

The Interrelated Development of Music, Color Selection, and Screen Composition in Norman McLaren's *Synchromy*

KURIHARA, Utako

Norman McLaren (1914 - 1987) was a pioneering animator on the National Film Board of Canada. His last animated piece, *Synchromy*, is a seven-minute film in which the music, composed by McLaren himself, may be experienced as a moving image. This is because the sound track was developed using a synthetic animated sound technique that analogically projected the track onto the screen. While considerable mention has been made of *Synchromy* in existing studies, approaches to this masterpiece have been limited to discussions regarding color samples or the relative descriptions of sound waves and sound cards.

In this paper, I analyze the structure of *Synchromy* with regard to each of the three items, music, color selection, and composition of the screen picture, as interrelated graded developments. In order to conduct this analysis, I dictated the music of *Synchromy* in three parts and over six octaves in two hundred and seventy bars of musical score, thereby presenting McLaren's rich musical language that employs even polyrhythm, sequential modulation, and the crossing over of the parts. Then, these techniques are successfully transplanted onto the development of screen composition. Furthermore, the juxtaposition of the colors on the screen used in each stage of the music has a developmental evolution, seen through the position of the RGB color model: from complementary primary colors to similar mined colors.

It can be concluded that such developmental interrelation of musical language, color selection, and the composition of the screen picture in *Synchromy* would prove to be the ultimate concept presented by McLaren in "the art of manipulating the invisible interstices that lie between the frames."