored experiences of mental health, identity, illness experiences and everyday life through visual expression. Rather than presenting finished narratives, the archive preserves traces of creative processes, including sketches, notes, visual metaphors, comic drafts, and spontaneous reflections.

Collectively, these materials reveal the workshop as a space of dialogue, experimentation, and meaning-making, highlighting the role of collaborative creativity in the development of personal and shared narratives.

2
A Cyclic Journey of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (2024)
Digital Painting

This work was co-created by a participant and researcher Ji Jiahao, presenting a personal exploration of the participant's experience of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). The work provides a space for reflection, expression, and the reinterpretation of lived experience.

Through visual metaphor and comic-based storytelling, the work reflects the cyclical nature of obsessive thoughts, compulsive behaviours, and the emotional challenges associated with living with OCD. By translating these experiences into visual narratives, the participant offers insight into the repetitive patterns and psychological complexities of the condition.

3
Beans (2024)
Digital Comic

This work was co-created by participant and researcher Jiahao Ji.

4
The Anxiety Journey (2024)
Digital Painting

This work was co-created by a participant and researcher Ji Jiahao, presenting a personal narrative that explores the participant's anxiety condition and uncertainty about the future.

5
The Angry Kettle (2024)
Digital Painting

This work was co-created by a participant and researcher Ji Jiahao, presenting a deeply personal narrative of the participant's experiences of anger and anxiety.

6
Me and Myself (2024)
Digital Painting

This work was co-created by a participant and researcher Ji Jiahao, which explores a personal narrative of how the participant lives alongside depression in everyday life.

7
The Octopus (2024)
Digital Painting

This work was co-created by a participant and researcher Ji Jiahao, presenting a personal narrative that explores the participant's feelings of unease and anxiety following the breakdown of an intimate relationship.

8
The Turbulent Heart (2024)
Digital Painting

This work was co-created by a participant and researcher Ji Jiahao, exploring the participant's experiences of complex psychological trauma and mental illness.

9
PTSD – Videos That Never Stop Playing (2024)
Digital Comics

This work was co-created by a participant and researcher Ji Jiahao, exploring the participant's lived experience of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). By translating these experiences into visual narratives, the participant conveys the emotional and psychological challenges of living with PTSD.

10
Generational Shame (2024)
Digital Comic

This work was co-created by a participant and researcher Ji Jiahao. The participant comes from the Uyghur community in China, incorporates the Uyghur language and script into the narrative to reflect on experiences of shame, gendered expectations, and identity formation within specific cultural and linguistic contexts.

11
Shared Minds (2026)
Comics Publication

Available to read and purchase in the exhibition

Shared Minds documents the collaborative comic-making processes developed between participants and researcher Ji Jiahao during a series of workshops exploring mental health experiences.

Bringing together co-created comics, conversations, drawings, and reflections, the publication examines how mental health narratives emerge through collaboration. It highlights the negotiations, misunderstandings, hesitations, and moments of shared understanding that shape the telling of lived experience.

12
Selected Research Publications (2023–2026)
Conference Papers and Proceedings

The papers presented here were published and presented at a range of international academic conferences during the course of this research.

Each publication focuses on a different dimension of the project, addressing its theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches, creative practices, and research findings. Collectively, these papers trace the development of the research and demonstrate how its contributions have been discussed and disseminated across multiple academic contexts.

13
Comic Library Corner

This corner brings together a selection of self-published comic books by the workshop comic artists.

These books are for display only. Please contact the exhibition team for further information.

14
Workshop Tables

These tables support the four public workshops taking place during the exhibition.

They also hold a selection of reading materials, including Jiahao Ji's comic publication Shared Minds and her academic essays.