

CAFE MAN RAY

Gallery commemorates one of the grand old men of dadaism

By Hunter Drohojowska

Old dadaists don't fade away, they wind up in Los Angeles at the G. Ray Hawkins Gallery. The gallery has been transformed into the Cafe Man Ray, a bistro environment commemorating the 10th anniversary of the gallery — it opened with a Man Ray show — and including objects, photographs and prints by the artist.

Man Ray, one of the founders of the dada movement in Paris about 70 years ago, is best recognized for his irreverent "Rayographs," pictures created in the darkroom alone, and for inventing the technique of solarization, which reverses positive or negative tones of a picture. The photographs at the gallery range from \$1,700 to \$17,000.

All the photographs were printed by Man Ray himself, according to gallery director David Fabey. There is a generous sprinkling of portraits of the artist's wife, Juliet Man Ray: Juliet on a burro in Tijuana; dressed up in funny clothes with her husband and surrealists Max Ernst and Dorothea Tanning; Juliet in evening dress with fan; and Juliet topless with the equally underclothed Countess Chadbourne.

Juliet Man Ray came to L.A.

from her home in Paris for last Friday night's reception wearing a dress adorned with a giant single eye by the designer Eliakim. A dancer who studied with Martha Graham, Juliet met Man Ray in Los Angeles in the 1940s. After six years together, they were married in a double ceremony with friends Ernst and Tanning. Man Ray died in 1976, and Juliet is executor of his estate, from which many of the works in the gallery were drawn.

Juliet Man Ray clung to the arm of Margaret Beyers, her friend for so long that Man Ray once did a print titled "Juliet's Face, Margaret's Hair."

Maurice Tuchman, senior curator of 20th-century art at the L.A. County Museum of Art, came by the Cafe Man Ray to pay respects to Juliet, as did Sidney Felsen, of Gemini, G.E.L., for whom Man Ray did limited edition photographic prints in 1966.

Man Ray gained acceptance in California when critic Jules Langner organized a show of his work at the L.A. County Museum of History, Science and Art in 1945. In 1948 there was a show at the Copley Gallery titled "To Be Continued Unnoticed." One of Man Ray's most famous paintings, of giant lips hovering in the sky ("Observation Time — The Lovers," 1932-34), was sold to gallery owner Bill Copley for enough money to pay the couple's



Jamie Rose, left, Juliet Man Ray, center, and Margaret Beyers celebrate the opening of Cafe Man Ray at the G. Ray Hawkins Gallery.

Herald photos by Leo Jarzomb

passage back to Europe.

One room of the gallery is filled with Man Ray photographs owned by director-producer Dennis Powers, including the famous image of a woman's nude back transformed into a violin called "Violin d'Ingres."

"He was way ahead of his time," said Powers. "He came to Hollywood to get into the film business. But he met with two Hollywood executives and walked out on the lunch." Powers wants to option the rights to Man Ray's

autobiography. "I think it has the potential to be an exciting miniseries."

Powers is selling his carefully honed collection, and one prospective buyer was on hand — Weston Naef of the J. Paul Getty Museum.

"In our collection, we have maybe 150 Man Rays. His important contribution is that he unrelatingly was an artist working in an experimental way for his own ends," Naef said. But Naef was just as interested in documentary

Shelley Cazin and Sidney Felsen look pleased to be on hand at the Man Ray show.



Dennis Powers, who says that Man Ray's life would make an exciting miniseries, and Diane Baker pause for a moment during the exhibit of the dadaist master's work.

pictures and snapshots by Man Ray. "They are some of the most wonderful pictures here, the same caliber of work as a hasty sketch by a great painter. Many things here

are natural additions to our collections (of photographs)."

Hunter Drohojowska writes regularly about art for the Herald.