

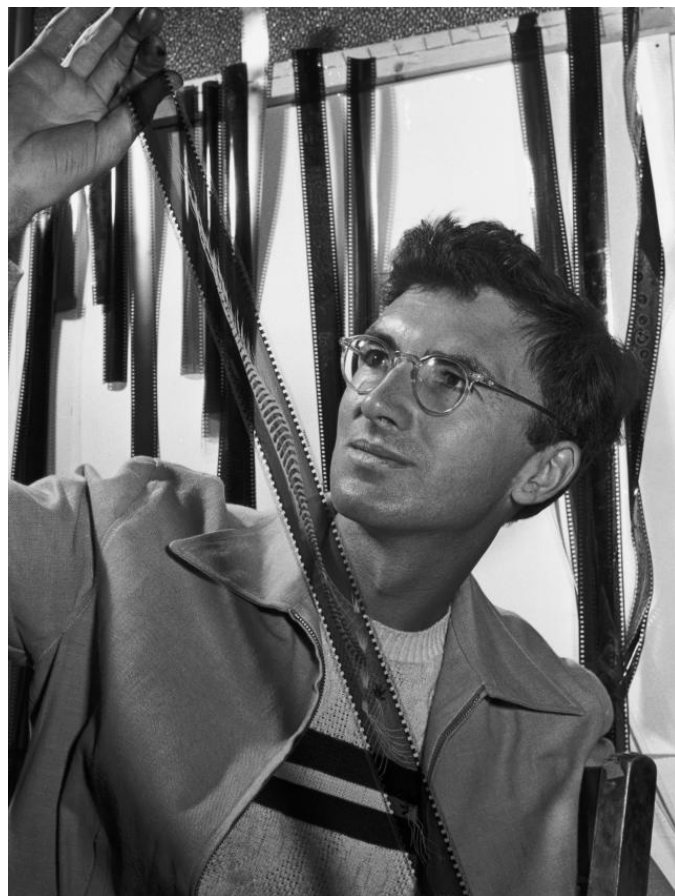
# NORMAN MCLAREN

Born in Stirling, Scotland, in 1914, Norman McLaren, the founder of the NFB's animation studio, succeeded in giving Canadian animation a vision and direction that still endure today, long after he was hired by John Grierson in 1941. McLaren refused to accept the simple narrative that claimed cinema had been invented by the Lumière brothers in 1895; he was of the opinion that the art form had yet to fully come into its own, and that research and experimentation were the natural ingredients of artistic creation. He thus emerged as a pioneer of countless techniques that have become hallmarks of animation: drawing and engraving on film, cross-dissolves, pixillation, synthesized sound, and many others. Pre-existing methods and formulas had no place in his approach. Uncommon boldness and originality were the creative sources for all his work.

The path Norman McLaren forged in the history of cinema has been illuminated by the many awards he received throughout his career: a Palme d'Or in the short film category at Cannes for *Blinkity Blank*, an Oscar® for *Neighbours*, a Berlin Silver Bear for *Rythmetic*, a Berlin Silver Plaque for *Begone Dull Care*, BAFTAs for *Blinkity Blank*, *A Chairy Tale* and *Pas de deux*, not to mention numerous Canadian awards, as well as the honours bestowed in recognition of his overall achievements.

McLaren's personality and philosophy were inseparable from the direction animation took at the NFB. A tireless innovator, he championed a creative concept of animation that views filmmakers as artisans who take charge of every step of the production of their films, much like artists in their studios. Consequently, McLaren set an example for his colleagues, motivating them to develop their own tools and experiment with new techniques.

Norman McLaren died in Montreal in 1987. His importance in the history of film animation is also evident in the influence he continues to have on hundreds of filmmakers and artists who consciously follow in his footsteps.



Norman McLaren checks the final print of the film *Begone Dull Care*.  
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**McLAREN**  
WALL-to-WALL

 **QUARTIER  
DES SPECTACLES  
MONTREAL**

**NFB  
FNO** 