



80ft Laser Chromasonic towers at the Royal Adelaide Expo 1978.

(like a well built piano) but showing little or no understanding of what art is about. Reminding me of nothing more than a bore of a television lighting man at the console flicking the dimmer of a few lamps and trying to match the rhythm of some beat – how dreary!

Let us consider the new tool: the laser – an accurate shape of *light* – in what ever colour it is possible to have – and – *time*. The other important factor is the organ through which we can recognise this form of *light-time*, the eye.

It is remarkable how much information an eye can receive and transmit to the brain. The old saying that one picture is worth 1,000 words rings quite true. Add the phenomenon of time to the picture and you get a wealth of other information – multiply the picture by space and you've got a visual concert as I proposed in my 4D project in 1965 (the fourth dimension being time). It looks to me that we are getting there.

In my last project, the Laser-Chromasonic Tower Mk. 2, in Adelaide in 1978, I think I

managed to step again a little closer to the soul or art in this form.

An essential element in a work of art is a Theme, containing the story, statement, situation, idea etc., expressed in a Form by means of a piano, the voice, paint or light. Where the form chosen is a combination of light and sound I have found that it is not enough that the music already has the soul and the light tries to accompany it. It would be like a dancer just tapping the rhythm to a good composition. Both have to be integrated to one form as art, otherwise we will finish with just another Disney's *Fantasia* – popular, but hardly a major work of art.

With the help of a couple of Synthesizers, I was able to give, at least partly, the Laser-Chromasonic Mk. 2 a theme. The audience could hear only the recorded music which was fed into several technical devices (optical scanners, modulated optics, mechanical scanners etc.) through synthesizers. The synthesizers were programmed to translate the original sounds into forms or shapes that

could be integrated with the music, and which were played by the operators, not only to be unified with the music, but also to present a kinetic form – a ballet if you like – possessing an existence of its own.

This unification proved quite successful from the popularity point of view. We had about 250,000 people viewing the exhibit, this however is not the point. Popularity does not mean quality. We were still far from the perfection I would like to obtain for a Carnegie Hall concert. It may require a special breed of artists to produce a work of art with combinations of sound and light. I feel we are getting there but it will take time. I firmly believe it is going to be a form of art as strong, as important and expressive as painting, sculpture, music, writing etc.

To be able to paint an aurora on the sky is becoming less and less science fiction. A few years ago I observed an experiment at the Australian National University by a scientist friend of mine producing a point of light (no holography!) at a predetermined location in



"Harmonics" – an experiment in art, 1978.



Artist's impression by the author of a visual concert in progress.