A THING OF BEAUTY
IS A JOY FOREVER

You are going to read a newspaper article about an artist. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Fill each gap (1-7) with the sentence which you think fits best from the list A–H. There is one sentence which you do not need to use.

Painter who lost his sight ‘sees’ as sculptor

In 1926, when Franco Marzotto Caortorta was twelve, he underwent an eye operation which involved cutting into the retina to correct severe short-sightedness. But at the age of 54, after a gradual deterioration in his eyesight, he went blind. He was, he said, one of 500 people who were to lose their eyesight within decades of having that operation.

But like artists from Michelangelo to Monet, who carried on working even when their eyes let them down, Mr Caortorta did not give up creating.

Working initially in clay, and then plasteline, a material that is particularly easy to mould, he trained himself, inspired by remembered images of Renaissance sculpture,

And still, he said, ‘It takes me a long time. I have a model, just there for the proportions, to tell me how long is an arm, an elbow...’ Striving for realism, he feels his model’s features, ‘Otherwise it doesn’t exist.’

Finally, at the age of 80, Mr Caortorta is preparing to make his British debut, with three exhibitions, including such distinguished venues as Hatfield House in Hertfordshire and the Accademia Italiana in central London. His achievements are remarkable. Degas, for example, lost the use of his right eye and may have suffered from severely weakened eyesight as early as his thirties: he often wrote of his anguish over his sight.

And by 1537, when he had reached the age of 62, Michelangelo could no longer carry out detailed work at close range.

A number of historians have suggested that extreme short-sightedness was not only reflected in some artists’ work, but may have affected it. It has been said that colour changes in Monet’s late water lily paintings were due to his failing eyesight, a result of cataracts.

Mr Caortorta said that he was spurred on by the example of any artist, but by a ‘necessity’. When he went blind, he was not ‘desperate or sad... I was so helped by my family. It came so naturally to be blind.’

A And I visualise the image in my mind.
B He became a sculptor and his hands became his eyes, his memory and touch his guides.
C Mr Caortorta will be exhibiting in the State Rooms of Hatfield House from May and in London at the Quaker House, in St Martin’s Lane from 21 June and the Accademia Italiana in Rutland Gate from 6 July.
D In 1918, he wrote of no longer perceiving colours with the same intensity.
E Mr Caortorta, who by then had established himself as a painter of Tuscan landscapes, exhibiting in galleries in Milan and Rome, was forced to lay down his brushes for the last time.
F Yet there are a surprising number of great masters who suffered such severe deterioration of their eyesight that they might have been registered as partially sighted.
G Pissarro was unable to paint out of doors because of his eyes’ sensitivity to light and wind.
H At first he was not confident of his abilities and it took some fifteen years before he felt he was skilled enough to have his sculptures cast in bronze.
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