

Beyond the Visual

Audio guide

**HENRY MOORE
INSTITUTE**

Stop 15. Track 1.

Joseph: Hello, my name is Joseph Rizzo Naudi. I'm a blind writer and I'm joined today by Lenka Clayton, who's one of the exhibiting artists in the *Beyond the Visual* exhibition. Hello, Lenka.

Lenka: Hey, Joseph. So nice to meet you and get to talk to you.

Joseph: Thank you so much for joining us.

Lenka: You're welcome.

Joseph: I would love to give the listeners a sense of your artwork. What is it that people will experience when they walk into the gallery and encounter your piece in this show?

Lenka: So the piece that I'm showing in *Beyond the Visual* is called *Sculpture for the Blind by the Blind*. In the middle of the area, there would be three tabletops. And then on top of those tables are nine white sculptural forms. They're between the size of a spaghetti squash and a sleeping small dog. They're made of plaster. They're waxed. There's also going to be a braille sign on the wall that can be read by touch. That is a description of the sculptures that you're looking at.

And there's also going to be a photograph on the wall of a sculpture by Constantine Brâncuși called *Sculpture for the Blind*.

Joseph: Can you give us a brief description of that photograph?

Lenka: They're white and they're marble. They're abstracted forms that resemble heads, eggs, spheres, something in that realm. They're displayed inside a museum vitrine. The middle one is a sculpture called *Sculpture for the Blind*.

The reasons that this project began, that I made this work, is that I came across this sculpture, *Sculpture for the Blind*, in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. And I'm a sighted person. I could see the sculpture and I could see that it was in this big glass case. And when I heard the title, there was something extraordinary that it suggested to me that it was a sculpture titled for the blind, but it was displayed permanently in a way that it was completely inaccessible to anybody who would identify as blind. And this little bit of confused logic, where the logic of the museum kind of came up against the logic of the artist, who named this very poetic title and the logic of the museum is to keep this as safe as possible. These two different logics collided and made this kind of absurd moment in reality, which I found thrilling and fascinating and ridiculous and kind of very demonstrative of the human condition. And I include myself, obviously, in that. And so I set myself the task of trying to, as I'm, you know, another artist, trying to carry out the original artist's wishes. Of course, you could argue, did he just title it that or did he mean that it was for the blind? But I decided to understand the title as that this sculpture was for people who would identify as blind. And I set myself the task of trying to make that happen. I did it through a number of steps.

First of all, I petitioned the museum to loan the work. I was working as an artist in residence with the Fabric Workshop and Museum. We tried to get the Philadelphia Museum to loan us the original artwork and they said no. We tried to arrange for groups of people to come and experience the artwork by touch. They, you know, that also wasn't possible.

We went through every version. We asked if we would be allowed to scan it to make a copy so that it could be touched. And this also wasn't possible. So we went through every kind of version we could in order to get this into the hands of someone who would identify as blind.

And in the end, I did the last thing I could, which was as a sighted person, I could stand in front of it in the museum and I could describe it. And so I wrote a description, a visual description as close as I could. And then with the Fabric Workshop and Museum, we invited people who identified as blind or visually impaired. They didn't have to be artists to come and listen to me read that description and to make the form that they understood from my words.

So each of the sculptures in this series were made by a different artist who identified as blind or visually impaired, according to the same description that I read out loud. And the Braille sign on the wall, which is only legible to somebody who's able to read Braille, is that description that I read aloud. So that's the one unifying core of this variety of sculptures.

One important part of this piece is that you're allowed to touch these sculptures so they can be experienced directly by touch. And that's the exact same way that they were made.

Joseph: Thank you so much, Lenka, for introducing us to your artwork and taking us through it in such interesting detail.

Lenka: Thank you for asking me. I'm delighted to be part of this exhibition. I'm incredibly honoured. And thanks, it was really nice to talk to you.

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This is a transcript of an audio guide produced by Henry Moore Institute for the exhibition *Beyond the Visual*, on display from 28 November 2025 to 19 April 2026. For more information visit henry-moore.org/beyond-the-visual