



March 28, 2021

**SURVEY OF AUDIENCES' WILLINGNESS  
TO RETURN TO INDOOR LIVE  
PERFORMANCES**

# INTRODUCTION

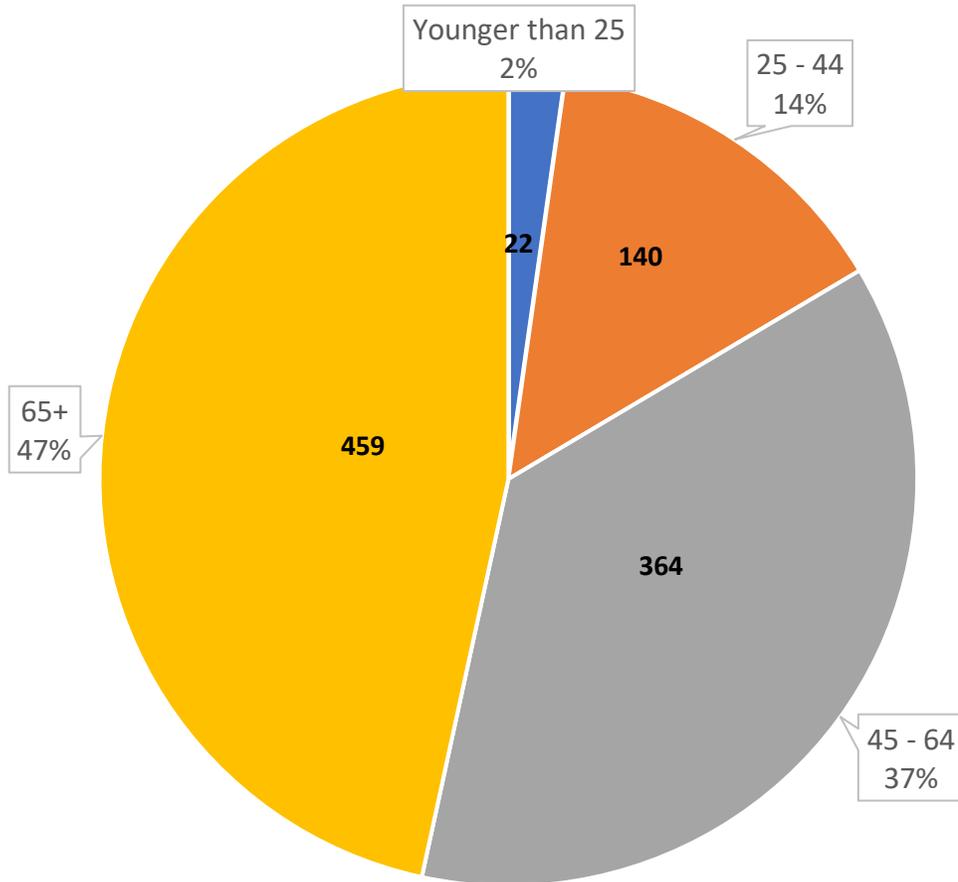
Over the past several months, Calliope Productions, like so many other community theaters, has been wrestling with the financial impact of the pandemic shutdown and strategizing its return to staging live indoor theater productions. Although indoor performances are allowed in Phase 4 of the Massachusetts pandemic reopening plan, theaters have had little information about the conditions under which audiences will actually resume attending such productions.

To guide itself, as well as other theater organizations, in this decision process, Calliope Productions developed and implemented a survey of theater-goers in the Worcester, Mass. area, which was conducted between February 15 and March 22, 2021, and resulted in 985 survey submissions.

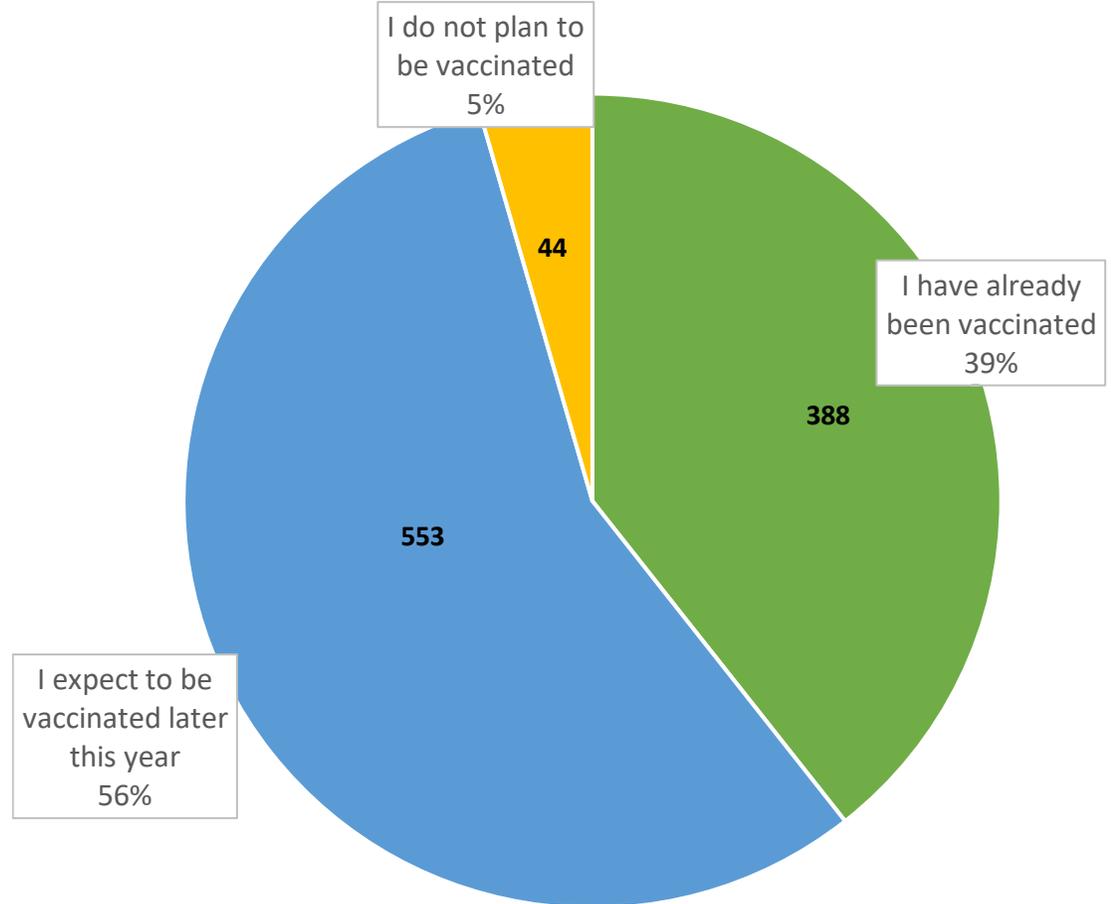
The format of the survey was relatively simple. After requiring theater-goers to identify their age bracket, frequency of theater attendance, and status regarding the Covid vaccination, the survey posed five questions intended to reveal the extent to which issues about mask wearing, social distancing, and vaccinations would impact their theater-going decisions. All survey questions were predicated on the condition that herd immunity has not yet been reached. The survey also included a section for open-ended comments.

# DEMOGRAPHICS

## Respondents by Age



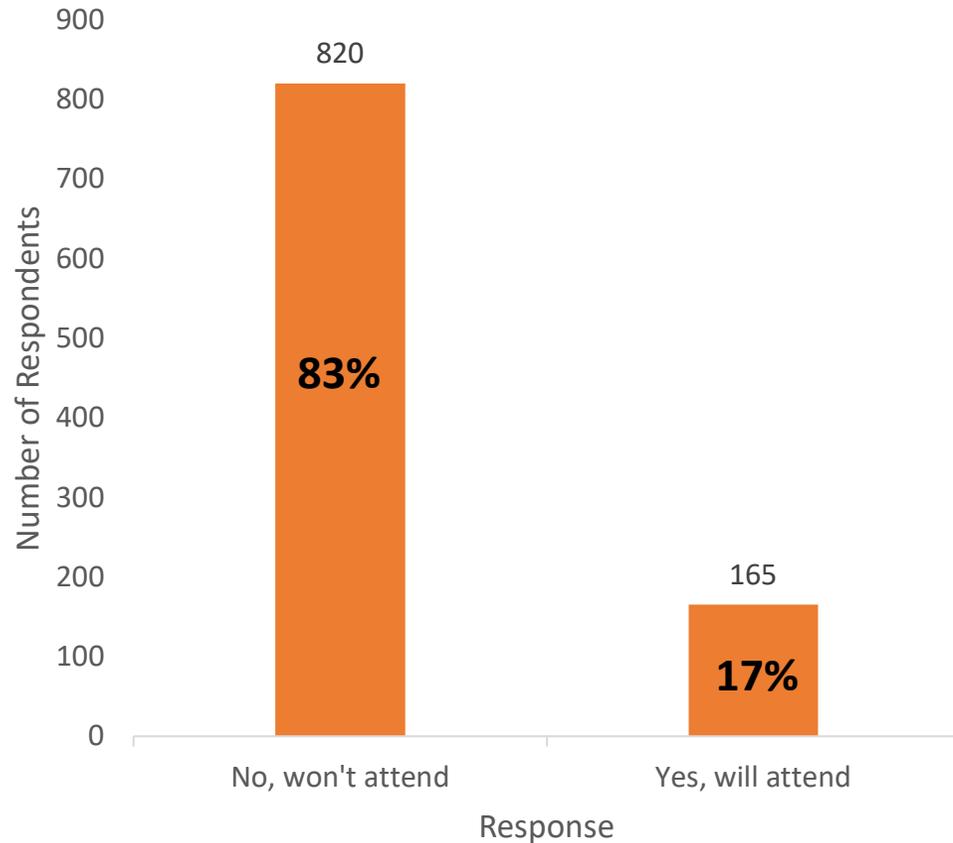
## Vaccination Attitude



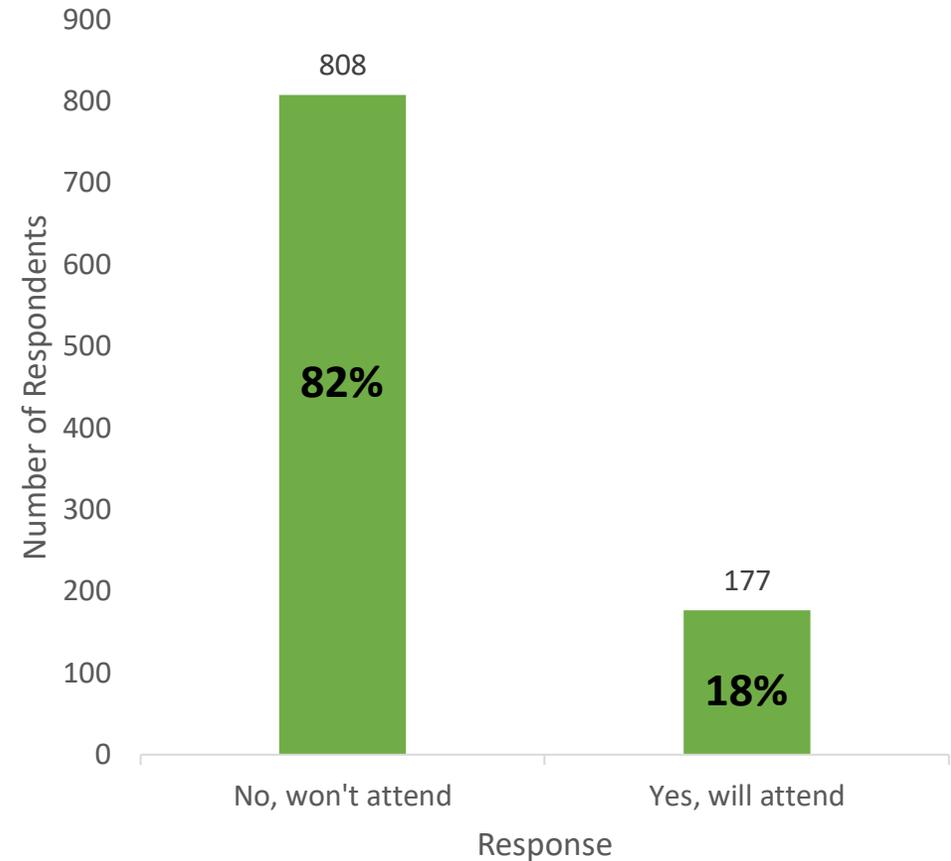
**In contrast to an average of 25% - 30% of the U.S. population not intending to become vaccinated against Covid, only 5% of the surveyed theater-goers do not intend to receive the vaccine.**

# MASKS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING

Before herd immunity is reached, would you attend an indoor live theater performance where the audience members are not required to wear masks?



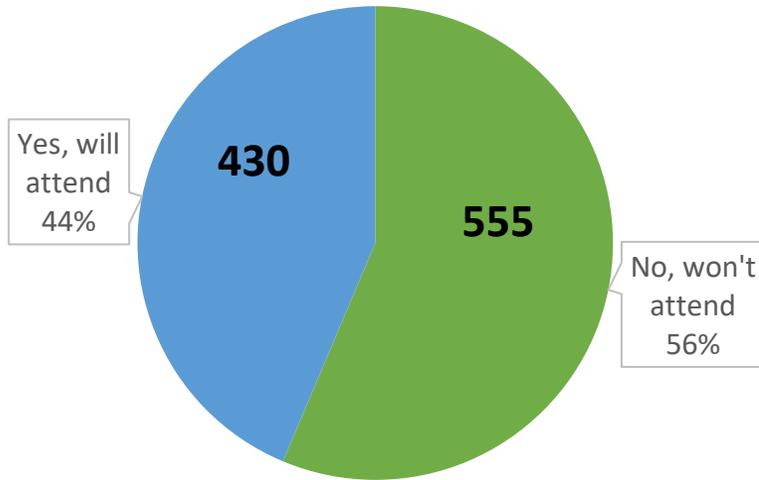
Before herd immunity is reached, would you attend an indoor live theater performance where social distancing is not required?



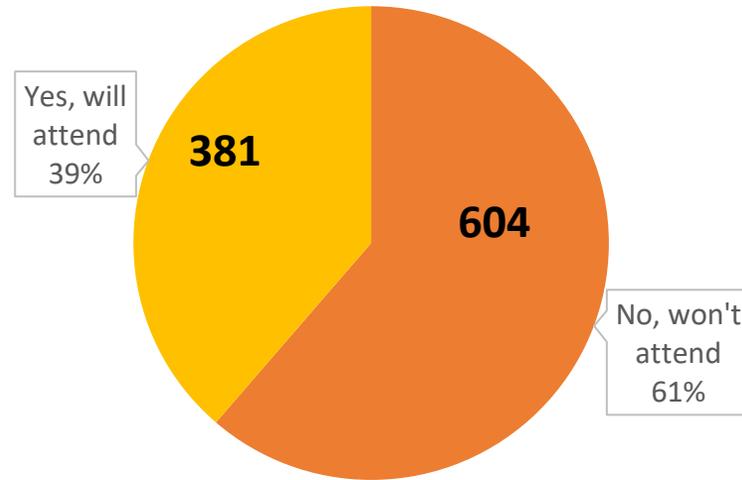
**Until herd immunity is reached, mandatory mask wearing and social distancing are requirements for 83% and 82% of theater-goers, respectively, in order to resume attending indoor performances.**

# VACCINATION QUESTIONS

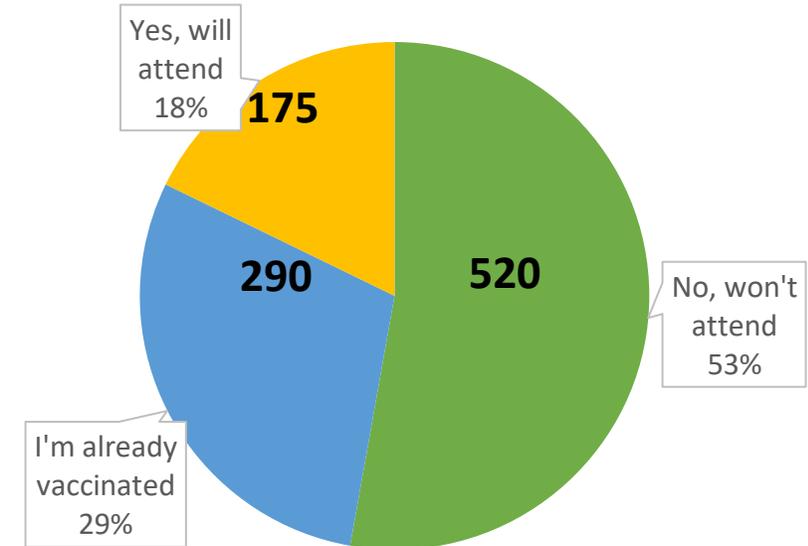
Before herd immunity is reached, would you attend an indoor live theater performance where **audience members** are not required to be vaccinated against the Covid virus?



Before herd immunity is reached, would you attend an indoor live theater performance where **performers and staff** are not required to be vaccinated against the Covid virus?



Before herd immunity is reached, would you attend an indoor live theater performance if **you yourself** have not been vaccinated against the Covid virus?



**Until herd immunity is reached, mandatory vaccinations for audience members, performers/staff, and survey respondents themselves are requirements for 56%, 61%, and 53% of theater-goers, respectively, to resume attending indoor performances.**

# COMMENTS FROM SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Open-ended comments from respondents fell into the following categories

Type of Comment	Number of respondents
Clarifying response	142
Wishing theaters well	33
Stating that they will only attend once herd immunity is reached	28
Preference for outdoor performances	25
Worried about opening too soon / Safety issues	14
Worried about ventilation	14
Unsure about their responses	11
Other	9
Urging to open things up quickly	6
Information about herd immunity	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>286</b>

# SAMPLE COMMENTS

- **Clarifying response:** *I believe that audience members should wear a mask until herd immunity is reached. I would feel better if I knew that staff and performers had also been vaccinated.*
- **Clarifying response:** *I would attend a shorter performance if masks of audience and non performing staff was required and a certain amount of social distancing was in place. Vaccination of others would probably not play into it for me. Hang in there- you are all missed and valued!!! Wishing you the best!*
- **Wishing theaters well:** *I look forward to attending but am patient with reasonable precautions/practices becoming the norm. Always loved the intimacy of small theaters.*
- **Stating that they will only attend once herd immunity is reached:** *I have a new baby at home who cannot be vaccinated and until herd immunity is achieved I do not plan on doing anything until I can be vaccinated myself to lessen the risk of bringing this disease home to him.*
- **Preference for outdoor performances:** *I would consider outdoor theater events with social distancing in place prior to herd immunity.*
- **Worried about opening too soon / Safety issues:** *We still need to be vigilant in our course of action regarding indoor gatherings. We are not safe as yet.*
- **Worried about ventilation:** *I would look for adequate air exchange and ventilation and space seats a little further apart so we were not packed in like sardines.*
- **Unsure about their responses:** *There are too many unknowns right now with the variants, people not doing the right thing and so on.*
- **Other:** *Offer your plays online for a ticket price.*
- **Urging to open things up quickly:** *It is essential that we resume life and enjoy social events including theatre. I am one of those people that as a young person, had to be very careful of sun exposure and perfume etc, and yet I believe living is so much more important and knowing that at some point we have to do what we can and yet be free. Looking forward to attending more great theatre. Thank you!*
- **Information about herd immunity:** *FWIW, herd immunity will likely be reached long before 70% of people get the vaccine (due to those with antibodies who have recovered from COVID-19, along with those with T-cell immunity/immunity gained from contracting other coronavirus colds). I hope to be back at Calliope soon, no vaccine required (as I do not plan to get it)!*

# FINAL NOTES

Questions about other health protocols, such as the cleaning and sanitizing of spaces and surfaces, installing plexi-glass barriers, providing hand sanitizers, and similar interventions were not addressed in the items in this survey because of a general assumption that they would be standard procedures anyway.

A maximum of two survey submissions were permitted per IP address in order to allow up to two people in the same household to submit surveys, while preventing someone from submitting multiple surveys that would affect the integrity of the data. Because submissions of the survey were keyed to IP addresses, all survey responses were anonymous, and no email addresses were identified or harvested.

Calliope Productions is grateful to Entr'acte Theatre Company, Greater Worcester Opera, Studio Theatre Company, Vanilla Box Productions, and Worcester County Light Opera Club for their help in sending this survey to their own email subscribers and social media contacts.

Calliope Productions would also like to thank Frank Josbacher for his immeasurable help in developing the survey and Matthew Cory for his assistance in producing this report.

For more information about this survey or about Calliope, email [calliope@calliopeproductions.org](mailto:calliope@calliopeproductions.org)

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## APPENDIX: SURVEY SUMMARY

<b>Survey Respondents grouped by Age Bracket and Annual Attendance</b>				
	<b>5 or Fewer Shows</b>	<b>6 - 11 Shows</b>	<b>12 or More Shows</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Younger than 25</b>	7	10	5	22
<b>25 - 44</b>	73	42	25	140
<b>45 - 64</b>	142	167	55	364
<b>Older than 64</b>	210	187	62	459
<b>Total</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>985</b>
<b>Survey Respondents grouped by Age Bracket and Vaccination Status</b>				
	<b>Already Vaccinated</b>	<b>Will be Vaccinated Later</b>	<b>Will not be Vaccinated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Younger than 25</b>	1	20	1	22
<b>25 - 44</b>	35	94	11	140
<b>45 - 64</b>	83	257	24	364
<b>Older than 64</b>	269	182	8	459
<b>Total</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>985</b>
<b>Willingness to attend Theatre if Respondent is not Vaccinated</b>				
	<b>Yes, attend</b>	<b>I'm already Vaccinated</b>	<b>No, won't attend</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Younger than 25</b>	7	1	14	22
<b>25 - 44</b>	40	30	70	140
<b>45 - 64</b>	90	66	208	364
<b>Older than 64</b>	38	193	228	459
<b>Total</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>985</b>

<b>Willingness to attend Theatre if other Audience members are not Vaccinated</b>				
	<b>Yes, attend</b>	<b>No, won't attend</b>	<b>Total</b>	
<b>Younger than 25</b>	13	9	22	
<b>25 - 44</b>	84	56	140	
<b>45 - 64</b>	177	187	364	
<b>Older than 64</b>	156	303	459	
<b>Total</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>985</b>	
<b>Willingness to attend Theatre if the performers and staff are not Vaccinated</b>				
	<b>Yes, attend</b>	<b>No, won't attend</b>	<b>Total</b>	
<b>Younger than 25</b>	13	9	22	
<b>25 - 44</b>	75	65	140	
<b>45 - 64</b>	155	209	364	
<b>Older than 64</b>	138	321	459	
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>985</b>	

<b>Willingness to attend Theatre if the Audience is not required to wear Masks</b>				
	<b>Yes, attend</b>	<b>No, won't attend</b>	<b>Total</b>	
<b>Younger than 25</b>	8	14	22	
<b>25 - 44</b>	31	109	140	
<b>45 - 64</b>	76	288	364	
<b>Older than 64</b>	50	409	459	
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>985</b>	
<b>Willingness to attend Theatre if the Audience is not required to have Social Distance</b>				
	<b>Yes, attend</b>	<b>No, won't attend</b>	<b>Total</b>	
<b>Younger than 25</b>	8	14	22	
<b>25 - 44</b>	33	107	140	
<b>45 - 64</b>	79	285	364	
<b>Older than 64</b>	57	402	459	
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>985</b>	