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| **About you** | **[Salutation]** | Richard | [Middle name] | Leskosky |
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| Lye, Len (1901-1980) |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| New Zealand native Len Lye was an experimental innovator in painting, sculpture, documentary film, and animation. After studying indigenous art in Samoa, he immigrated to England in 1926. His early paintings anticipated abstract expressionism and he later became associated with surrealism, showcasing multiple works in London’s 1936 International Surrealist Exhibition. During World War Two, Lye made live-action films for the British government and, after migrating to the USA in 1944, for the *March of Time* series. His kinetic (motorised) sculptures figured prominently in international exhibits throughout the 1960s.  Best known for his experimental animation, Lye was more concerned with depicting motion than the moving figures. He pioneered camera-less filmmaking — which he called ‘direct cinema’ — by applying paint to clear film stock (*Colour Box*, 1935) and scratching images on the emulsion of exposed film (*Free Radicals*, 1958). He also manipulated the three colour matrices of the Gasparcolor process to create textured film images (*Rainbow Dance*, 1936) and explored the potential of the rayogram, Man Ray’s camera-less photographic process (*Colour Cry*, 1952). His imagery often suggests that of the Pacific Island tribes with whom he lived in his youth, and he frequently utilised jazz scores in his films. Disney studio animators studied Lye’s films while working on *Fantasia*, and he influenced many avant-garde filmmakers including Norman McLaren, Ian Hugo, and Stan Brakhage. |
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| Further reading:  (Bendazzi)  (Lye, A Colour Box)  (Lye, No Trouble)  (Lye, Curnow and Horrocks, Figures of Motion: Len Lye, Selected Writings)  (Russet and Starr) |