

# AUDIENCE OUTLOOK MONITOR

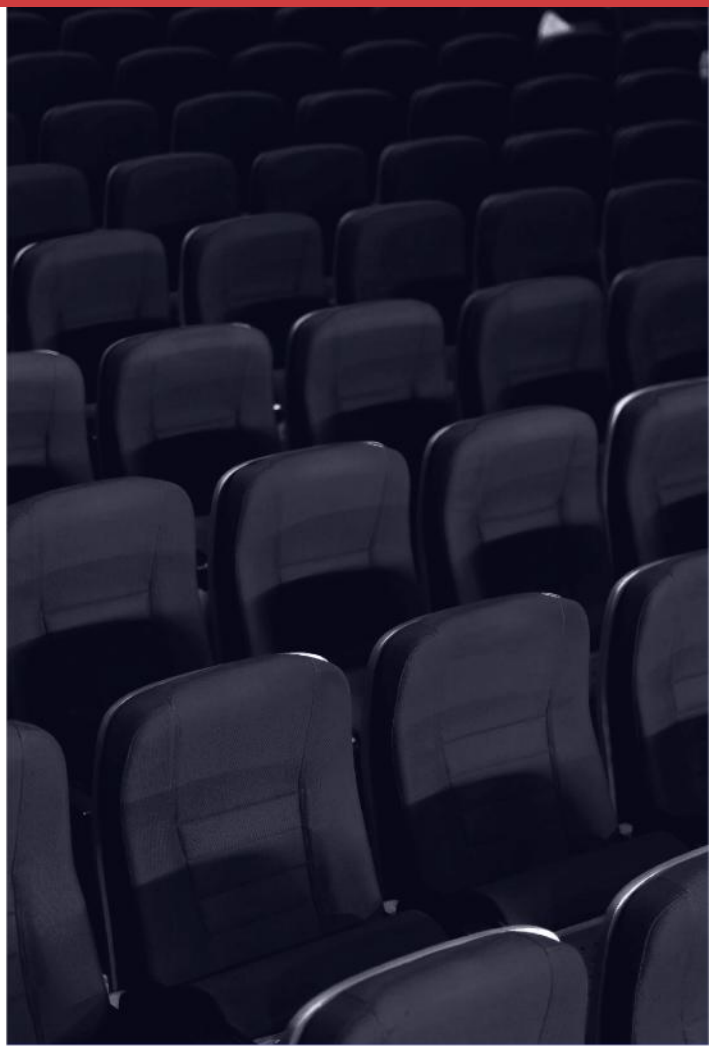
A longitudinal study of audience attitudes about arts  
and cultural events during COVID-19

## Findings for ArtsBoston Cohort

Overview of Results: April 2021

In Partnership with

**ARTSBOSTON**  
TAKE YOURSELF TO A NEW PLACE



# Contents

**3** About the Study

**4** Vaccination

**6** Returning to In-Person Programs

**8** Focus on Respondents Reporting Low Levels of Readiness to Return

**9** Engagement with Digital Programming



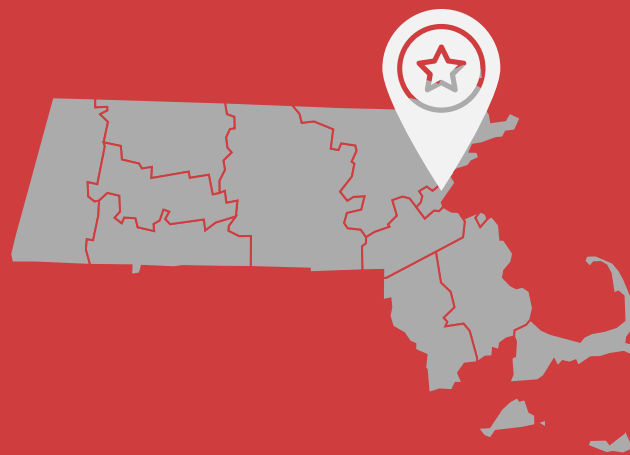
# About the Study

The COVID-19 Audience Outlook Monitor is a longitudinal tracking study of audience attitudes about going out to cultural events during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The study is being administered by WolfBrown.

ArtsBoston hosted a cohort of 14 organizations for Phase 1 in 2020, and is hosting a cohort of 17 organizations for Phase 2 in 2021.

Participating organizations will deploy the survey either three times or five times in 2021, depending on the size of their database.

This report covers results from the first deployment, launched April 13, 2021, which generated approx. 2,500 completed surveys.

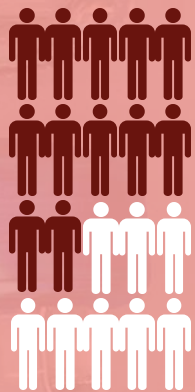


## Phase 2 Cohort Participants

- Actors' Shakespeare Project
- American Repertory Theater
- ArtsEmerson
- Boston Lyric Opera
- Boston Pops
- Boston Symphony Orchestra, Inc
- Celebrity Series of Boston
- Central Square Theater
- Emerson Colonial Theatre
- Global Arts Live
- Handel and Haydn Society
- Huntington Theatre Company
- Museum of Science, Boston
- Peabody Essex Museum
- Tanglewood
- The Dance Complex
- The Lyric Stage Company of Boston



# Vaccination



**87%**

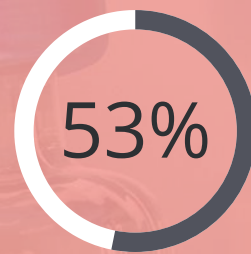
Of respondents  
are partially or  
fully vaccinated.

When will  
vaccinated  
respondents be  
ready to return to  
in-person arts and  
cultural events?

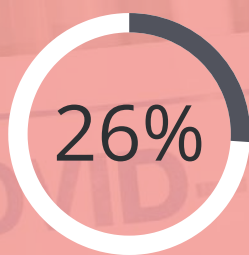
Waiting for others in their  
network to get vaccinated



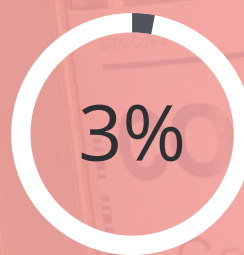
Waiting for low  
infection rates



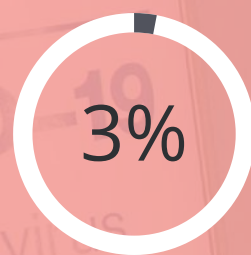
Ready now



Waiting for safety  
measures to be removed



Waiting to be certain  
of immunity



How do our respondent's vaccination rates  
compare to national figures?

*As of April 13th*

**62%**

Fully Vaccinated Boston  
Cohort Respondents

**25%**

Fully Vaccinated Suffolk  
County\* All Adults

**23%**

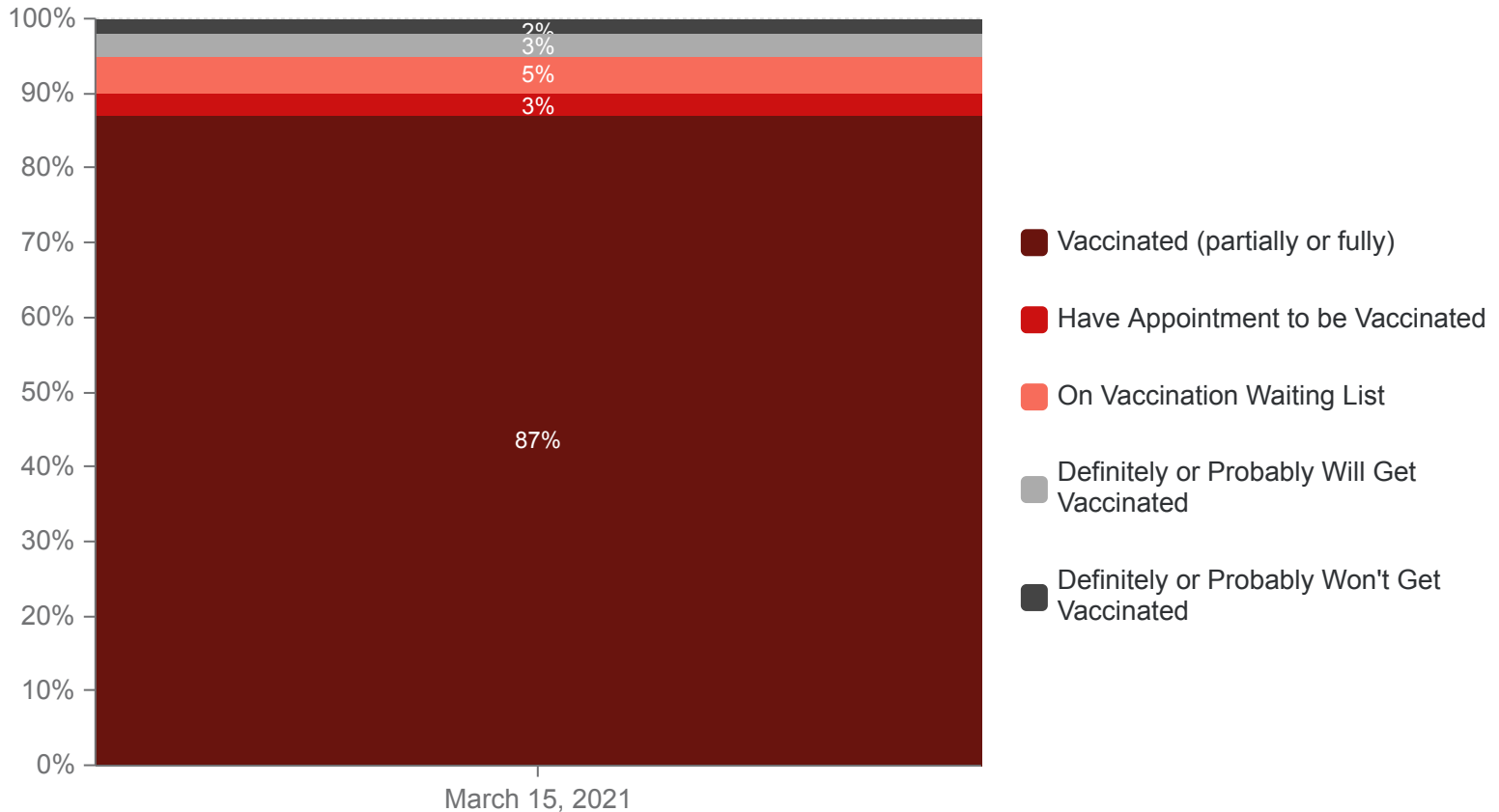
Fully Vaccinated  
National\*\* All Adults

\* Visit [the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Government website](#) for Suffolk County vaccine data.

\*\* Visit [the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website](#) for national vaccine data.



# Vaccination Progress



What barriers to vaccination are unvaccinated respondents facing?

10%

Of unvaccinated respondents reported experiencing difficulty accessing information about how and where to get vaccinated.

85%

Of unvaccinated respondents who will probably or definitely not get vaccinated do not trust that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe enough.

# Returning to In-Person Programs

## Indoor Events with Distancing & Safety Measures

**25%**

Of respondents to surveys sent by performing arts organizations would attend an indoor event with masks and social distancing given the opportunity

10% of respondents would still attend without distancing but with masks

**34%**

Of respondents to surveys sent by museums would attend an indoor event with masks and social distancing given the opportunity

12% of respondents would still attend without distancing but with masks

## Outdoor Events with Distancing & Safety Measures

**78%**

Of respondents to surveys sent by performing arts organizations would attend an outdoor event with masks and social distancing given the opportunity

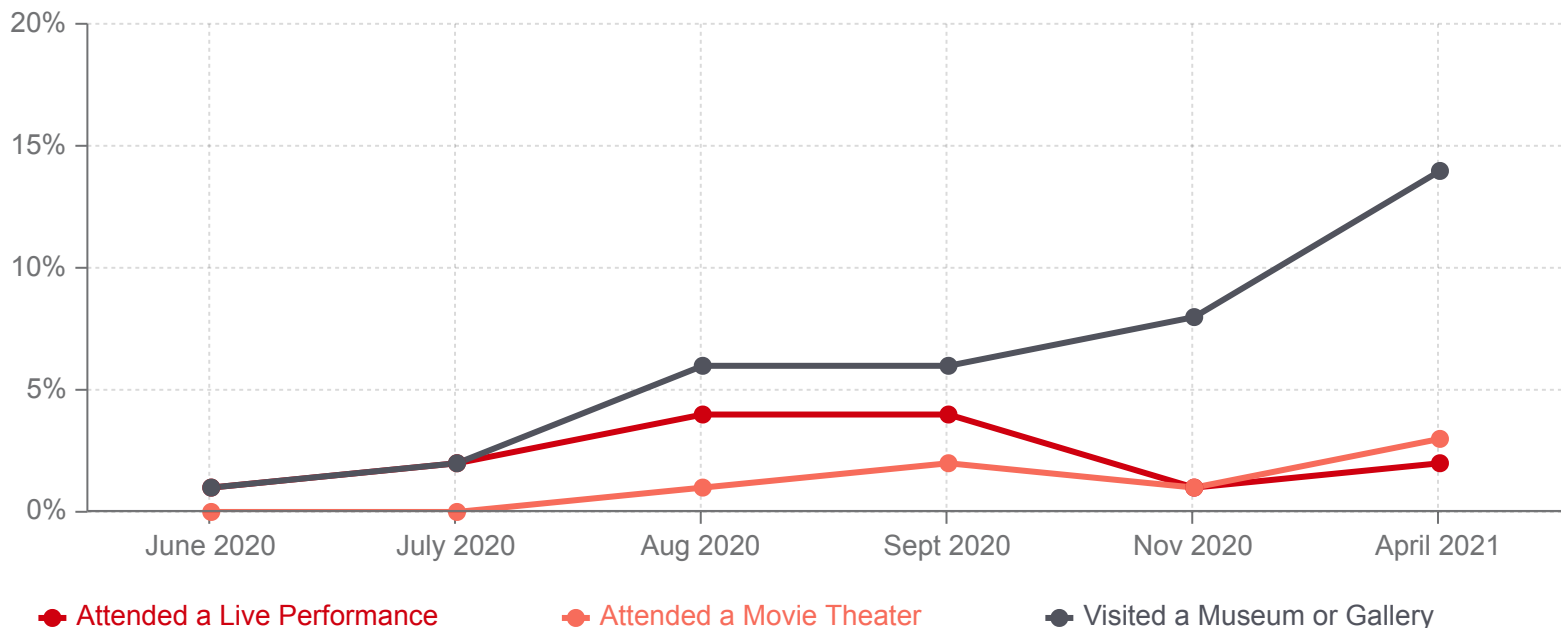
27% of respondents would still attend without distancing but with masks

**81%**

Of respondents to surveys sent by museums would attend an outdoor event with masks and social distancing given the opportunity

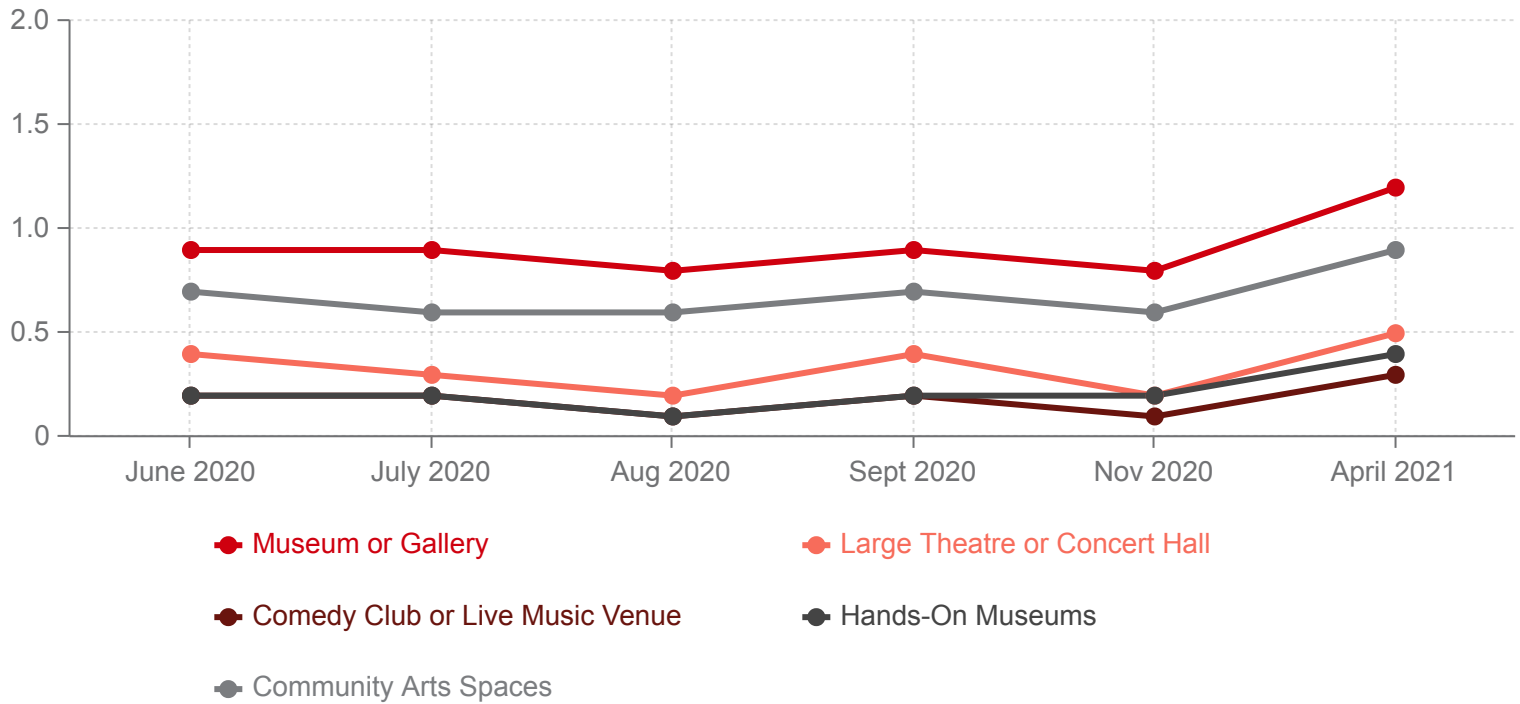
27% of respondents would still attend without distancing but with masks

## Have respondents attended in-person events in the last two weeks?



# Comfort Level Attending Different Cultural Facilities

0= Not Comfortable and 2 = Very Comfortable



When thinking about returning to the sending organization in person, what health-related topics are most important to respondents?

Museums

#1

Mask Wearing

#2

Distancing

#3

Ventilation

Performing Arts

#1

Mask Wearing

#2

Distancing

#3

Ventilation

"Provide clear, detailed information about your decision-making process regarding 1) the criteria you use to determine whether to open (ie. Whether it's local and state case count, infection trends, percent of population vaccinated, etc.) and, 2) what safety precautions, protocols and building air quality mitigation are in place."

"I worry most about a bait and switch situation. I've found that often groups say that they're social distancing but then you get there and masks aren't being worn properly and people are bumping into you."

# Focus on Respondents Reporting Low Levels of Readiness to Return

While respondents are being vaccinated at high rates, some groups of respondents indicate they won't be ready for some time.



18%

Of vaccinated respondents who identified someone in their immediate family or household as being vulnerable to a serious health outcome from contracting COVID-19 are ready to return to in-person event.



28%

Of all respondents with vulnerable members of their family or household estimate they won't return to in-person performing arts events until January 2022 or later.



19%

Of fully vaccinated respondents are not yet comfortable walking around a museum or gallery.



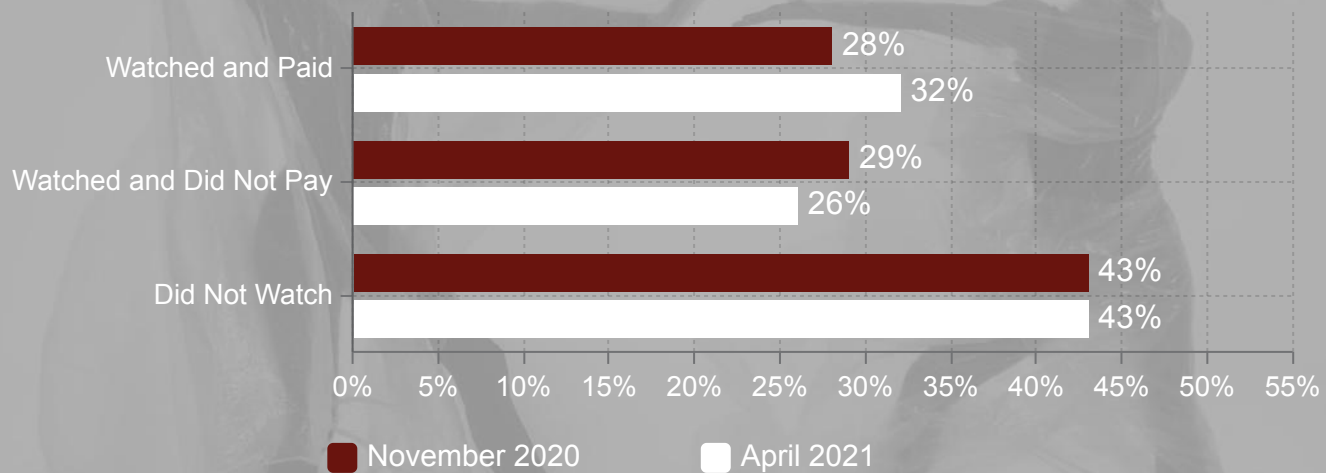
60%

Of fully vaccinated respondents are not yet comfortable going to a large theatre or concert hall.

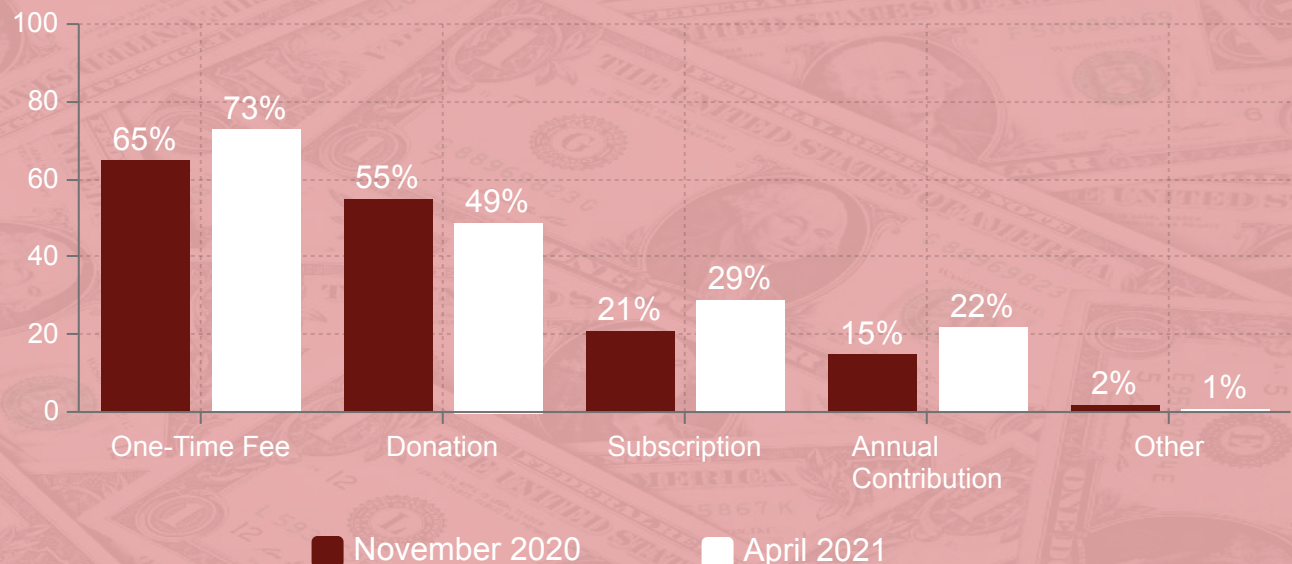


# Engagement With Digital Programming

How did respondents engage with online cultural programs in the last two weeks?



How did respondents who paid for online cultural programs purchase those programs?





# 66%

Of respondents anticipate that digital programming will play a small role (53%) or a substantial role (13%) in their cultural life after in-person programs have fully returned.

## What kinds of digital programs will respondents be interested in after cultural facilities re-open?

*"Play readings and discussions about works of music or art could be great to attend online. I attended an event for another arts org online about opera libretti and really enjoyed the event. Being able to see the singers read the libretto and also act with their cameras up close was unlike any other way I have seen such readings done. I also really enjoyed the play from another theater that was made into a series of podcast episodes."*

*"... I like short online presentations and talks by cultural orgs (book releases, art curator talks, etc.), and will probably attend these in the future—they feel almost more like watching an episode of an interesting documentary series, or a class, or a webinar, or a podcast, so I don't mind watching these at home instead of commuting to a venue."*

*"It's still much easier for me as a single parent to stream performance-based events rather than attend in person (no babysitter, etc), so I'd love the opportunity to do that."*

*"Sometimes, we are unable to see a popular show. We would be happy to pay to see it on-line at a future date rather than miss it altogether."*

For more information about this study or to view results from cohorts around the country and internationally visit [audienceoutlookmonitor.com](https://audienceoutlookmonitor.com).

Sign up for our newsletter for announcements about monthly executive briefings, deep-dive webinars, and more.