

She **NYC ARTS**

Gender Equity In the Arts

STUDY RESULTS

TRIGGER WARNING: THIS STUDY
INCLUDES DESCRIPTIONS OF
DISCRIMINATION, SEXUAL ASSAULT,
AND VIOLENCE.

Released by SheNYC Arts
DECEMBER 1, 2022

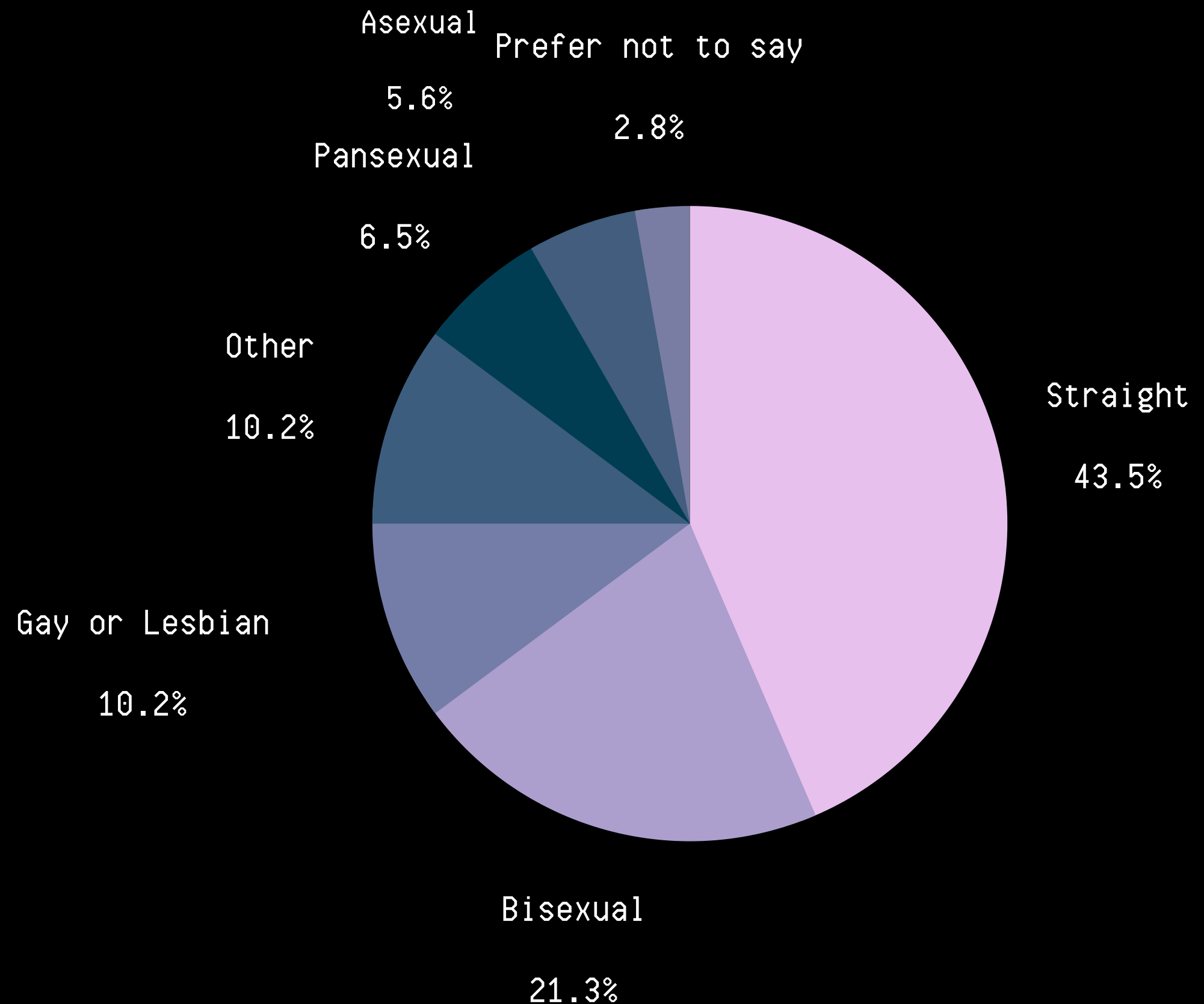
Demographics

Over 100 respondents were reached by SheNYC Arts social media and mailing list. Our programming mostly supports women & LGBTQ writers & producers; the demographics of the respondents reflect that.

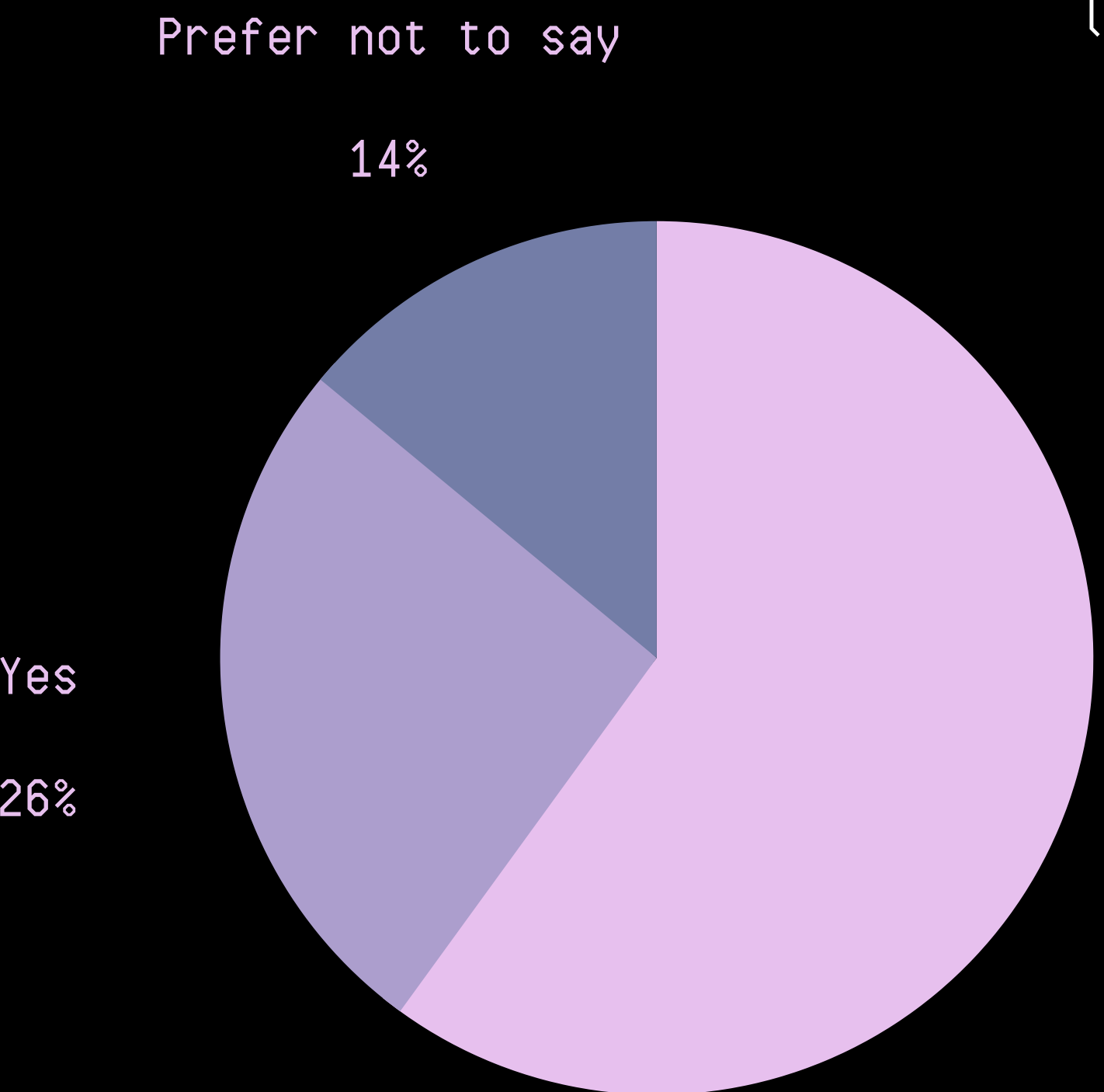
GENDER IDENTITY OF RESPONDENTS

- 86% CIS WOMAN
- 13% NON-BINARY/GENDER NON-CONFORMING
- 7% TRANS NON-BINARY
- 2% TRANS MAN
- 2% OTHER
- 1% TRANS WOMAN
- 1% PREFER NOT TO SAY

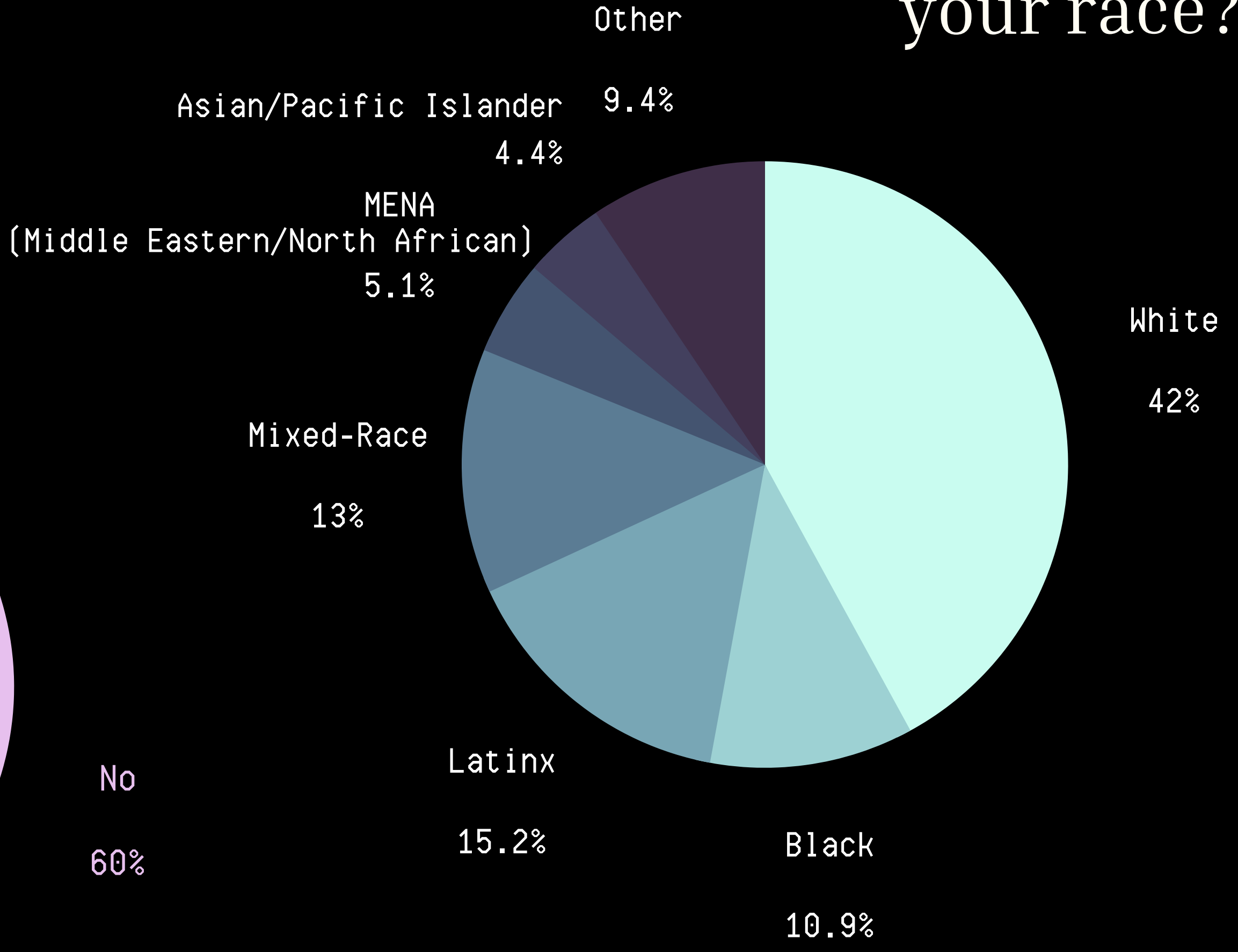
SEXUAL ORIENTATION OF RESPONDENTS (68% LGBTQIA+)



Do you identify as having a disability?

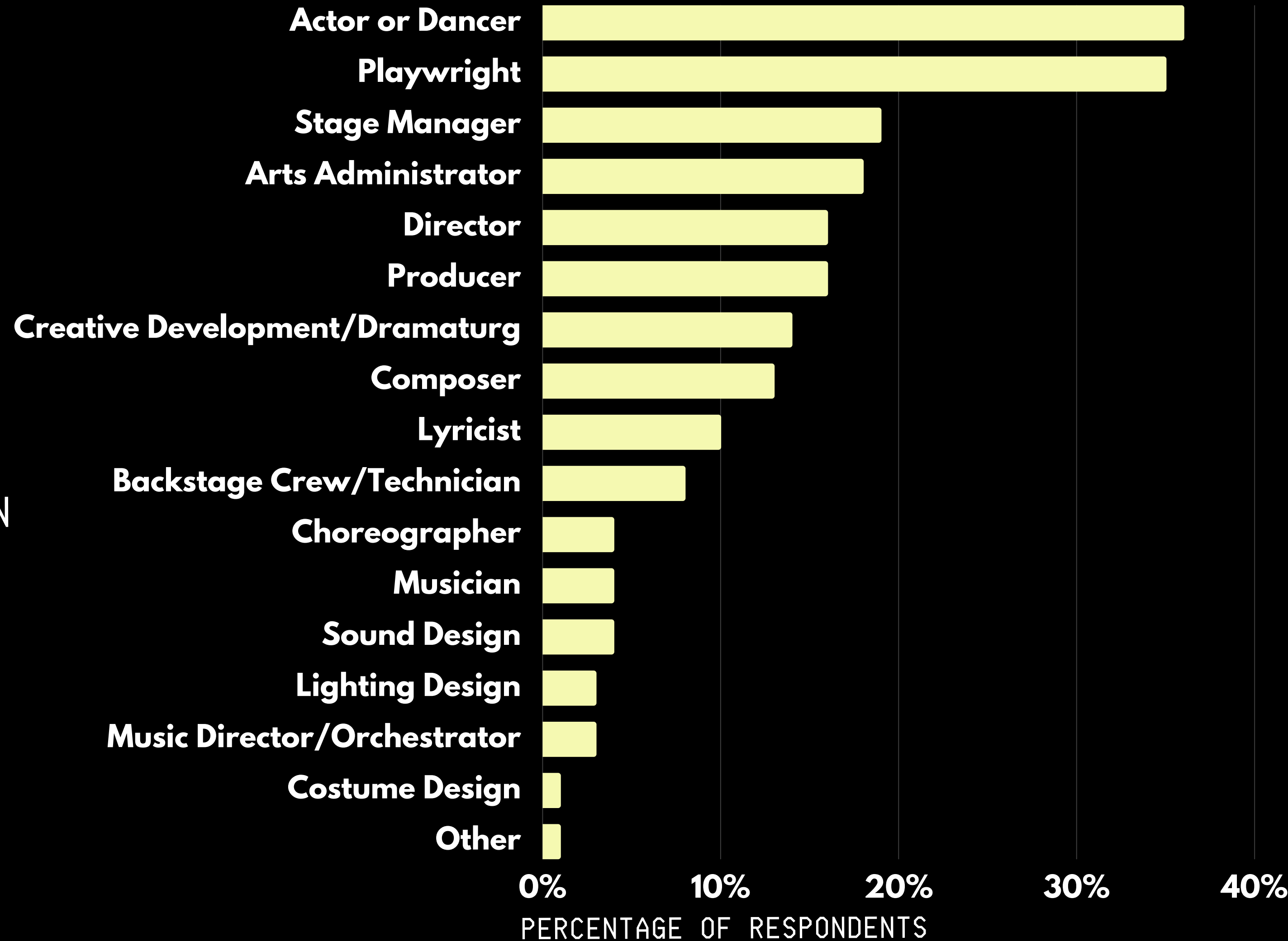


How do you identify your race?



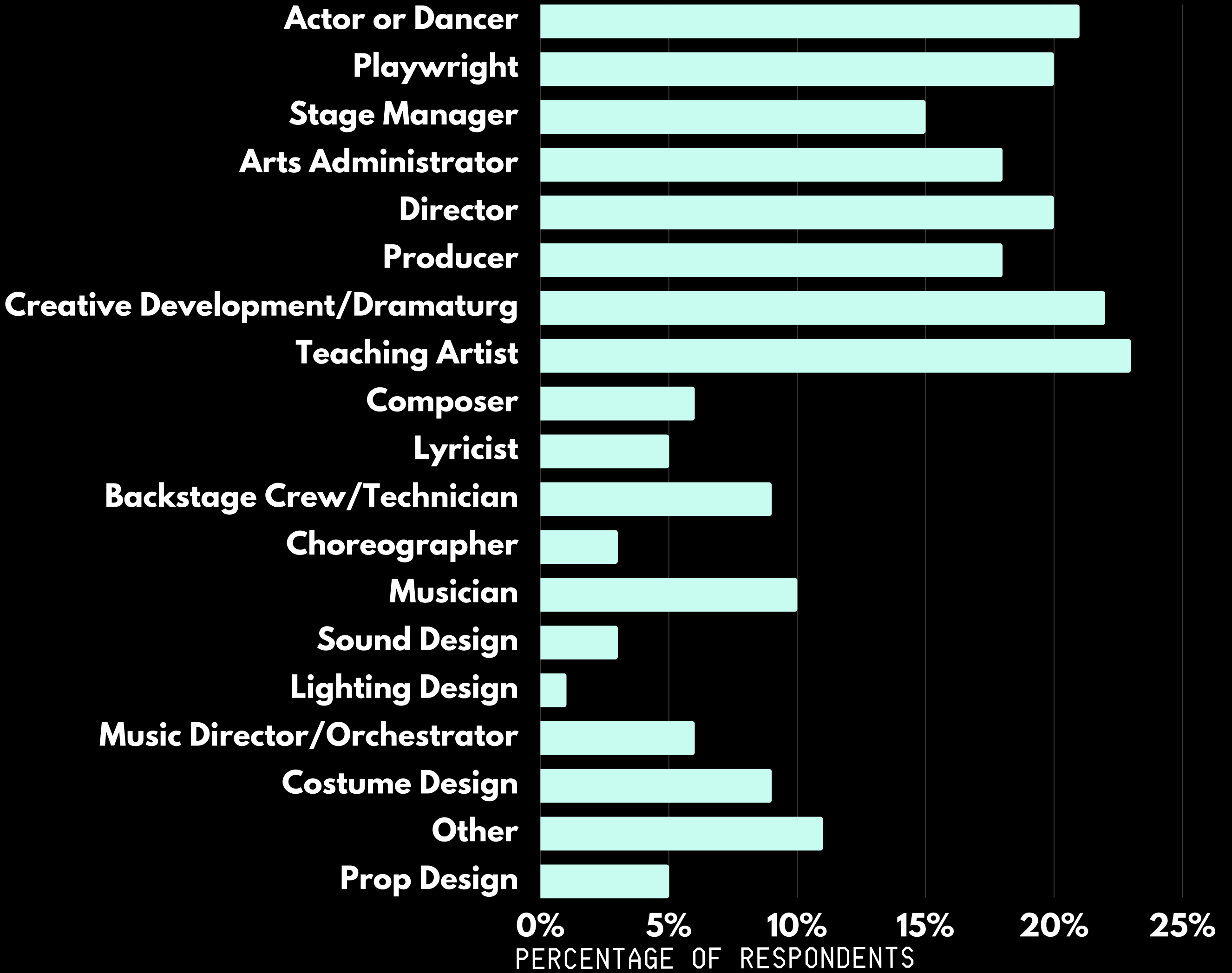
Primary Specialty

RESPONDENTS WERE
ASKED WHAT THEIR
SINGLE PRIMARY
SPECIALTY IS WITHIN
THE ARTS &
ENTERTAINMENT
INDUSTRY.



Secondary Specialty

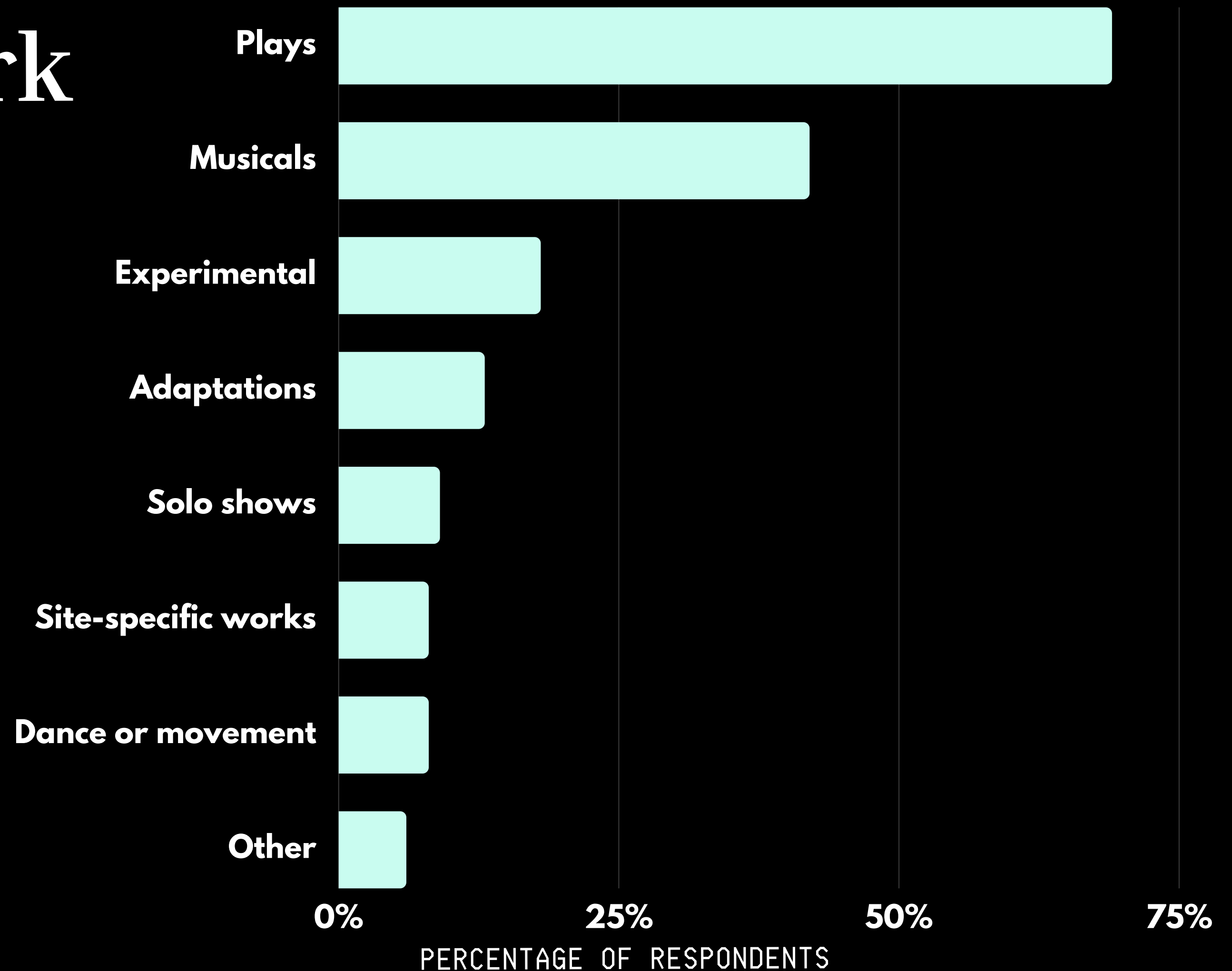
93% OF RESPONDENTS LISTED A SECONDARY SPECIALTY THAT THEY DO IN ADDITION TO THEIR PRIMARY SPECIALTY IN THE FIELD. THIS IS WHAT THEY SELECTED AS THAT SECONDARY SPECIALTY.



Artistic Work Preference

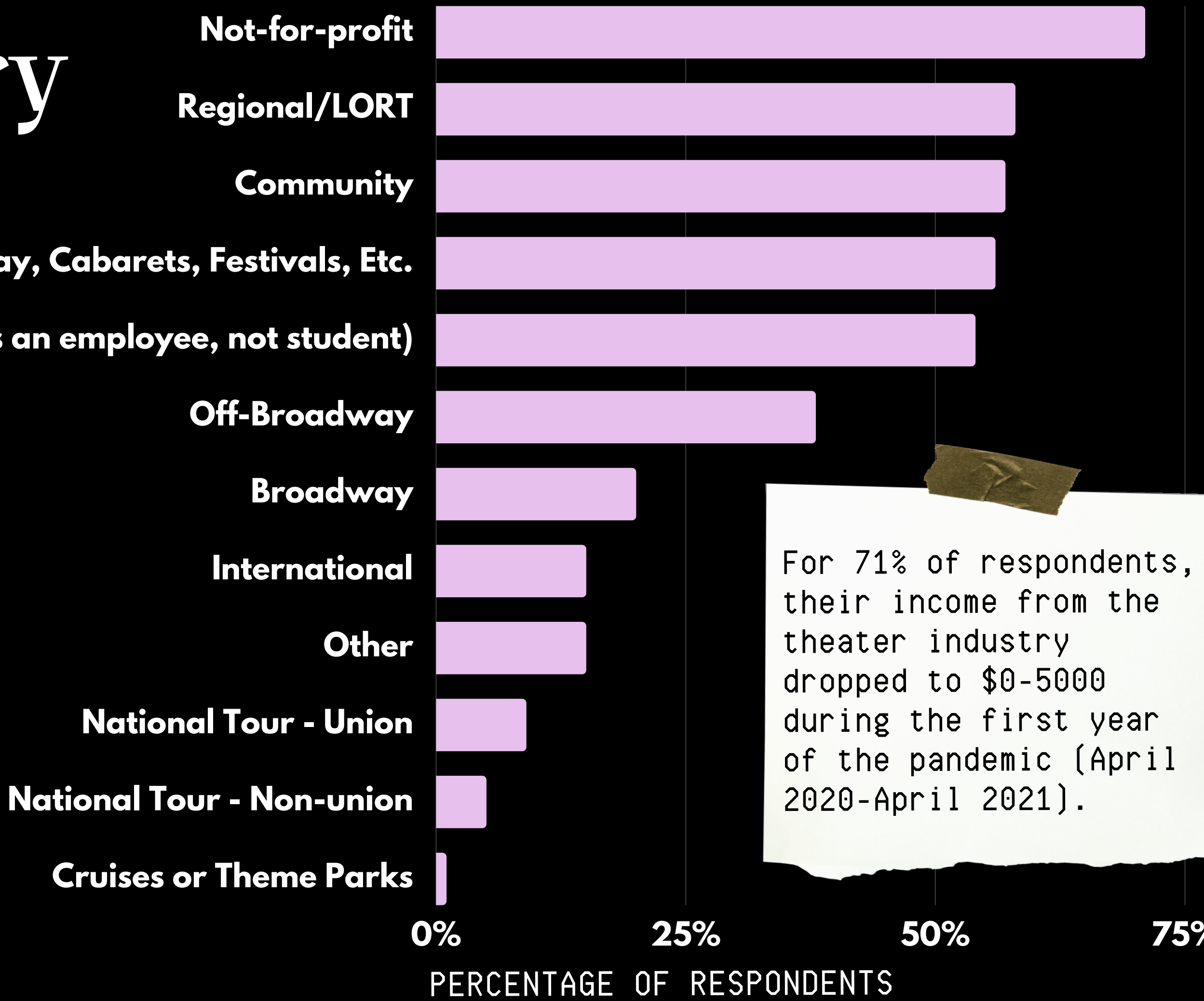
RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED, "WHAT TYPES OF THEATRICAL WORKS DO YOU TRY TO WORK ON THE MOST?"

THEY WERE ALLOWED TO SELECT MULTIPLE ANSWERS.



Work History

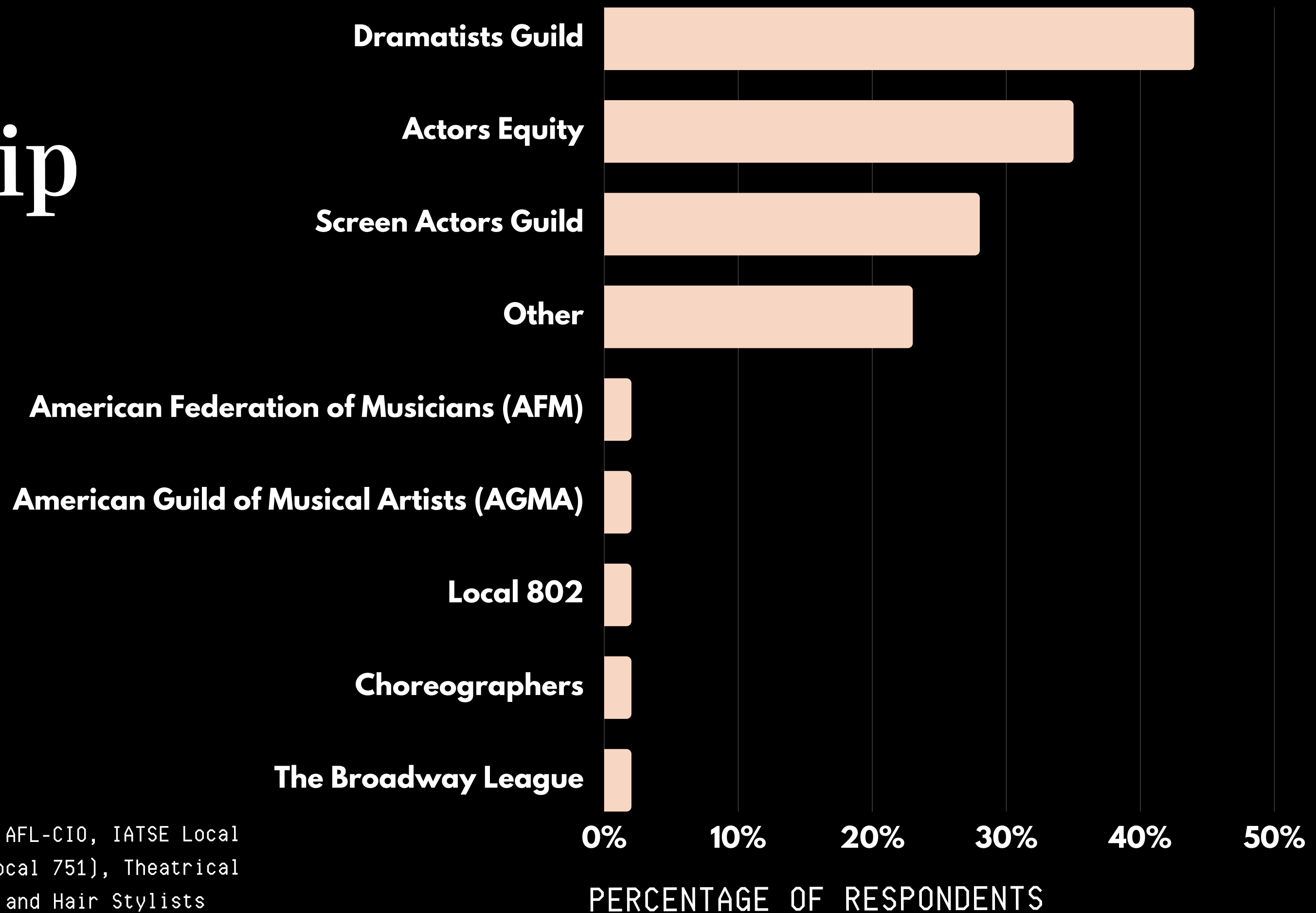
ALL RESPONDENTS WERE ARTS WORKERS WHO HAVE BEEN PAID TO WORK IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY. THIS IS THE BREAKDOWN OF WHICH PARTS OF THE INDUSTRY THEY'VE WORKED IN.



For 71% of respondents, their income from the theater industry dropped to \$0-5000 during the first year of the pandemic (April 2020-April 2021).

Union Membership

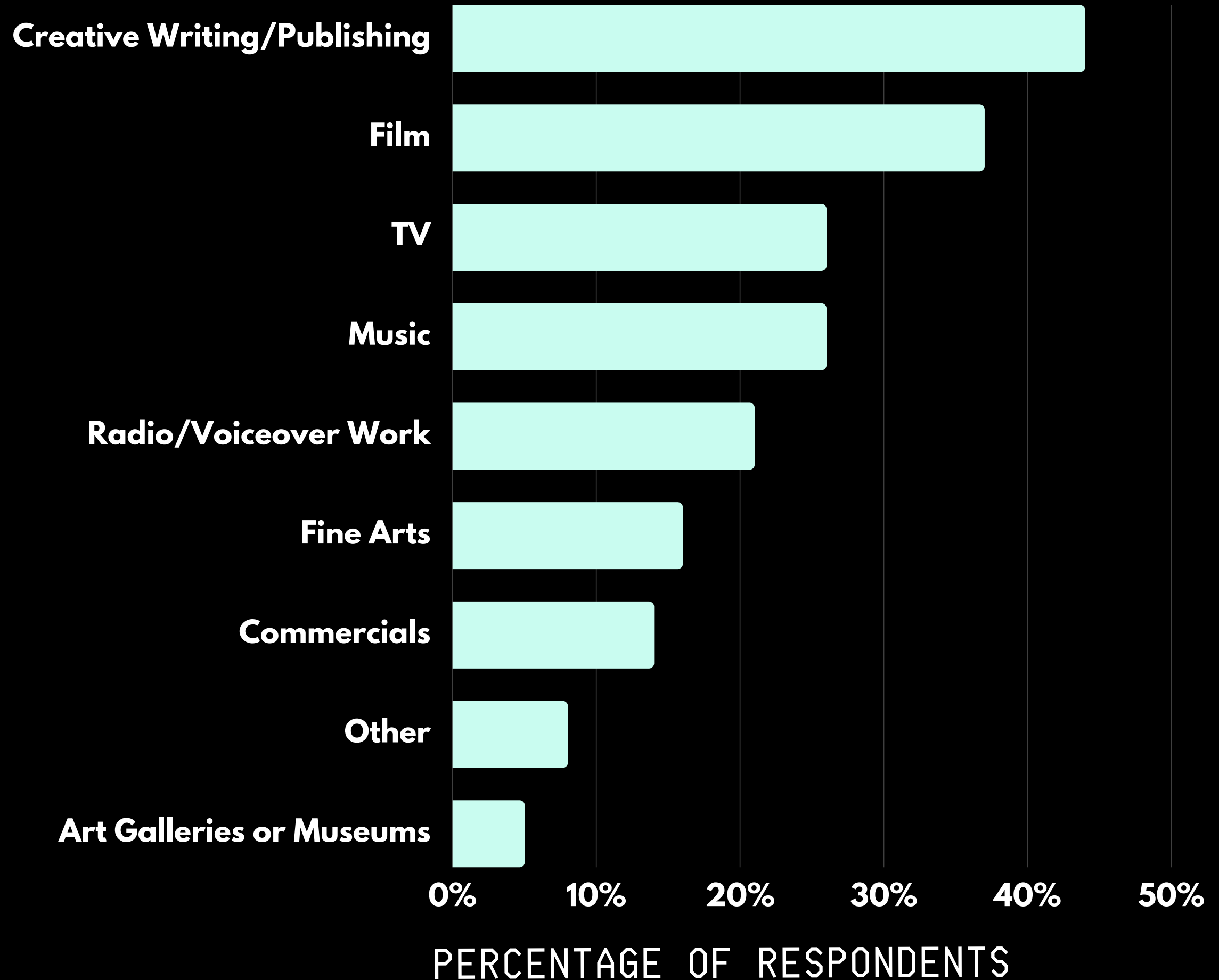
RESPONDENTS WERE
ASKED WHICH UNIONS,
GUILDS, OR TRADE
LEAGUES THEY ARE A
PART OF.



0 respondents were a part of the following: AFL-CIO, IATSE Local 306, Treasurers and Ticket Sellers Union (Local 751), Theatrical Wardrobe Union (Local 764), Make-Up Artists and Hair Stylists (Local 798), ATPAM

Other Parts of the Entertainment Industry

RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED IF THEY CONSISTENTLY GET PAID WORK IN OTHER FACETS OF THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY, OUTSIDE OF THEATER. OF THOSE WHO SAID YES, THESE ARE THE INDUSTRIES THEY WORK IN.

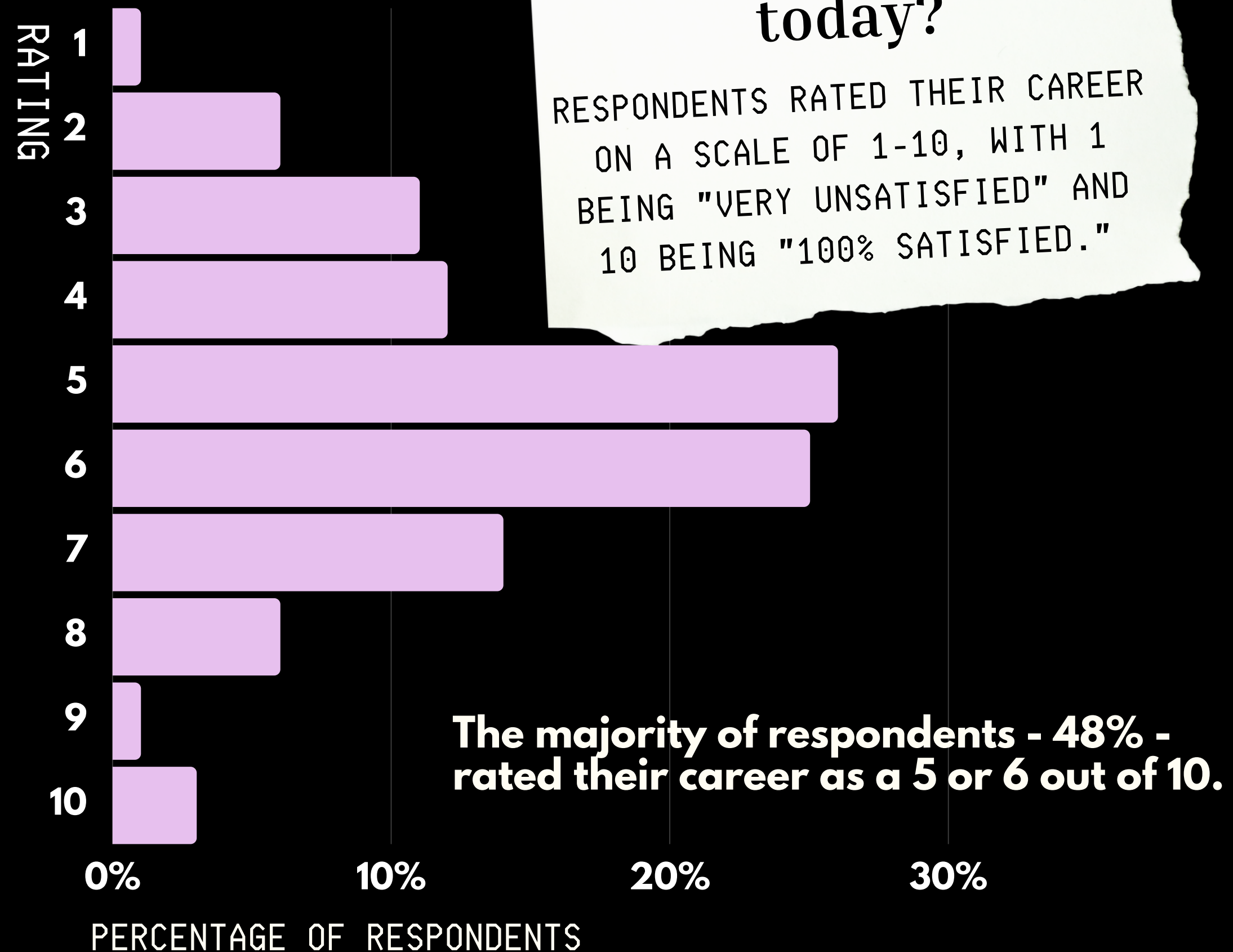


RESPONSES

The respondents were then asked a series of questions, and asked to answer only in regards to workplaces in the arts.

In the entertainment industry, "work" can happen in many unconventional places, so "workplace" was defined as both your physical workplace, and any environment in which you are interacting with coworkers outside of that workplace (for example, a show's opening night party, a team dinner on a break from rehearsal, or traveling between tour stops).

These statistics are interspersed with quotes from respondents' answers, which have been edited for anonymity.



What resources would be helpful in advancing your career?

OUT OF 19 OPTIONS GIVEN, THESE WERE THE TOP 6 RESOURCES THAT OVER HALF OF RESPONDENTS CHOSE.

Low-cost/free opportunities to produce your work at early phases of development (readings, concerts, etc.)

Networking Opportunities

Direct financial support

Mentorship programs

Festivals

Residencies/Retreats



0% 25% 50% 75%

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS

“ [An older, female boss] would tell me to 'wait my turn' when trying to assert myself or learn more. This really affected my confidence and ability to network and learn within the production I was working on. I find this discouragement really harmful from older successful women to young women, even more than from men. ”

What resources would be helpful in advancing your career?

OTHER OPTIONS GIVEN, IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE FROM THE RESPONDENTS:

- Mental health resources [47%]
- Being part of an artist directory [46%]
- Healthcare benefits [45%]
- Support with applying for grants [44%]
- Paid internships [34%]
- Getting feedback on your work from a script reader/dramaturg [33%]
- Workshops & educational programs about career development generally [31%]
- Workshops & educational programs about a specific craft [29%]
- Opportunities to teach others [29%]

In response to "other things that would help you advance your career," one respondent says:

"A GUARANTEED BASIC LIVING WAGE, BETTER ADA COMPLIANCE WITHIN ARTS INSTITUTIONS, ESTABLISHMENT OF A FEDERAL-LEVEL ARTS & CULTURE SECRETARY/DEPARTMENT, A CULTURAL & POLICY SHIFT PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGING THE VALUE OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY."

An overwhelming consensus – 74% of respondents – said “Unpaid internships” are NOT helpful in advancing their careers.

Notes from playwrights and composers:

"I spend roughly one month out of every year applying for grant funding and various opportunities. This is time that I never get paid for and also time that I can't be writing. It would be great if there was an effort to create salaried arts positions for writers/composers or grant funding that was aimed at career building rather than only projects."

“I often feel that as a writer/composer, I create jobs for other people, but not for myself. I am paid such a small amount compared to the hours of work, while any member of the production team will have months or years of paid work as a result of my work.”

"The pandemic is the biggest problem for my work, as there are less companies commissioning new work...Additionally, I am often the lowest paid person in the companies I work for (working as a writer/composer), when considering the hours I put in. This has caused me to reconsider what I should be spending my time doing and may eventually mean that I work in theatre on a limited or part-time basis."

85% of respondents believe their gender identity has negatively impacted their career.

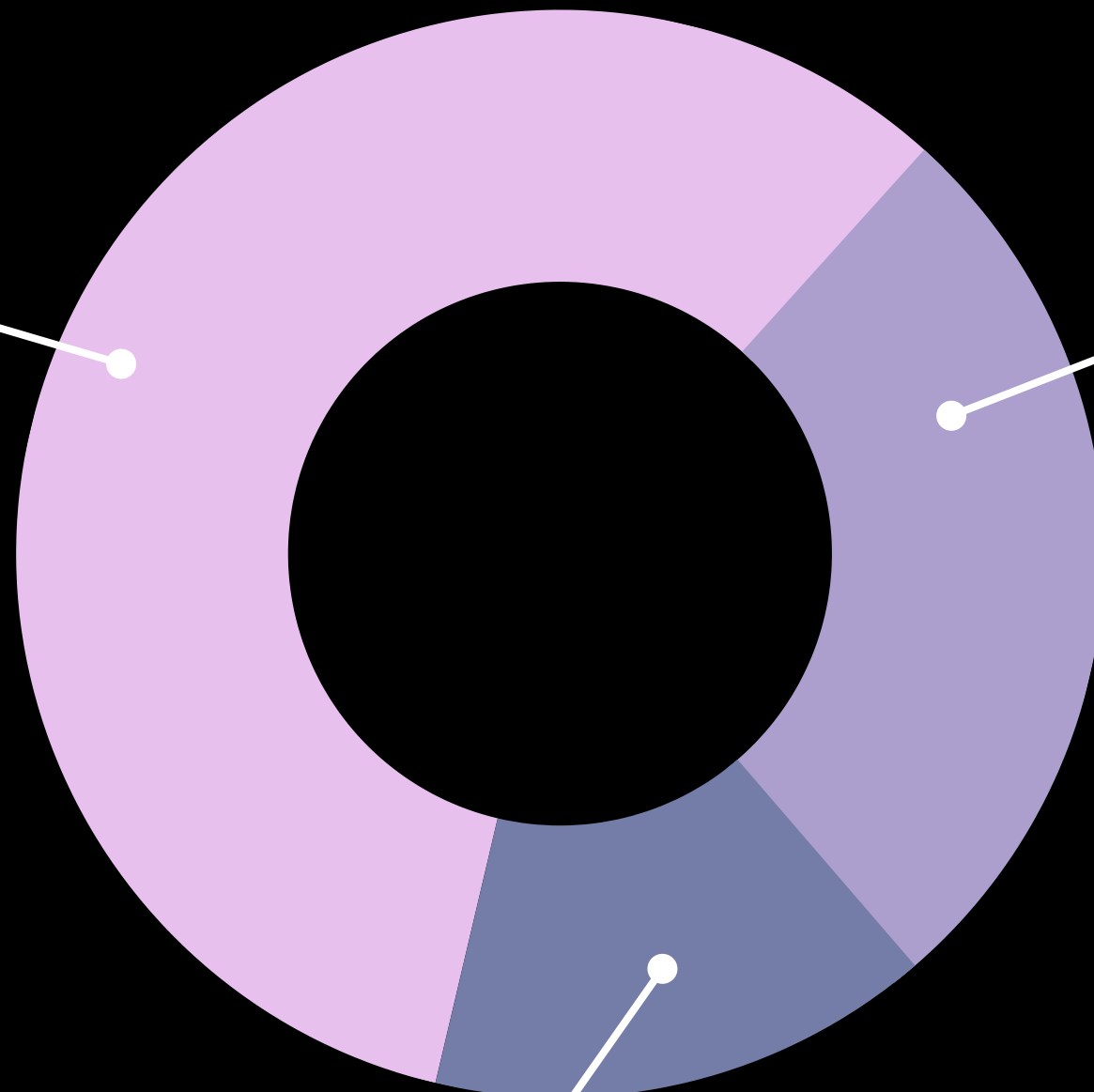
58%

OF RESPONDENTS SAY THEY "HAVE ONE OR MORE SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES IN WHICH YOUR GENDER NEGATIVELY IMPACTED YOUR CAREER."

27%

"HAVE NO SPECIFIC EXPERIENCES, BUT FEEL LIKE IT'S NEGATIVELY AFFECTED YOUR CAREER IN A MORE GENERALIZED WAY"

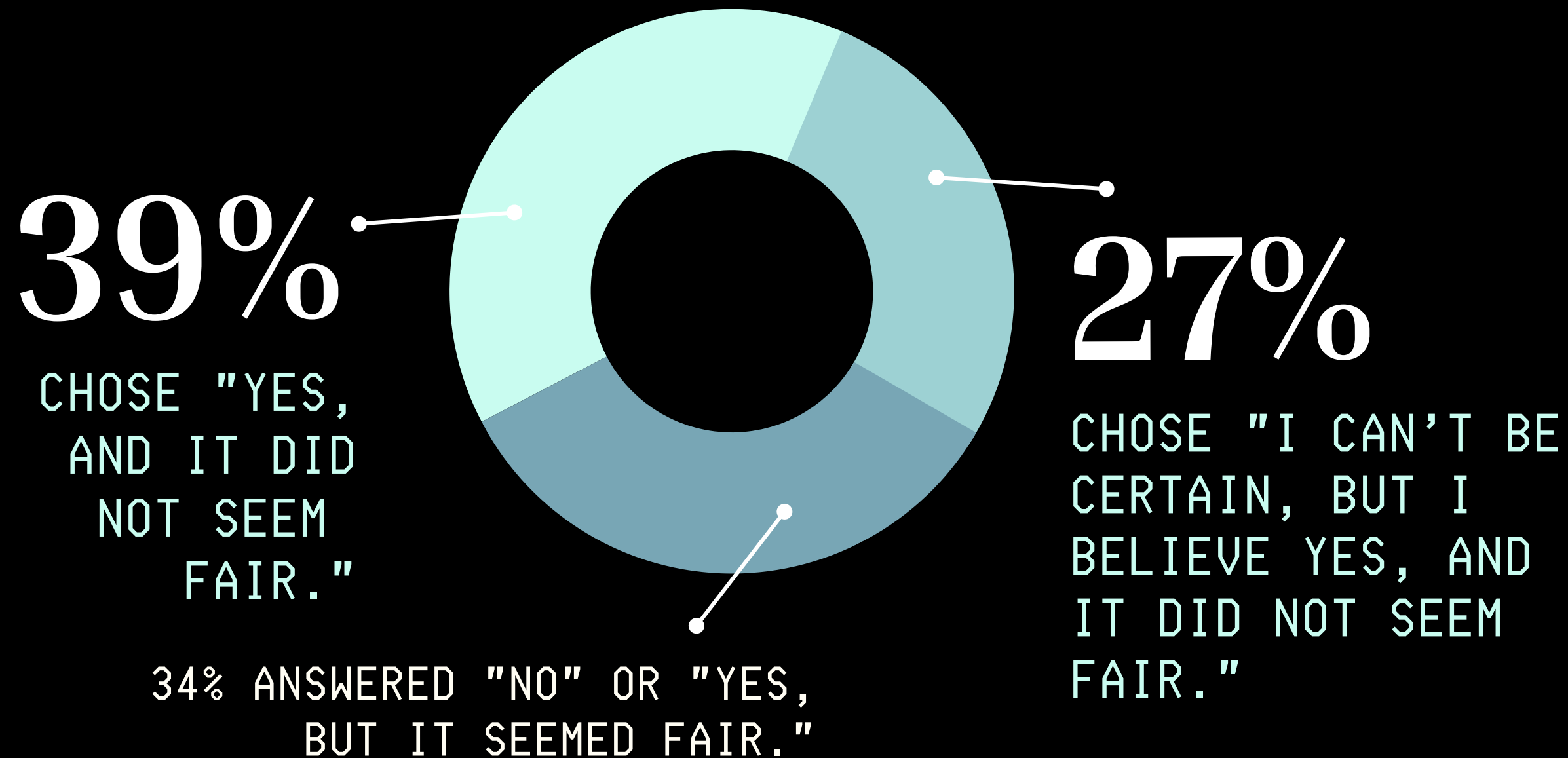
15% DO NOT FEEL THEIR GENDER HAS AFFECTED THEIR CAREER



66% of gender-marginalized artists believe they're being paid less than non-marginalized coworkers

Have you ever worked in an environment where someone in an equal or lower position to you, but of a non-marginalized gender, made more income than you?

Have you ever worked in an environment where someone of a non-marginalized gender got a promotion over you?



How has gender discrimination impacted your career?

"I worked closely with a male team member from another (non-creative) department in the producing organization. He started a year after me at the same level of title, with zero professional experience (whether in an office or in a theater). I had 5 years experience in theater work and a master's degree in my very specialized field. He was also completely incompetent at his job. He made 10% more than me.

I began a campaign to get a raise. It took me two years; painstaking amounts of documentation to prove I deserved to be paid for the work I was doing; countless conversations...to get me a promotion in September 2019. Then I was furloughed (the incompetent coworker wasn't) 6 months later, and eventually laid off.

Oh, did I mention that the same day I was promoted, my direct supervisor was laid off? They essentially gave me his job—so they could pay me less for doing the same work he was doing for much more money."

"The list is too long to enumerate. I chose a gender neutral name specifically because of the extreme inequality in both theatre and the entertainment industry/Hollywood. Doing that hasn't shielded me, however. Sometimes the prejudice is overt, sometimes more covert and possibly unconscious. But it is very pronounced in lack of mentorship, networking and collaboration of and between women.

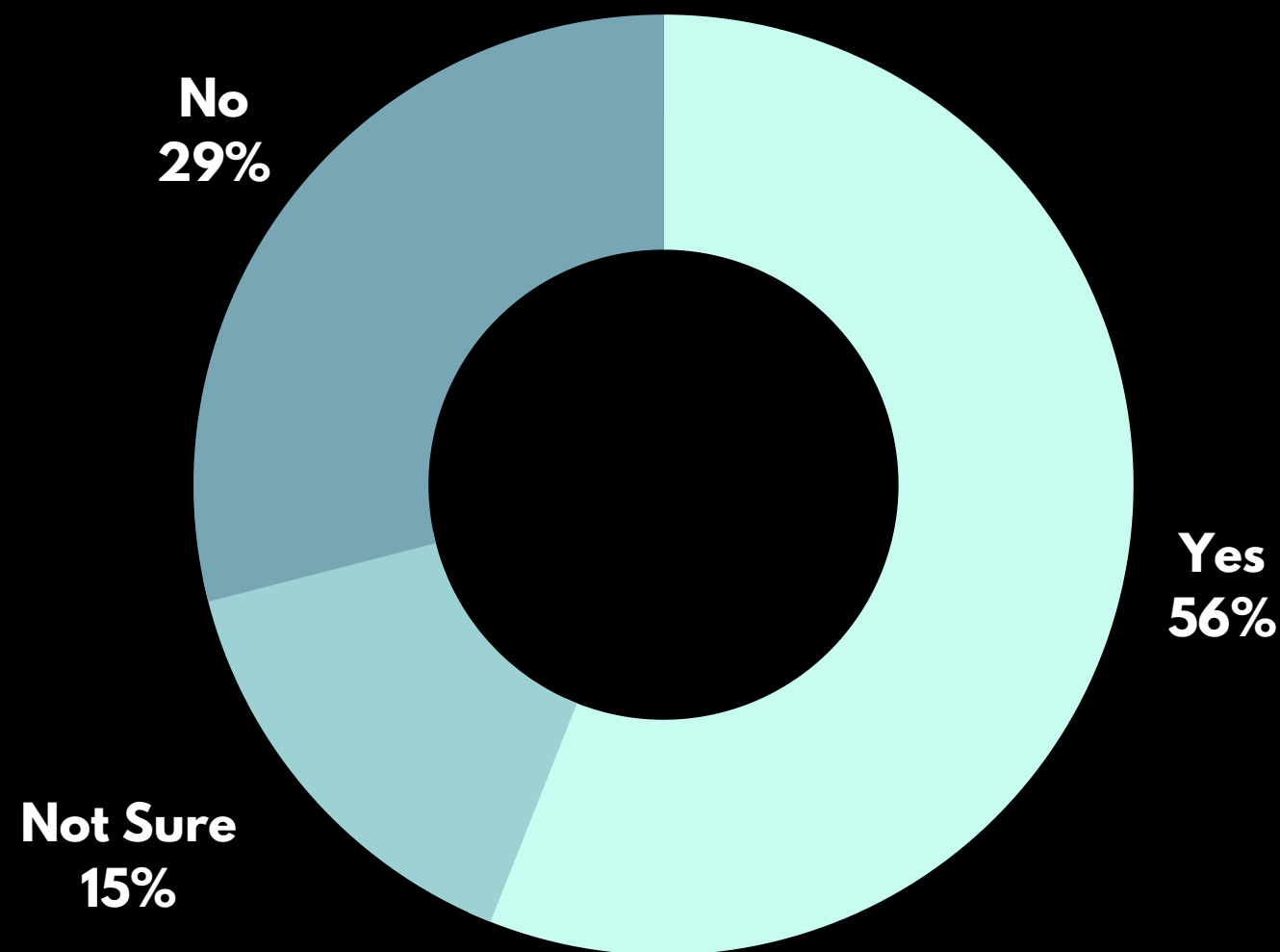
It's also pronounced in the comparative absence of women in positions of economic and artistic decision-making. Lack of gender parity on Boards of Directors, or women whose positions as literary managers or associate artistic directors are mere window dressing for male leaders whose tastes dictate the season and developmental resource allocation."

"I worked on a show where a male castmate in a similar track to mine was receiving additional pay under the table. The cited reason was that 'high quality male employees are harder to find.'"

Gender Discrimination in the Workplace

Respondents were asked if they've experienced what they would define as "sexual harassment" in an arts workplace. Separately, they were then asked if they experienced any kind of non-physical discrimination based on their gender identity in the workplace, which would include both sexual harassment and other discrimination they would not define as "sexual harassment" specifically.

HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED
SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN AN
ARTS/ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY
WORKPLACE?



HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY KIND
OF NON-PHYSICAL HARASSMENT OR
DISCRIMINATION THAT YOU FELT
WAS DRIVEN BY YOUR GENDER
IDENTITY?



“Until the 'Me Too' movement, I felt that the onus was on me because I'd failed to properly neutralize a bully. I actually believed that dealing with daily harassment and public humiliation was supposed to be part of my skill set as an actress - and that I had failed.”

How has gender discrimination impacted your career?

"I was a series regular on a network TV show with 3 other leads - all male. One of the actors harassed me daily, constantly. He would say explicitly sexual things to me (that no one else could hear) while we were shooting or right before we filmed. I asked him repeatedly to stop - he ignored me or laughed at me or told me to lighten up...If I called him out on it when it happened - that is, in front of those people - he'd dismiss me with comments like 'Oh my God get over yourself' or 'This is a comedy - get a sense of humor.' [One example is we] were exiting a scene and he yelled to the director 'Can she leave first so I can watch her ass while she walks?'

...I tried everything to deal with it: I talked to him privately, I talked to him in front of the other cast, I tried to joke back and act like it wasn't a big deal, I talked to producers...I found myself unable to be funny (it was a sitcom) - my timing was off, I was self-conscious, I was so anxious and overwhelmed with trying to manage it that eventually I couldn't function.

I'd never had stage fright in my life. For years - like 15 years - after that show I had terrible stage fright. It wrecked me, wrecked my confidence."

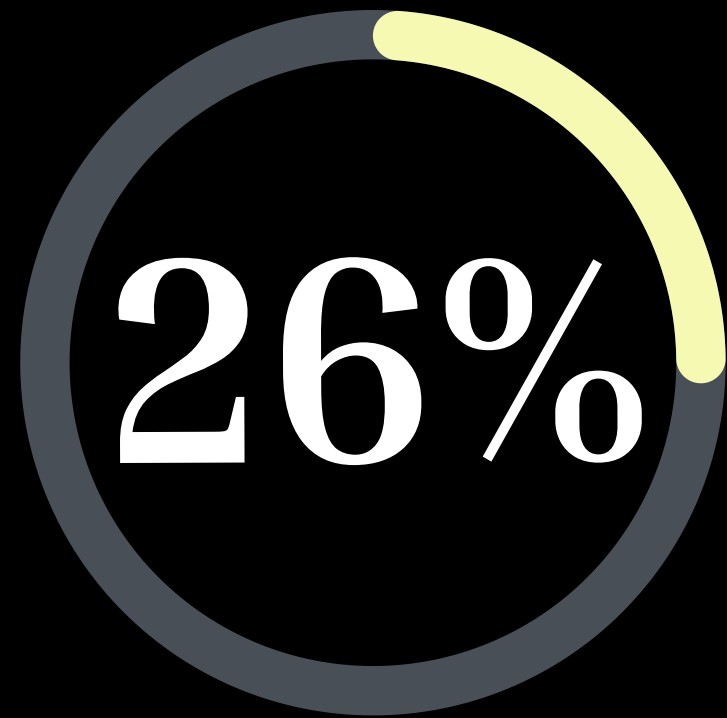
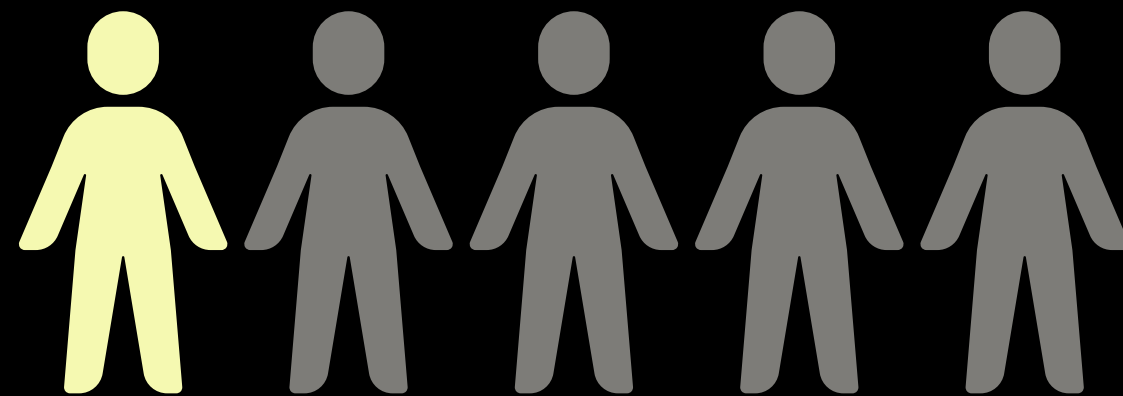
"[A man in leadership] at the regional theater company I worked for...would often make inappropriate and offensive comments to the theater staff of a sexual and misogynistic nature. He would police my wardrobe for being 'too revealing' while encouraging male employees to dress and act in more sexually provocative ways. Once, he flashed his bare ass to me and 3 other employees. I heard anecdotes from other employees that this had happened on at least 2 other occasions. This behavior was all justified and often excused because he was gay and 'just joking,' and was viewed by many as an amusing quirk, rather than a matter for potential concern. Anyone who voiced discomfort or concern would be dismissed as uptight."

“I was pressured to continue teaching during severe morning sickness (multiple times), with no flexibility for any type of access to maternity leave. I was expected to work with a 103 degree fever *while pregnant*, given no pathway to time off after suffering a miscarriage. Sporadic childcare resulted in loss of work or hostility within classrooms either by my employer or due to lack of support from my employer.”

Physical violence in the workplace

20%

HAVE EXPERIENCED
SEXUAL ASSAULT IN
AN ARTS WORKPLACE



HAVE EXPERIENCED
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE IN THE
WORKPLACE THAT THEY FELT
WAS DRIVEN BY THEIR
GENDER IDENTITY

15%

WERE DISCRIMINATED
AGAINST DUE TO A MEDICAL
CONDITION, MEDICAL
EMERGENCY, OR MEDICAL
PROCEDURE RELATED TO
THEIR GENDER IDENTITY

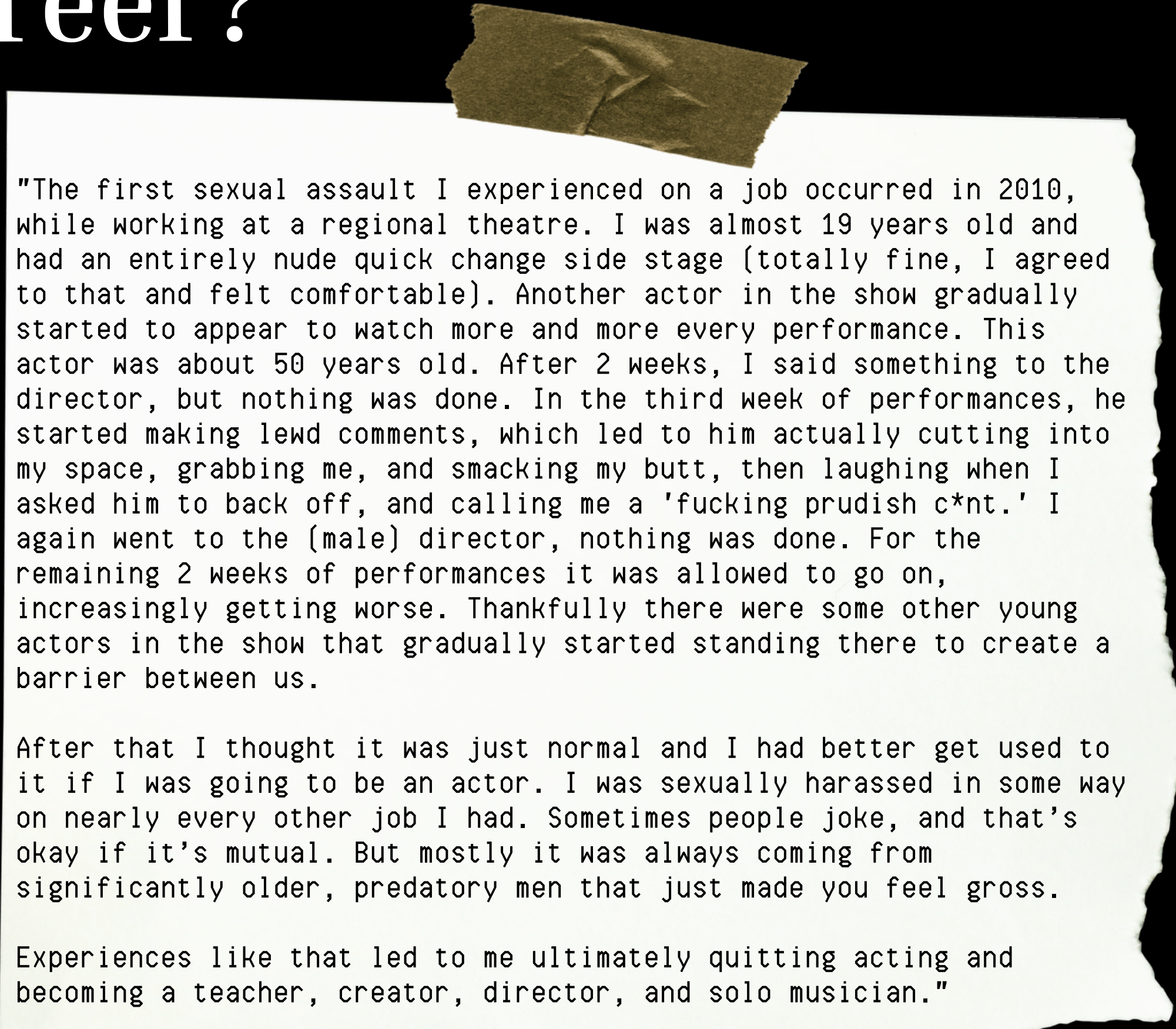
AN ADDITIONAL 7% ANSWERED "NOT SURE" TO
THIS QUESTION.

How has sexual assault impacted your career?

“ I was attacked onstage by a co-star/classmate. He grabbed my breast in a rehearsal & then tried to choke me during the performance. None of this had been planned or agreed upon.

I was told by a different male classmate that I wouldn't succeed if I didn't get comfortable with being sexual in front of others. I also dealt with many of my female actor friends being raped by a local producer.

For many years, it felt like an unsafe profession to continue in, which put me behind in pursuing my career. ”



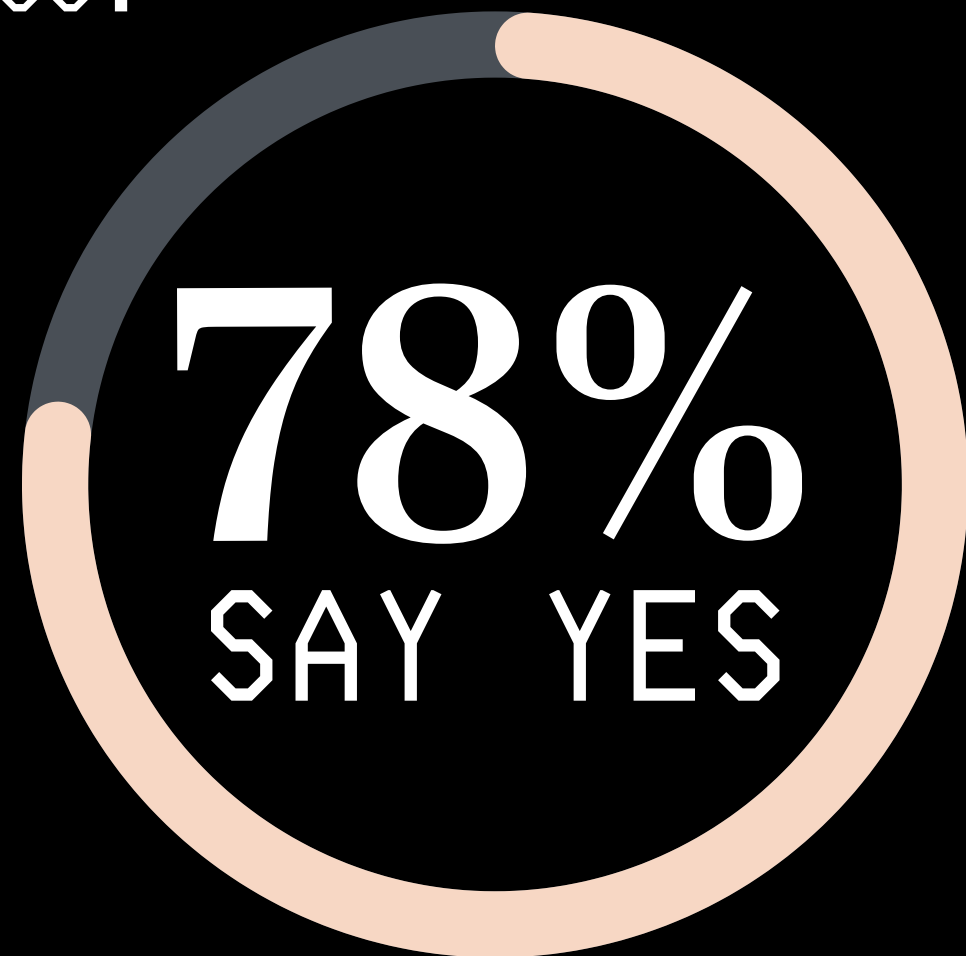
"The first sexual assault I experienced on a job occurred in 2010, while working at a regional theatre. I was almost 19 years old and had an entirely nude quick change side stage (totally fine, I agreed to that and felt comfortable). Another actor in the show gradually started to appear to watch more and more every performance. This actor was about 50 years old. After 2 weeks, I said something to the director, but nothing was done. In the third week of performances, he started making lewd comments, which led to him actually cutting into my space, grabbing me, and smacking my butt, then laughing when I asked him to back off, and calling me a 'fucking prudish c*nt.' I again went to the (male) director, nothing was done. For the remaining 2 weeks of performances it was allowed to go on, increasingly getting worse. Thankfully there were some other young actors in the show that gradually started standing there to create a barrier between us.

After that I thought it was just normal and I had better get used to it if I was going to be an actor. I was sexually harassed in some way on nearly every other job I had. Sometimes people joke, and that's okay if it's mutual. But mostly it was always coming from significantly older, predatory men that just made you feel gross.

Experiences like that led to me ultimately quitting acting and becoming a teacher, creator, director, and solo musician."

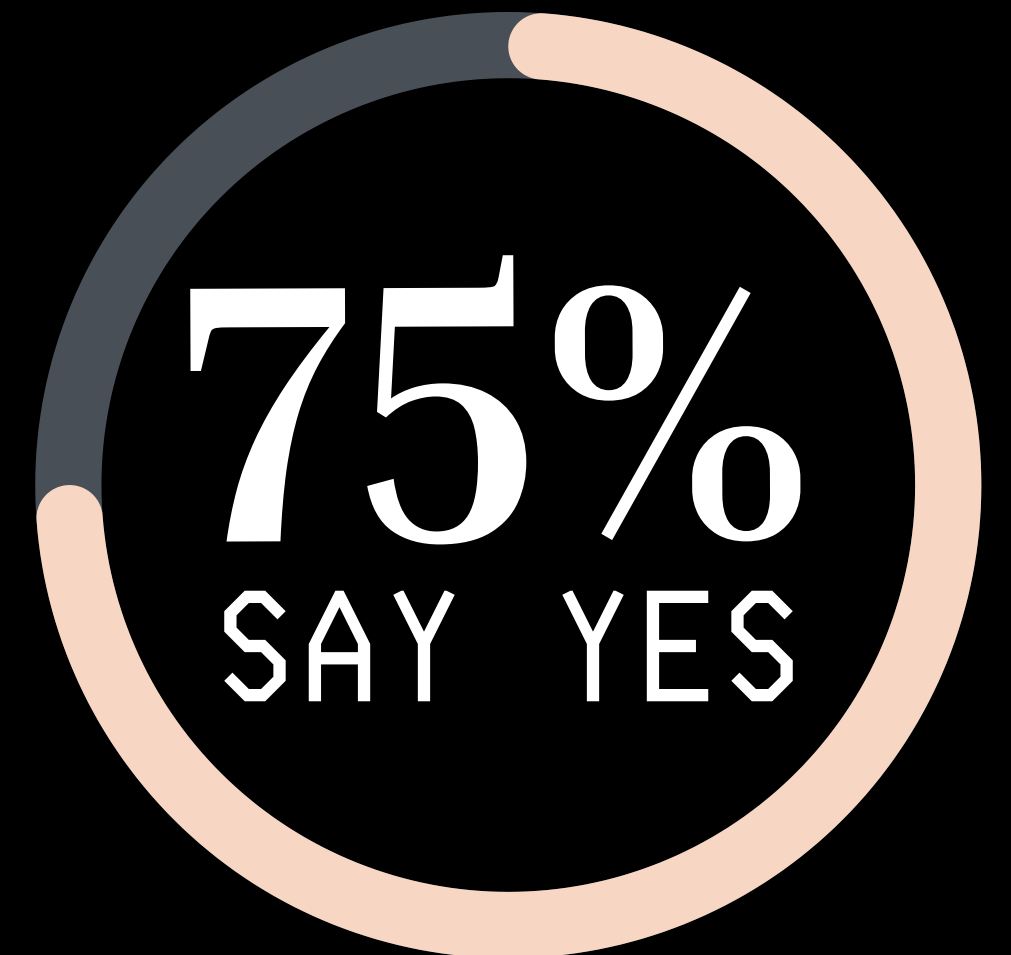
Arts & Entertainment Workplace Culture

WITHIN THE ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY, HAVE YOU EVER WITNESSED SOMEONE ELSE EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATION, VIOLENCE, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, OR SEXUAL ASSAULT IN THE WORKPLACE, EITHER FIRSTHAND OR THAT THEY DISCLOSED TO YOU?



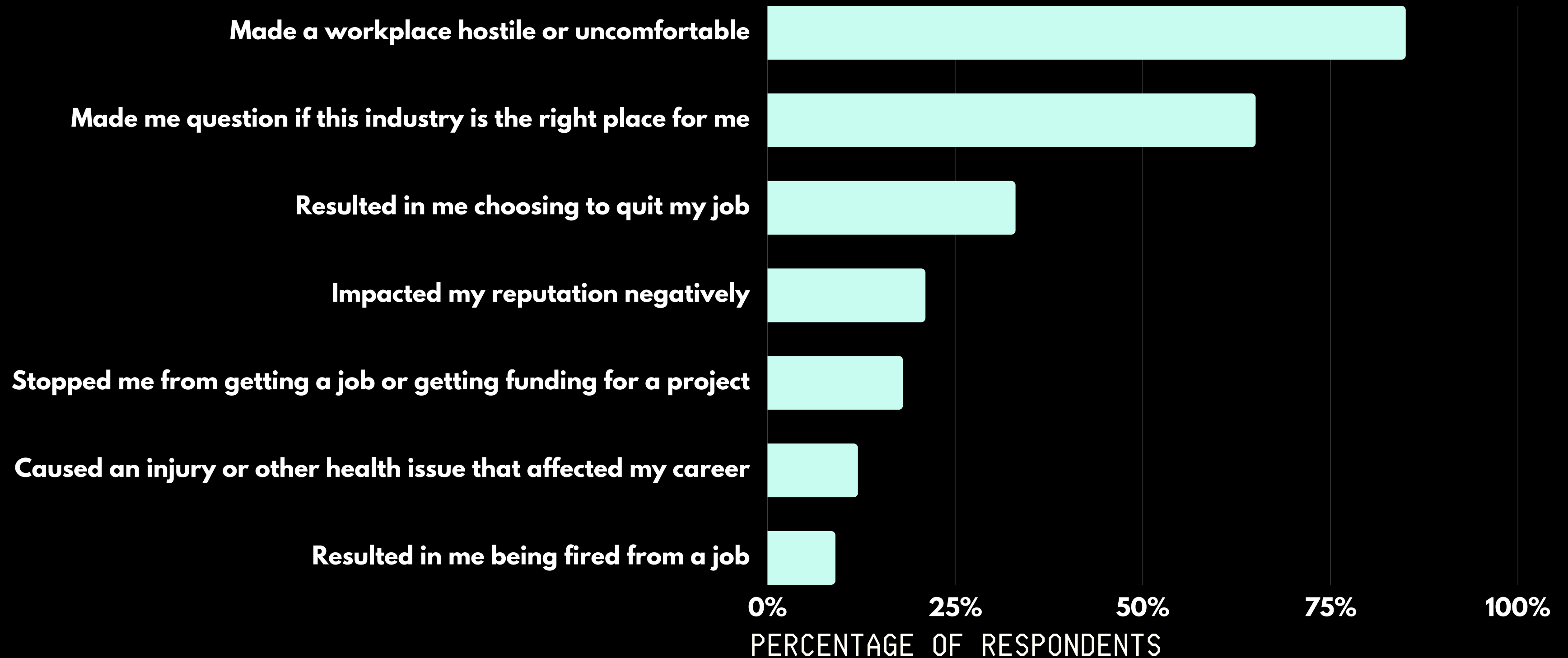
“My white male boss asked if it's 'my time of the month' if I were to act differently or had an off day. It seems small but it affected how I presented myself constantly and caused a lot of anxiety.”

HAVE YOU EVER FELT YOU WERE WORKING IN AN ENVIRONMENT THAT YOU WOULD DEFINE AS “HOSTILE,” FOR ANY REASON?



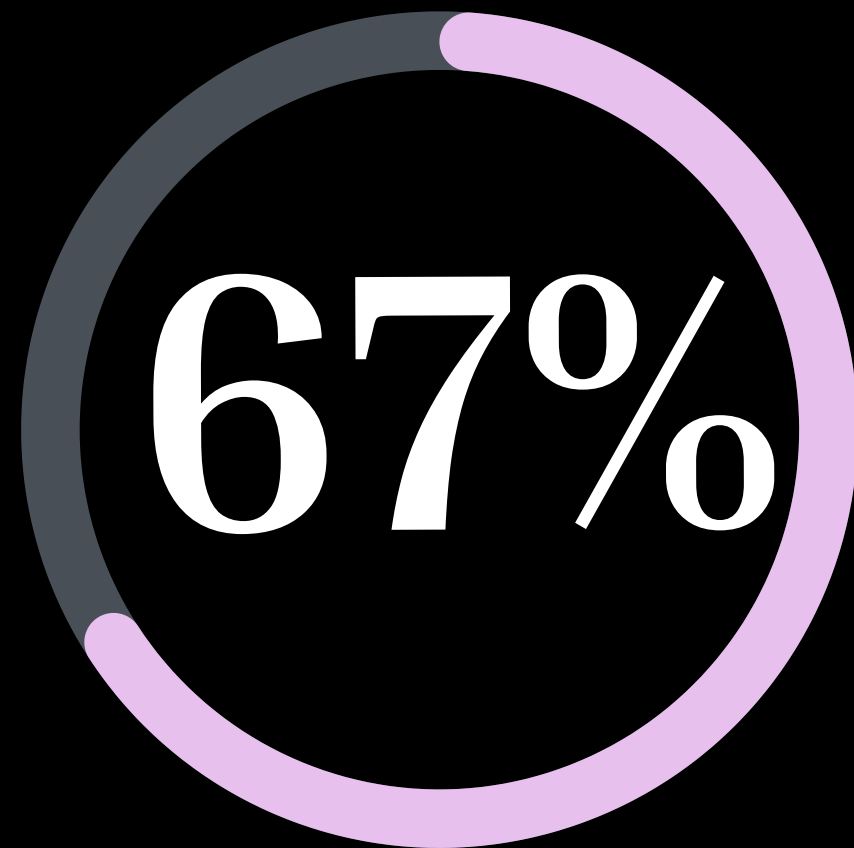
The Impact of Workplace Discrimination

61% OF PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCED VIOLENT OR NON-VIOLENT DISCRIMINATION SAID THAT IT NEGATIVELY IMPACTED THEIR CAREER LONG-TERM. OF THOSE PEOPLE, HERE IS HOW IT IMPACTED THEM:



The Impact of Workplace Discrimination

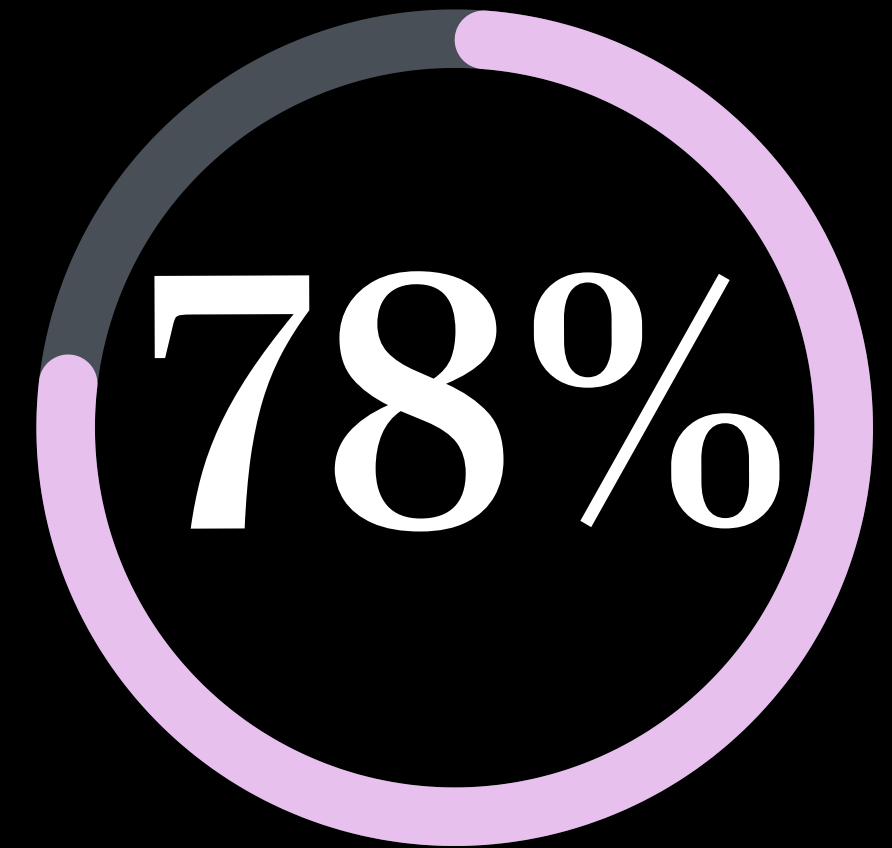
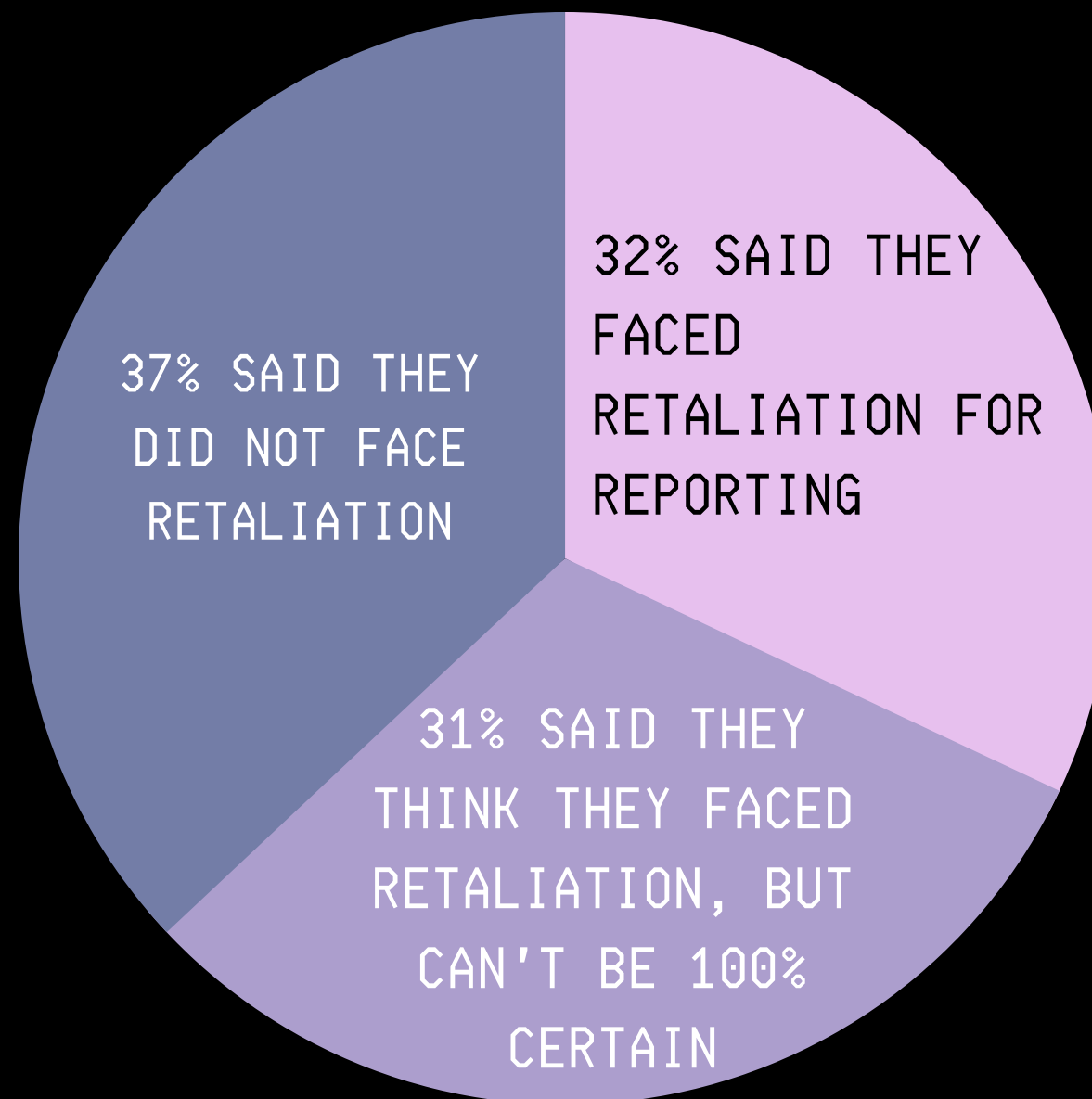
OF PEOPLE WHO FACED DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, OR VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE AND BROUGHT A COMPLAINT TO THEIR EMPLOYER, UNION, OR HR:



WOULD RANK THEIR
EMPLOYER'S RESPONSE AS
A 1-3 OUT OF 10

("1" BEING THE WORST POSSIBLE
RESPONSE, "10" BEING THE
BEST)

63% DEFINITELY OR POSSIBLY FACED
RETALIATION FOR REPORTING IT



NEVER BROUGHT A LAWSUIT
OR COMPLAINT TO A
GOVERNMENT AGENCY*

*18% OF THESE SAID THEY WOULD
PURSUE LEGAL ACTION IF THEY
FELT THEY HAD THE RESOURCES

Final Thoughts

Playwrights, composers, and producers start each new show that all other artists get hired to work on. But, they expressed frustration that there are the fewest resources for them, and they bear the financial & time burden of developing their new show from scratch. Actors appeared at the highest risk for physical assaults.

Most of the artists surveyed have to work multiple jobs across multiple industries to make ends meet. Those in the lowest income brackets were most affected financially by the COVID shutdown. Of the 71% of respondents whose income dropped to under \$5,000 during the pandemic, most were making \$55,000 or less prior to the pandemic.

INDUSTRY ACTION ITEMS TO FIX GENDER INEQUALITY, BASED ON THIS STUDY

- A CENTRALIZED REPORTING SYSTEM FOR INDUSTRY-WIDE SEXUAL HARASSMENT, ASSAULT, AND DISCRIMINATION WITH CONSISTENT CONSEQUENCES FOR PERPETRATORS
- A FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH CARE ACKNOWLEDGING HOW FACING DISCRIMINATION LONG-TERM CAN HAVE HEALTH & CAREER IMPLICATIONS
- INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT WRITERS/COMPOSERS: A "COMMON APP" TO REDUCE THE TIME SPENT APPLYING FOR GRANTS, RESIDENCIES, AND OPPORTUNITIES; CENTRALIZED RESOURCES FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

“If these questions have been written out, perhaps I’m not the only one who has experienced this. So thank you.”

“One thing I’ve learned from talking to other women is that my experiences are really common and they happen to women world wide. I also 100% believe there is a better industry we can all create together.”

About This Study

This study was conducted by She NYC Arts, a 501(c)3 Not-For-Profit organization that fights for gender equity in the entertainment industry, with a specific focus on theater and Broadway. In addition to this study, our programs include annual Theater Festivals in New York, Los Angeles, and Atlanta; the Broadway Women's Alliance; and CreateHER, a program for New York City High School students to train them on careers in playwriting and producing. In December 2022, SheNYC will launch its newest program: New Pages, a publishing wing to further distribute the work of our alumni playwrights.

SHE NYC ARTS IS FUNDED BY GENEROUS GRANTS FROM: ART/NY, THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS, NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS, AND INDIVIDUAL DONORS AND SPONSORS.

This survey was conducted anonymously, and some quotes have been edited to protect anonymity. Respondents had the option to include their contact information if they wanted to be contacted further about the survey. Respondents were reached by:

- SHE NYC ARTS MAILING LIST OR SOCIAL MEDIA: 73%
- WORD OF MOUTH: 13%
- OTHER ORGANIZATIONS' MAILING LISTS OR SOCIAL MEDIA: 9%
- OTHER: 7%



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FROM SHE NYC THEATER FESTIVAL SHOWS

Volume 1: 2016-2017, New York

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