Touch: Beyond Vision Exhibition Opens the World of Tactile Photographs and Tactile Art for the Blind

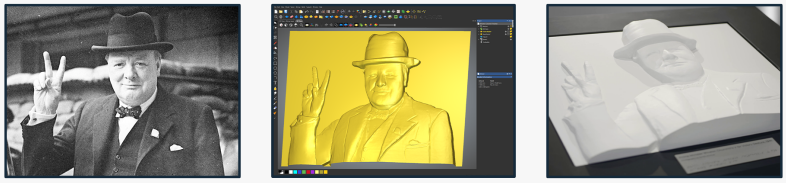
Touch: Beyond Vision at London's OXO Tower showcased tactile photographs, letting blind audiences feel memories by touch ahead of Blind Awareness Month

WARWICKSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM, September 29, 2025 / EINPresswire.com/ -- At London's OXO Tower, blind and visually impaired visitors experienced something powerful: an exhibition where photographs, memories, and cultural icons could finally be felt.

Hosted at the OXO2 Gallery, Touch: Beyond Vision was created by Carveco, the Warwickshire software company led by Managing Director Robert Newman. The event introduced the public to a groundbreaking way of making images accessible through touch, combining Carveco's new AI "Image to Relief" tool with traditional plaster casting techniques.

At the heart of the exhibition was the Memory Wall, a collection of 12 tactile photographs contributed by blind and visually impaired people from across the UK. These included guide dogs, wedding days, treasured family portraits, and loved ones. For many, it was the first time they had been able

Lucy Edwards touching Mo Farah Tactile for to the blind



Creating Tactile Artwork for the blind

The Beatles tactile artwork for the blind

to reconnect with these deeply personal images. As visitors ran their hands over the high tactile carvings, they were able to “see” their own lives, their own moments, through touch.

One guest described it simply: “For the first time, I can feel my memories.”

The emotional impact was clear throughout the day. BBC presenter Lucy Edwards said:

“This is the best tactile art that I’ve felt, because of the depth of it.”

Actor Ellie Wallwork, best known for roles in Doctor Who and Call the Midwife, added:

“This is not something I have ever experienced before in my life. It’s so emotional to be able to engage with it.”

And Chris Warwick Fisher RPT, blindwood turner and TV personality on BBC’s Money for Nothing, spoke about the importance of the tactile photographs for memory:

“As soon as you touch it, you know instantly what it is – and it means so much. It’s like being there with my dad again. The detail that we pick up, especially because we have such sensitive touch, is amazing.”

Chris was presented with a tactile relief of a photograph of his late father , an image he had not been able to experience since losing his sight in 2008. His reaction captured the essence of what Touch: Beyond Vision was designed to achieve.

The exhibition also featured 18 tactile artworks representing British cultural icons and landmarks, each accompanied by braille labels and audio descriptions. Visitors could move freely between plinths, exploring the depth and detail of each relief with their hands.

To create the works, Carveco’s AI software transformed digital images into 3D relief models. These were then carved in plaster using CNC machinery, chosen because its texture mimics the warmth and authenticity of traditional greek or roman art forms.

Alongside the artworks and Memory Wall, visitors were invited to watch a live 3D printing station producing tactile photographs on site. A “Sim Specs” area gave sighted guests the chance to experience the world with limited vision, highlighting the importance of inclusive design.

Speaking about the event, Robert Newman, Managing Director of Carveco Ltd., said: “For over 30 years our software has been used to create coins and medals for mints all over the world. Those objects are tactile by nature, small works of art you can hold and feel. With Touch: Beyond Vision, we wanted to take that same principle of relief design and apply it to something even more personal: people’s own photographs and memories. The result was extraordinary. We saw first-hand how tactile photographs can help blind and visually impaired people connect with art,

culture, and their own lives in ways that were previously out of reach."

Throughout the event, the OXO2 Gallery was alive with conversation, emotion, and discovery. Blind and visually impaired guests traced the contours of familiar faces, ran their hands across recognisable landmarks, and lingered at the Memory Wall, sometimes with tears, sometimes with laughter. Sighted visitors were equally moved, many saying they had never thought about how much of visual culture is inaccessible to those without sight.

Carveco designed the event not only to showcase its AI innovation, but to demonstrate the power of tactile art for the blind to transform inclusion.

For many blind people, photographs have always been for someone else. Touch: Beyond Vision set out to change that. By turning digital images into tactile reliefs, the exhibition showed that memories can now be experienced by everyone.

Teachers who attended spoke about the potential of tactile photographs in classrooms. Museum professionals saw opportunities for tactile exhibits that allow all visitors to engage with history. Families realised they could preserve treasured moments in ways accessible to every member.

The exhibition was intended as a first step. Following the overwhelming response, Carveco is now exploring opportunities to bring Touch: Beyond Vision to a permanent home or touring exhibition. "This is just the start," Newman added. "The Memory Wall showed us the true meaning of tactile art for the blind. It's not about technology; it's about people. It's about giving everyone the chance to touch, to connect, and to remember."

Robert Newman
Carveco Ltd
info@carveco.com
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