

Beyond the Visual

Audio guide

**HENRY MOORE
INSTITUTE**

Stop 9. Track 1.

Joseph: Hello, my name is Joseph Rizzo Naudi. I'm a blind writer and I'm here with David Johnson, one of the artists exhibiting at the *Beyond the Visual* exhibition. Thank you so much for joining me, David.

David: Hi there, Joseph. Thank you for having me.

Joseph: So we're going to give people listening a sense of your artwork, the artwork that you're exhibiting at the exhibition. And I'm wondering what people will find when they enter the gallery space and come across your work.

David: So I am presenting two pieces in the show. One of them consists of a table, a large rectangular modernist table. It'll be surrounded by four stools of the same style and visitors will be invited to sit at the table on the stool and under the table. They will find a series of silicon facsimile pieces of discarded chewing gum. Perfectly clean, but very similar to the lumps of chewing gum we all find under tables and chairs in public places.

These lumps of chewing gum, lookalike chewing gum, are laid out in such a way as to present the kind of pattern. And in fact there will be braille pattern under those as well. A braille word. The dots will make up a braille word in what they call grade two braille, which is where some of the word is put into kind of shorthand form. And that word is the name of the piece, which

is 'inhibition'. Because the whole piece is about inhibited art. It's about hiding it rather than exhibiting it. It's out of sight. It's invisible, inhibited and only available to touch.

Joseph: Thanks very much, David, for those introductions to your works. Could you give us a sense of your practice and how these artworks fit into it?

David: I've had over thirty years with no vision at all. What I find quite interesting is that I revived my art practice after I lost my sight. In my childhood and my teens, I was a very keen artist. Art was a very important part of my life. I went to art college after I left school for a year. Then my sight at that point was beginning to go quite quickly. So I stopped my artwork at that point.

Though I was totally blind, I found that art making and thinking about art and going to many audio description events designed for blind people, visually impaired people, brought to me a connection with the visual in a very powerful way, which was to me very surprising and very thrilling, very much part of what played into my sort of revived interest in art making. And all my work now is three-dimensional or tactile or sonic in character. Through those other ways of making art, I reconnect with the visual in a very strong way.

I suppose it's like the unusual aspect that a lot of my works present, taking very normal and everyday objects and placing them in very unusual or extraordinary either context or scales of presentation.

Joseph: David Johnson, thank you so much for taking us through your artworks and a little bit into your practice.

David: Thank you, Joe. It's been very rewarding for me to be given the opportunity to talk about them.

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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