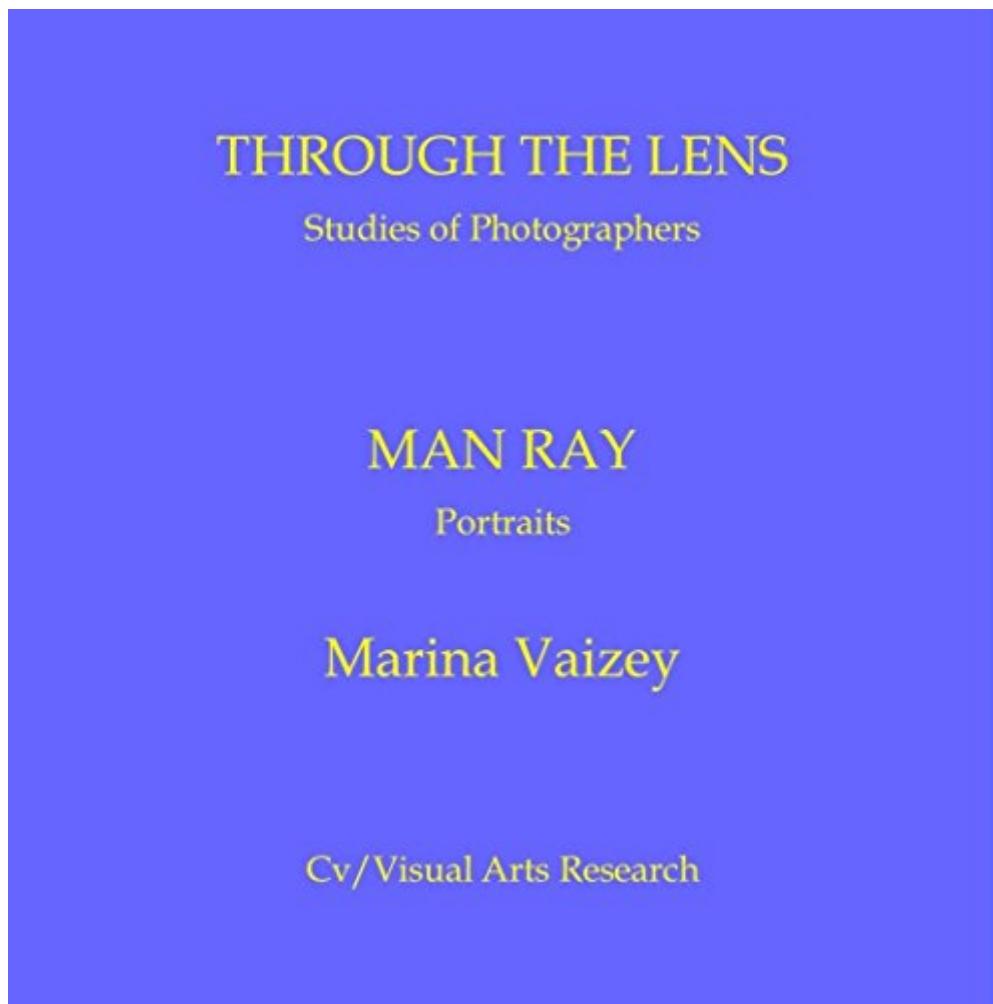


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Man Ray Portraits



Synopsis

This ample exhibition — about 150 or so photographs, and a small complementary display of well-chosen magazines, showing a succinct number in published form — by Man Ray (1890-1976) is described as the first to concentrate exclusively on his portraits. He was born in Philadelphia as Michael Emmanuel Radnitzky, the eldest child of Russian Jewish immigrants (the father's classic occupation for someone of his ethnicity and class that of a tailor); the family moved to Brooklyn in 1897, the first of Man Ray's advantageous geographical relocations. The boy, talented in drawing, was deeply engaged with the New York art world before he was 20, and a student both at the National Academy of Design (America's Royal Academy) and the Art Students League. His family simplified their surname to Ray in 1912, and he was to be known as Man Ray for the rest of his life, perhaps a portent of the extraordinary self transformations to come. He already was working as a sculptor, and in paint and mixed media, and with found material for abstract compositions, officially a dada-ist and soon to be classified as a surrealist, when that ism came into view. Man Ray purchased his first camera in 1915 to record his paintings, but by 1920 he had begun to make his living through portrait photography.

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