

CONDUCTING C.O.V.E.S. AT THE BARNES FOUNDATION & CALDER GARDENS

ANNA ROTH
BMC 2027

HART B420 - MUSEUM STUDIES
PRAXIS SEMINAR

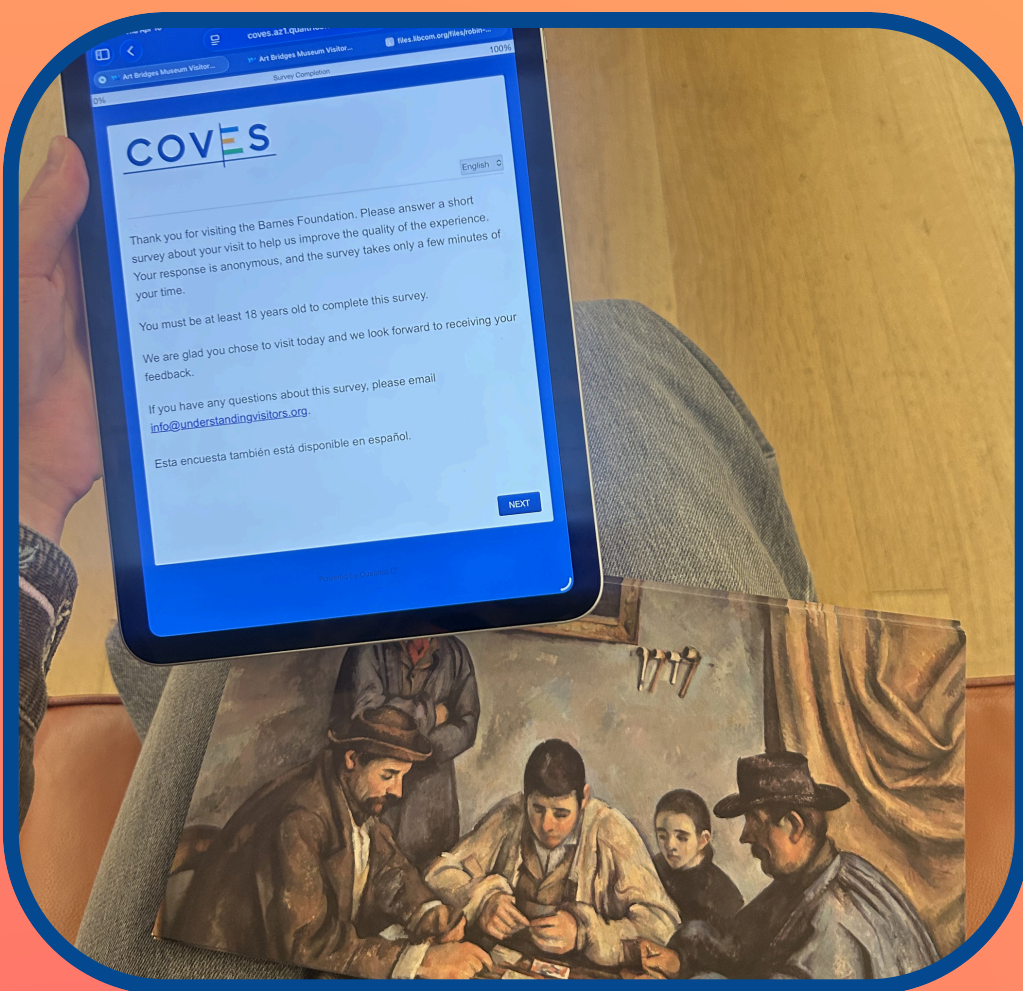
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BACKGROUND

- The Barnes Foundation is an institution founded in 1922 which houses the collection of Albert C Barnes.
 - Educational mission promoting accessibility.
 - Displays Impressionist, Modern, African, Indigenous American art and metalwork.
- Calder Gardens is a new institution founded in 2025 as an open space for reflection at the intersection of Alexander Calder's art, nature, and architecture.
 - Operating partner of the Barnes.

PROJECT & GOALS

- Collaboration for Ongoing Visitor Experience Studies (COVES).
- Intercept 30-60 visitors weekly to better understand Barnes visitors as part of a multi-institutional museum study.
- To develop a more nuanced understanding of museum visitor behavior and museum systems.
- Deepen understanding of museum operations in connection to the community.



RESULTS

- Who are the visitors?
- Why does each person visit?
- How do visitors rate their experiences?



CHALLENGES

- Staying persistent on days with fewer visitors.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Meeting dozens of new people each day, including new colleagues.
- Hearing about the experiences of visitors.
- Proximity to amazing artwork and special exhibitions.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Visitors are more likely to be receptive to surveying when someone approaches them, as the experience feels more personal. They also appreciate the ability to share their opinions.
- Accessibility is one of the factors that people notice first, and this is reflected in the feedback that they choose to share.
- Collaborative and free experiences tend to draw in larger crowds.

