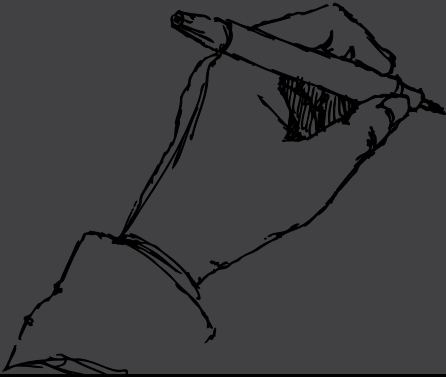


STOPMO

Studio

Stop-Motion Animation Workshop



LESSON
2

INTRODUCTION TO ANIMATION



Introduction

This teachers' guide will introduce you to the term "animation" and the historical development of animation in relation to the National Film Board of Canada (NFB), in addition to exploring Norman McLaren's animated works and different types of animation by other filmmakers.

- Discuss who Norman McLaren is and what role he played in the historical development of animation at the NFB;
- Review and discuss the best examples of Norman McLaren's animated works and how they have contributed to Canadian culture;
- Distinguish between the different types of animated films by various artists;
- Analyze artwork and discuss the artist's intention.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this teachers' guide you will be able to:

- Define the term animation in your own words;





INTRODUCTION TO ANIMATION

Definition Animation

Before you begin, it is important to have an understanding of animation. The term is generally defined as:

- The art or process of preparing animated cartoons.
- An animated cartoon.

The NFB defines animation and stop-motion animation as follows:

Animation: Frame-by-frame creation or capture of drawings, CGI models, puppets or objects, recording incremental changes in the subject. Played back at normal speed, the recorded manipulations create the illusion of movement and “give life to” what was previously static art.

Stop-motion animation: Creating the illusion of movement in a puppet by incremental “move and stop” frame-by-frame shooting. The recorded changes to the puppet’s poses “give life” to what was previously static art. This technique often uses clay or plasticine characters or puppets. Pixilation is a variation of stop-motion animation and is achieved by photographing the movement of humans one frame at a time.

Class Discussion: Define Animation

You are encouraged to investigate and discuss various definitions of animation and stop-motion animation before you proceed. Then explore the following animation facts.

Animation Facts

DID YOU KNOW?

Early animators used devices such as **phenakistoscopes**

[youtube.com/watch?v=ZmNcWhvgN1o&feature=related](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmNcWhvgN1o&feature=related)
zoetropes

[youtube.com/watch?v=dKEM5sYnOjE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKEM5sYnOjE)
and **thaumatropes**

[youtube.com/watch?v=nKuV9UysqIQ&feature=related](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKuV9UysqIQ&feature=related)
to create the illusion of movement.

The first theatre of animation opened in Paris in 1892 and was called the Théâtre Optique.

Disney created the first animated film with sound in 1928. It featured Mickey Mouse and was entitled **Steamboat Willie (7 min 23 s)**

[youtube.com/watch?v=BBggghnQF6E4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BBggghnQF6E4)

The first animated film to win an Oscar in the short documentary category was Norman McLaren’s NFB film **Neighbours in 1952 (8 min 6 s)**

[nfb.ca/film/neighbours_voisins](https://www.nfb.ca/film/neighbours_voisins)

Norman McLaren and NFB Pioneering

Who was Norman McLaren? How is he associated with animation pioneering at the NFB? Click on the following link to access **Norman McLaren’s bio**.

For an introduction to stop-motion animation and the pioneering role of the NFB, watch:



**Introduction:
StopMoStudio - Stop-Motion
Animation Workshop (46 s)**



**NFB Pioneering
Animation (58 s)**

Class Discussion: Norman McLaren

Discuss who Norman McLaren was. How do his animated works relate to Canadian culture?

Exploring Norman McLaren’s Stop-Motion Animated Films

Watch the following animated films (which feature stop-motion and drawing-on-film techniques) by Norman McLaren.

Examples of Stop-Motion

Neighbours by Norman McLaren (1952, 8 min 6 s)

[nfb.ca/film/neighbours_voisins](https://www.nfb.ca/film/neighbours_voisins)

Synopsis: McLaren employs principles normally used to put drawings or puppets into motion to animate live actors. The story is a parable about two people who come to blows over the possession of a flower. (Recommended for grades 7–10; Health, Social Studies.)

A Chairy Tale by Claude Jutra and Norman McLaren (1957, 9 min 54 s)

[nfb.ca/film/a_Chairy_tale](https://www.nfb.ca/film/a_Chairy_tale)

Synopsis: A chair, animated by Evelyn Lambart, refuses to be sat upon, forcing a young man to perform a sort of dance with the chair. (Recommended for all grades.)

Discours de bienvenue de Norman McLaren by Norman McLaren (1961, 6 min 52 s)

[nfb.ca/film/discours_de_bienvenue_de_norman_mclaren](https://www.nfb.ca/film/discours_de_bienvenue_de_norman_mclaren)

Synopsis: This humorous piece features Norman McLaren trying to give a speech while his mic keeps moving, leading to various attempts to keep it in place—nailing it to the floor, tying it down, etc. (Recommended for grades 10–12; Arts Education/Visual Arts/Multimedia and Film and Video Education.)

Keep Your Mouth Shut by Norman McLaren (1944, 2 min 20 s)

[nfb.ca/film/keep_your_mouth_shut](https://www.nfb.ca/film/keep_your_mouth_shut)

Synopsis: In this grim wartime propaganda film, a talking human skull cautions Canadians to “keep their mouths shut” in an effort to end gossiping during World War II. (Recommended for grades 11–12; Civic Responsibility and History WWII.)

Examples of Direct-on-Film Animation

Direct-on-film animation (also referred to as drawing on film or direct animation) is made by painting, etching or otherwise altering raw film stock.

Boogie-Doodle by Norman McLaren (1941, 3 min 28 s)

[nfb.ca/film/boogie](https://www.nfb.ca/film/boogie)

Synopsis: An abstract work in which various shapes and forms morph and chase each other. (Recommended for grades 3–11; Arts Education/Visual Arts, Media Arts, Film and Video Production.)

Hen Hop by Norman McLaren (1942, 3 min 40 s)

[nfb.ca/film/hen-hop](https://www.nfb.ca/film/hen-hop)

Synopsis: A shape-shifting hen dances to a variety of tunes. (Recommended for all grades.)



INTRODUCTION TO ANIMATION

Begone Dull Care by Evelyn Lambart and Norman McLaren (1949, 7 min 52 s)

nfb.ca/film/begone_dull_care_caprice_couleurs

Synopsis: A vibrant example of painting on film, in fluid lines and colour, set to jazz music. (Recommended for grades 1–10; Arts, Music, Film Animation.)

Blinkity Blank by Norman McLaren (1955, 5 min 15 s)

nfb.ca/film/blinkity-blank

Synopsis: Experimenting with the phenomenon of persistence of vision, McLaren engraves pictures on blank film, creating vivid, percussive effects. (Recommended for all grades.)

Synchronie by Norman McLaren (1971, 7 min 33 s)

nfb.ca/film/synchronie

Synopsis: Made with an optical printer, this film displays McLaren's technique of rendering sound directly onto film (flashing white boxes on blue/red vertical lines). (Recommended for all grades.)

Class Discussion

Discuss the examples of Norman McLaren's most well-known works. Which ones won awards? What type(s) of animation is he best known for? What do you think his intentions were when he created these films? What is your opinion of his experimental works on film? Do you find these works to be similar to other animated works you've seen?

Exploring Different Types of Stop-Motion Animation

Clay animation is one type of stop-motion animation. Other types of animation are listed below.

The NFB film *Animate Everything!* is a great introduction to the concept of animation. It can be presented to students to demonstrate how they can also convey a message and share a story through a variety of animation techniques.

Animate Everything! by Scott Kiborn (2010, 14 min 23 s):

onf.ca/film/animate_everything/

Synopsis: Spaceships soar into space. Dots dance on a page. Rocks and twigs transform into expressive faces. Kids can easily create this kind of magic themselves, and all they require are a few simple tools. Divided into four short, easy-to-understand chapters, *Animate Everything!* introduces basic concepts of animation to a young audience. Offering visual explanations with colourful images, siblings Lindsay and Will demonstrate how to bring everyday objects to life—and even how to animate people! *Animate Everything!* encourages you to “make your own magic in whatever style you want.”

- **Object Animation:** Using everyday objects such as a stapler, mug, pencil, etc.
- **Pixilation:** A variation of conventional stop-motion animation achieved by variation of conventional stop-motion animation and is achieved by photographing the movement of humans one frame at time.
- **Sand Animation:** A process that involves moving sand around on a flat surface (2D).
- **Painting on Glass:** Applying paint mixed with glycerin (to prevent it from drying) on a glass surface (2D).
- **Paper Cut-Out Animation:** Animation employing paper puppets with hinged limbs, using pieces of construction paper on a flat surface (2D).
- **Pinscreen:** Animation created from white and grey tones produced from differing pin depths and light on a screen.
- **Computer-generated animation:** Digitally created animation.

The following films, made by various directors, employ examples of different types of animation:

Object Animation/Pixilation

The Ride by Gerald Potterton (1963, 6 min 40 s)

nfb.ca/film/ride

Synopsis: This film depicts the daydream of a chauffeur awaiting his employer. On a hot summer day, he begins to imagine that it's winter—and a series of comic misadventures unfolds. (Recommended for grades 7–12; Health/Personal Development and Problem Solving/Conflict Resolution.)

Chérie, ôte tes raquettes by André Leduc (1975, 2 min 55 s)

nfb.ca/film/Cherie_ote_tes_raquettes

Synopsis: This amusing French-language film uses pixillation to depict a couple's highly unusual trek through the countryside. (Recommended for grades 7–12; Media Education/Film and Video Production.)

Tchou-tchou by Co Hoedeman (1972, 13 min 52 s)

nfb.ca/film/tchou-tchou_en

Synopsis: Object animation is used to bring to life characters made of blocks. (Recommended for all grades.)

The Garden of Ecos by Co Hoedeman (1977, 10 min 47 s)

nfb.ca/film/garden_of_ecos

Synopsis: An animated garden featuring animals, bugs and objects made out of papier mâché. (Recommended for all grades.)

Painting on Glass

Black Soul by Martine Chartrand (2000, 9 min 47 s)

nfb.ca/film/black_soul

Synopsis: This animated film dives into the heart of black culture with an exhilarating trip through history. Watch as a young boy traces his roots through the stories his grandmother shares with him about the events that shaped their cultural heritage. (Recommended for grades 9–12; Social Studies and Diversity.)

Jeu by Georges Schwizgebel (2006, 3 min 45 s)

nfb.ca/film/jeu_en

Synopsis: In the world of *Jeu*, the landscape is constantly morphing—a helter-skelter universe that evokes the chaos of modern life. (Recommended for all grades.)

Sand Animation

The ErlKing by Ben Zelkowicz (2002, 5 min 2 s)

nfb.ca/film/erlKing

Synopsis: Based on Goethe's poem, *The ErlKing* uses sand-on-glass animation set to the music of Schubert. The moving images, resembling woodcuts, capture the haunting, nightmarish quality of the tale of the ErlKing who steals and kills a little boy. (Recommended for grades 9–12.)

The Sand Castle by Co Hoedeman (1977, 13 min 17 s)

nfb.ca/film/sand_castle

Synopsis: An Oscar-winning short about a sandman and the creatures he sculpts out of sand. (Recommended for grades K–6; Arts Education/Visual Arts.)

Wapikoni mobile – Le vieil homme et la rivière by Stephen Chilton; in Atikamekw with French subtitles (2008, 5 min 9 s)

nfb.ca/film/Le_vieil_homme_et_la_riviere

Synopsis: One of the first animation films produced by the Aboriginal Wapikoni mobile studio, this touching short features beautiful imagery created through sand animation. (Recommended for grades 7–10; Arts Education/Visual Arts.)



INTRODUCTION TO ANIMATION

Paper Cut-Out Animation

Marianne's Theatre by Co Hoedeman
(2004, 15 min 45 s)

nfb.ca/film/mariannes_theatre

Synopsis: This short about a troupe of marionette acrobats dissolves the boundaries between theatre and animated film to create a magical experience. (Recommended for all grades.)

Forming Game by Malcolm Southerland
(2008, 5 min 27 s)

nfb.ca/film/forming_game

Synopsis: There are no winners or losers in this “game,” an engaging dance of shapes and sounds; the fun is in the creative way that forms unfold. (Recommended for grades 7–9.)

Sniffing Bear by Co Hoedeman (1992, 7 min 47 s)

nfb.ca/film/sniffing_bear

Synopsis: This animated film uses the Arctic landscape and the traditional Inuit characters of the Bear, the Seal and the Owl to raise young people’s awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse. (Recommended for grades K–6; Health/Personal Development/Substance Use and Abuse/Addiction.)

The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse by Evelyn Lambart (1980, 5 min 29 s)

nfb.ca/film/town_mouse_country_mouse

Synopsis: This beautifully animated film depicts two different lifestyles and suggests it is preferable to live a simple life than one of danger. (Recommended for all grades.)

Le corbeau et le renard by Francine Desbiens, Pierre Hébert, Yves Leduc and Michèle Pauzé; French only (1969, 2 min 34 s)

nfb.ca/film/corbeau_et_le_renard_Le

Synopsis: A modern interpretation of the classic Jean de La Fontaine fable. (Recommended for Grades 9–12; Arts Education/Visual Arts/English Language Arts/Children’s Stories/Fables.)

Charles et François by Co Hoedeman; French only (1987, 15 min 24 s)

nfb.ca/film/charles_et_francois

Synopsis: An animated film about an unusual relationship, full of tenderness and complicity. This story depicts the physical and psychological upheavals of a grandfather and his grandson over the years. A sweet reflection on the changing nature of life. (Recommended for grades 7–11; Family Studies/Home Economics/Aging/Death, Dying.)

Pinscreen

Mindscape by Jacques Drouin (1976, 7 min 31 s)

nfb.ca/film/Mindscape

Synopsis: An artist steps inside his painting and wanders about in a landscape filled with symbols that trigger unexpected associations. (No grade recommendation provided; suggest grades 7–12.)

Imprints by Jacques Drouin (2004, 6 min 3 s)

nfb.ca/film/Empreintes_Imprints

Synopsis: This creative example of pinscreen animation is “the filmmaker’s declaration of love for the pinscreen—an instrument that has been such an important part of his life” (Marco de Blois). (Recommended for grades 9–12; Visual and Media Arts.)

Digital Animation

Hunger by Peter Foldès (1973, 11 min 22 s)

nfb.ca/film/Hunger

Synopsis: Depicting one man’s descent into greed and gluttony, *Hunger* is one of the first films to use computer animation; this satire serves as a cautionary tale against self-indulgence in a world still plagued by hunger and poverty. (Recommendation for grades 10–12; Arts Education/Visual Arts.)

Ryan by Chris Landreth (2004, 13 min 57 s)

nfb.ca/film/Ryan

Synopsis: An animated film about the life of Ryan Larkin, a Canadian animator who produced some of the most influential animated films of his time. Interviews with Ryan’s friends shed light on his downward spiral and struggle with addiction. (Recommended for grades 11–12; Art Education and Visual Arts, Health/Personal Development, Mental Health/Stress, Substance Use and Abuse/Addiction.)

Opération Coucou by Pierre M. Trudeau; French only (2002, 13 min 8 s)

nfb.ca/film/operation_coucou

Moon Man by Paul Morstad (2004, 3 min 33 s)

nfb.ca/film/Moon_Man

Synopsis: Inspired by the song “Moon Man Newfie,” composed and sung by Canadian music legend Stompin’ Tom Connors, this film tells the story of folk hero Codfish Dan, who made Newfoundland history after a lucky fishing trip on the Milky Way. (Recommended for all grades.)

La Salla by Richard Condie (1996, 8 min 11 s)

nfb.ca/film/La_Salla

Synopsis: In a room full of wind-up toys, the film’s hero sets a chain of events into motion that ends up disturbing both his own, and the viewer’s, sense of reality. (Recommendation for grades 11–12; Health/Personal Development/Problem Solving/Conflict Resolution.)

L’escapade de Marco by Philippe Lanteigne; French only (2005, 6 min 1 s)

onf.ca/film/escapade_de_marco

Synopsis: Marco uses his imagination to embark on a dangerous adventure on a motorized scooter. (Recommended for all grades.)

Class Discussion

Discuss the different types of animation and consider the length of time it took to produce them. Are you surprised by the variety of animation types? What types of animation do you prefer or find most unique?

An overview of **Animation Techniques** can be found on the NFB website at www3.nfb.ca/animation/objanim/en/techniques.

Individual Learning Activity

Select a topic that interests you and is relevant to your class work. You may select from the following course themes if you like, or choose your own topic.


- Bullying
- The Environment
- Substance Abuse
- Active Healthy Lifestyles, Body Image
- Racism and Diversity

Look for an animated film on NFB.ca that relates to the topic you have selected. If you need help, please access the links provided below. You will likely have little trouble finding a film that addresses your chosen topic, as the NFB has produced numerous animated works!

SUGGESTED NFB ANIMATED FILMS RELATED TO SELECTED COURSE THEMES


BULLYING:

Bully Dance by Janet Perlman (2000, 10 min 14 s)

 nfb.ca/film/bully_dance

THE ENVIRONMENT:

Under the Weather by Tali (1997, 6 min 10 s)

 nfb.ca/film/under_weather

Islet by Nicolas Brault (2003, 7 min 1 s)

 nfb.ca/film/islet

The Garden of Ecos by Co Hoedeman
(1997, 10 min 45 s)

 nfb.ca/film/garden_of_ecos

Arkelope by Roslyn Schwartz (1994, 5 min 17 s)

 nfb.ca/film/arkelope

Blowhard by Brad Caslor and Christopher Hinton
(1978, 9 min 33 s)


 nfb.ca/film/blowhard

Deep Threat by Zlatko Grgic (1997, 7 min 12 s)

 nfb.ca/film/deep_threat

SUBSTANCE ABUSE:

The Sniffing Bear by Co Hoedeman
(1992, 7 min 47 s)

 nfb.ca/film/sniffing_bear


ACTIVE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES, BODY IMAGE:

Flawed by Andrea Dorfman (2010, 6 min 3 s)


 nfb.ca/flawed

RACISM/DIVERSITY:

Christopher Changes His Name by Cilia Sawadogo
(2000, 6 min 30 s)

 nfb.ca/film/christopher_changes_his_name

Roses Sing on New Snow by Yuan Zhang
(2002, 7 min 4 s)

 nfb.ca/film/roses_sing_on_new_snow


Lights for Gita by Michel Vo (2001, 7 min 34 s)

 nfb.ca/film/lights_for_gita

Black Soul by Martine Chartrand
(2000, 9 min 47 s)

 nfb.ca/film/black_soul

Minoru: Memory of Exile by Michael Fukushima
(1992, 18 min 45 s)

 nfb.ca/film/Minoru-Memory-of-Exile

Pies by Sheldon Cohen (2004, 12 min 14 s)

 nfb.ca/film/pies

The Chinese Violin by Joe Chang (2002, 8 min 21 s)

 nfb.ca/film/chinese_violin

NORMAN MCLAREN'S BIO

ANNEX 01

For animator and filmmaker Norman McLaren, images, colours, sounds and music had special resonances, which he delighted in exploring in depth. Today, more than fifty films remain as reminders of his remarkable artistry.

The young McLaren intended to specialize in set design when he entered the Glasgow School of Fine Arts in 1932. He joined the Glasgow Film Society and discovered motion pictures through the masterpieces of Sergei Eisenstein, Vsevolod Pudovkin and Oskar Fischinger. He quickly realized the relevance of this “seventh art” as a means of expression and began painting directly on film, scratching the emulsion to make the film stock transparent, unaware that Len Lye was also carrying out similar experiments.

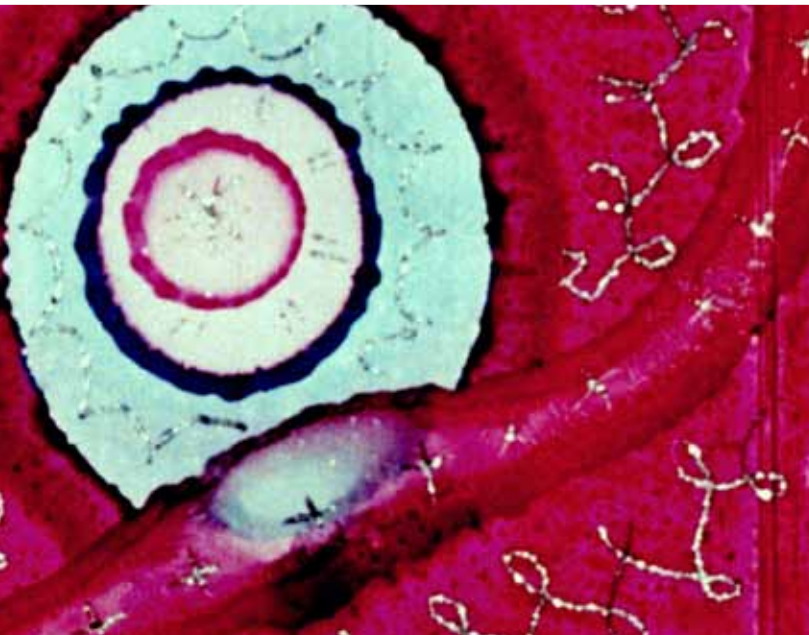
McLaren began his filmmaking career in 1934 and, the following year, two of his films won prizes at the Scottish Amateur Film Festival, where John Grierson was one of the members of the jury. In 1941, at the invitation of Grierson, who had become Canada’s first Government Film Commissioner, McLaren joined the National Film Board.

Most of the early films he made for the NFB were intended to support the war effort: *V for Victory*, *Five for Four*, *Dollar Dance* and *Keep Your Mouth Shut*. This didn’t prevent him from making several experimental films and founding an animation department at the NFB.

McLaren’s determination to explore new techniques resulted in a body of work that won him international renown. Throughout his career, he made fifty-nine films, most leaning towards experimental animation and using music as an important element. In three of his films, he also experimented with the use of dance and dancers.

McLaren’s sense of movement led him to apply animation to anything and everything. He used a simple chair in *A Chairy Tale*; scratches and painting on film in *Begone Dull Care/Caprice en couleurs* in 1949 and *Blinkity Blank* in 1954; and a mixture of live characters, animation and special effects for *Neighbours* in 1952 and *Canon* in 1964. In *Opening Speech: McLaren/Discours de bienvenue de Norman McLaren*, he even filmed himself struggling with a microphone that had a will of its own.

McLaren’s films have garnered more than 200 international awards. *Neighbours* won an Oscar in 1952, and *Blinkity Blank* received the short film Palme d’Or at the 1955 Cannes Film Festival. In addition to these awards, the honorary doctorates awarded to him all over the world, his membership in juries at countless festivals, the many tributes paid to him, the retrospectives of his films, the articles, papers and theses on his work, and the exhibitions of his drawings and films, all show that, years after his death, his reputation is as strong as it ever was.



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FILMS BY AND ABOUT MCLAREN

ANNEX 02

- Seven Till Five,*
1933
- Camera Makes Whoopee,*
1935
- Polychrome Phantasy,*
1935
- Book Bargain,*
1936
- Defence of Madrid,*
1936
- Hell Unlimited,*
1936
- McLaren: Student & Amateur Filmmaker,*
1933-1936. 1936
- Mony a Pickle,*
1938
- News for the Navy,*
1938
- Love on the Wing,*
1939
- McLaren: The Young Professional,*
1936-1939, 1939
- NBC Valentine Greeting,*
1939
- The Obedient Flame,*
1939
- Scherzo,*
1939
- Spook Sport,*
1940
- Boogie-Doodle,*
1941
- Mail Early,*
1941
- McLaren: Independent & Immigrant,*
1939-1941, 1941
- V for Victory,*
1941
- Five for Four,*
1942
- Hen Hop,*
1942
- Dollar Dance,*
1943
- Chants populaires (No. 1),*
1943
- Chants populaires (No. 2),*
1943
- Chants populaires (No. 3),*
1943
- Chants populaires (No. 5),*
1943
- C'est l'aviron,*
1944
- Keep Your Mouth Shut,*
1944
- A Rainy Day,*
1944
- Let's All Sing Together (No. 1),*
1944
- Let's All Sing Together (No. 2),*
1944
- Let's All Sing Together (No. 3),*
1945
- Let's All Sing Together (No. 4),*
1945
- Let's All Sing Together (No. 5),*
1945
- Let's All Sing Together (No. 6),*
1945
- Chants populaires (No. 4),*
1946
- Chants populaires (No. 6),*
1946
- Hoppity Pop,*
1946
- Là-haut sur ces montagnes,*
1945
- A Little Phantasy on a 19th-century Painting,*
1946
- Fiddle-de-dee,*
1947
- La Poulette grise,*
1947
- Story of a Violin,*
1947
- Neighbours,*
1952
- Blinkity Blank,*
1955
- Animated Motion: Part 3,*
1977
- Animated Motion: Part 4,*
1977
- Animated Motion: Part 5,*
1978
- McLaren: The Civil Servant as Artist,*
1976-1978, 1978
- McLaren: Artist as Civil Servant,*
1941-1948, 1982
- McLaren: The Civil Servant as Artist,*
1956-1961, 1982
- McLaren: The Civil Servant as Artist,*
1961-1971, 1982
- The McLaren Package,*
1992
- Creative Process: Norman McLaren,*
2002
- Norman McLaren Collector's Edition,*
2002
- Norman McLaren – The Masters Edition,*
2006