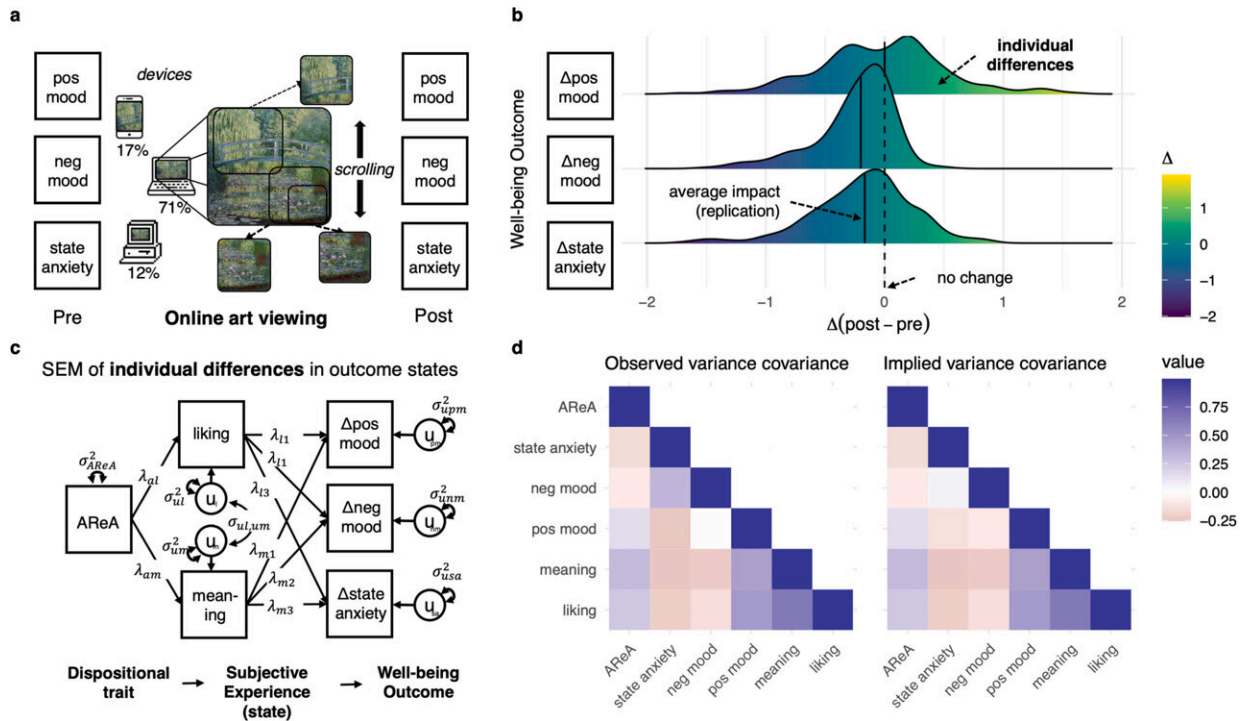


# Online art for real-world well-being

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Graphic Abstract of Design and Methods. A), well-being outcomes were measured before and after interacting with a Google Arts and Culture exhibition of Claude Monet's The Water-Lily Pond (1899, The National Gallery, London). Most users opted to complete the survey and view the art with a laptop computer over smartphones or desktop computers. B), the pre-and post-measures of each well-being outcome were converted into a change score, which is plotted in a frequency distribution to show the individual differences in the impact of art viewing. The dotted line represents the no-change line at zero, and the dark solid line indicates the mean for each outcome distribution. The portion of the distribution on the right for positive mood (left for neg. mood and anxiety) indicates improvements in these psychological states. C), this Structural Equation Model was pre-registered to test the impact of trait AReA on well-being

outcomes mediated by subjective experience states. D), the observed and implied variance-covariance matrix, which visualize the comparison of the predicted model with the data collected. Credit: *Computers in Human Behavior* (2023). DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2023.107764

A recent study conducted by researchers from the University of Vienna, the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, and the Max Planck Institute for Empirical Aesthetics sheds light on the potential of online art viewing as a tool for improving well-being.

The study was led by University of Vienna researchers MacKenzie Trupp and Mathew Pelowski and involved 240 participants who viewed an interactive Monet Water Lilies art exhibition from Google Arts and Culture. Results showed significant improvements in mood and anxiety after just a few minutes of viewing, highlighting the positive impact online art viewing can have on [mental health](#).

Interestingly, the study also found that some people are more receptive to art than others and were able to benefit more. This advantage could be predicted using a metric called "aesthetic responsiveness," a personal trait developed by one of the team members. The researchers found that these additional well-being benefits reported by esthetically responsive people were largely driven by meaning-making and pleasure felt during the art viewing.

Overall, this study offers evidence for the potential of online art interventions to have a detectable positive effect on well-being. The results published in *Computers in Human Behavior* highlight the potential for utilizing the embeddedness of digital art media in users' lives, allowing for bite-size art experiences on demand, ready to shift them from the every day into therapeutic states of pleasure and meaning-

making.

First Author Trupp suggests that "this study leads to an excitingly more nuanced understanding of the literature in the field but also emphasizes the need for further empirical investigation of possible mechanisms." Understanding that well-being can be supported without an in-person visit to a physical museum is particularly important as it is not always possible to make such a trip, especially for those in hospitals, [care homes](#), rural towns, or in lockdown.

**More information:** MacKenzie D. Trupp et al, Who benefits from online art viewing, and how: The role of pleasure, meaningfulness, and trait aesthetic responsiveness in computer-based art interventions for well-being, *Computers in Human Behavior* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2023.107764](#)

Provided by University of Vienna

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