

THE MISSION of the National Museum of African Art is to foster the discovery and

appreciation of the visual arts of Africa, the cradle of humanity.

The Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives is a research and reference center devoted to the collection and preservation of visual materials that reflect the arts, cultures and history of Africa.

The archives' collections are available to members of the general public as well as to researchers and scholars.

FRONT COVER
Dogon Kanaga
masked dancers with
Sirige masked dancers
in background (detail)
Sangha, Mali
Photograph by
Eliot Elisofon, 1959
EEPA EECL 3508

LEFT
Young Wolof man,
Senegal
Carte-de-visite,
albumen print, c. 1880
Bonnevide Studio,
Dakar and Paris
EEPA 1989-03-21



BELOW
Minister and his wife
South Coast, Natal,
South Africa
Photograph by
Constance Stuart
Larrabee, 1949
EEPA 1998-060282



ACCESSING THE COLLECTIONS

- *By appointment only*
Monday through Friday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
- The archives is located on sublevel 2 of the National Museum of African Art
950 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC
- Records of the collections are also accessible online through SIRIS (the Smithsonian Institution Research Information System) at www.siris.si.edu.

To conduct searches by keywords, click on “Search all catalogs” in the Cross Catalog Searching Center section or “Search Catalog” under Archives, Manuscripts & Photographic Collections.

To browse images, click on “Image Gallery” at the bottom of the page and then click on “Eliot Elisofon Photo Archives” under Smithsonian Repositories.

REQUESTING IMAGES

- All requests for permission to use images must be submitted in writing (by email, letter or fax) and are subject to approval.
- Fees are charged for one-time usage and pre-payment is required on all photographic orders. For a current list of fees and services, please contact the Elisofon Archives.

WEBSITE

www.nmafa.si.edu/research/archives.html

E-MAIL

elisofonarchives@si.edu

TELEPHONE

202.633.4690 | 202.357.4879 fax

MAILING ADDRESS

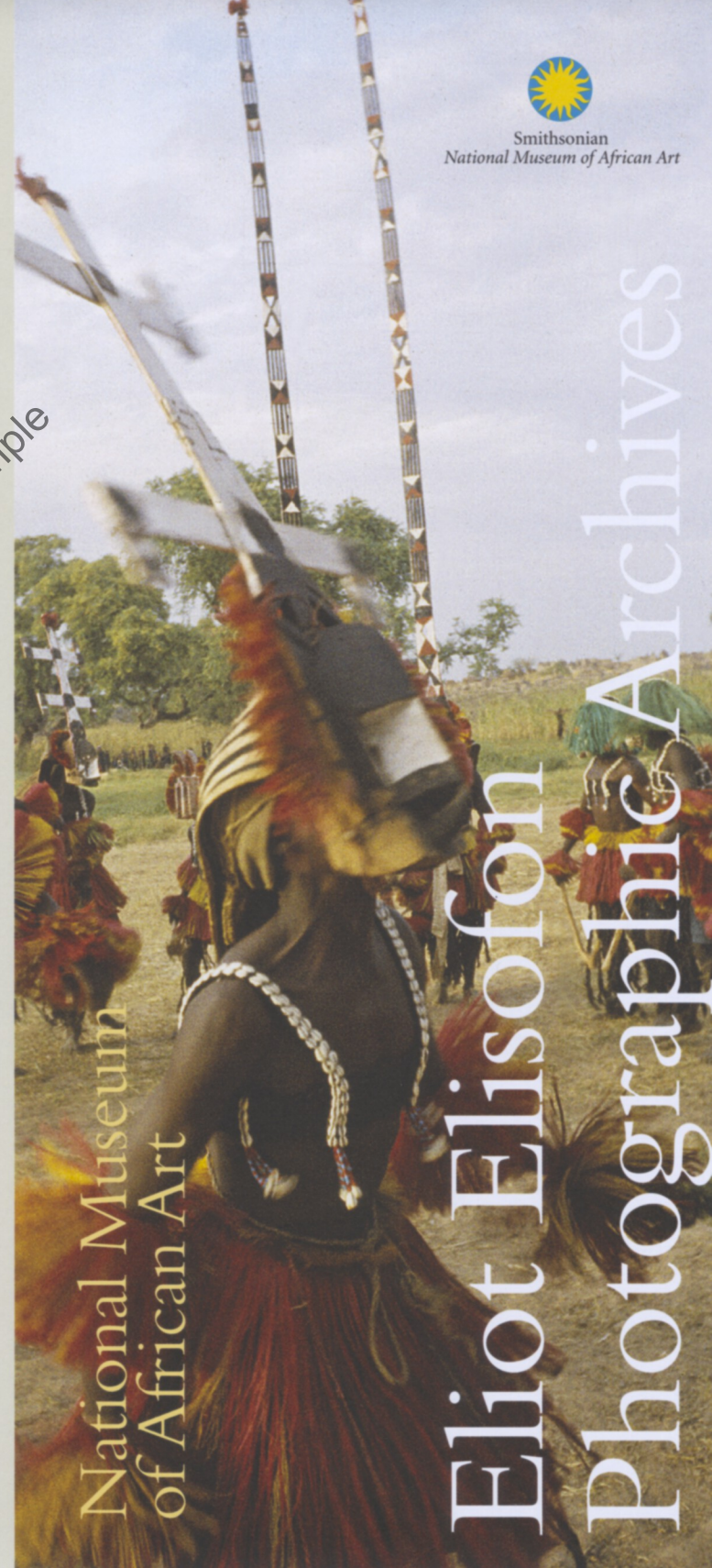
Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives
National Museum of African Art
Smithsonian Institution
MRC 708 P.O. Box 37012
Washington, DC 20013-7012



Smithsonian
National Museum of African Art



Smithsonian
National Museum of African Art



National Museum
of African Art
Eliot Elisofon
Photographic Archives

SAA Museum Archives Section Working Group Example



Eliot Elisofon photographing
Dogon blacksmith (detail)
Ogul du Haut village, Mali
Photograph by Maya Bracher, 1971
EEPA EENG 10693

association with the National Museum of African Art began as a founding trustee in 1964. Upon his death in 1973, Elisofon's extensive collection of African materials—including over 50,000 black-and-white negatives and photographs, 30,000 color slides and 120,000 feet of motion picture film and sound materials—was donated to the museum. This bequest became the foundation for the Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives.



Young Fante woman
Cape Coast, Ghana
Photographer unknown,
c. 1885–1910
Ghana Photographic Album
EEPA 1995-0018-0002

A UNIQUE REPOSITORY for materials illuminating the history of photography and photographic practices in Africa, the Elisofon Archives collections

ELIOT ELISOFFON, for whom the archives is named, was an internationally known photographer and filmmaker whose enduring visual record of African life from 1947 to 1972 was published in magazines such as *Life* and the *National Geographic*. As a filmmaker, he worked on film and television projects including the *Black African Heritage Series* (1972), a four-part documentary on African arts and cultures. Elisofon's

contain more than 300,000 items, including historic collections of glass plate negatives, cartes-de-visite, lantern slides, stereographs, postcards, maps and engravings. Special collections include late 19th- and early 20th-century photographic albums with significant anthropological and art historical research value. The holdings are divided into two major categories:

art photographs, which include African works of art from the collection of the National Museum of African Art, and **field photographs**, which depict art and life in Africa.

The field photographs, consisting of more than 300,000 images of African artists, leadership, masquerades, architecture and natural landscapes and reflect the work of both Western and indigenous photographers. The most outstanding field collection is the work of photographer Eliot Elisofon, whose images focus on the arts and cultures of West and

Butterfly mask performance
Dosi peoples, Burkina Faso
Photograph by Robert Pringle, 1988



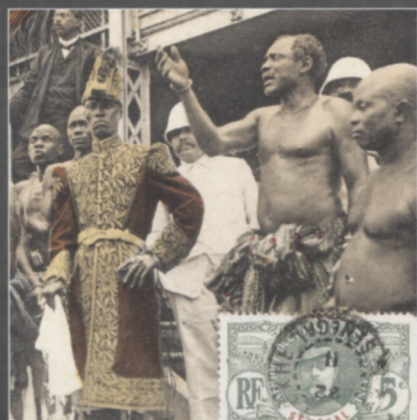
Ancient city of Gondar, Ethiopia
Photograph by Dimitrios Kyriazis,
between 1950–74
EEPA 1999-051948

Mask
Nuna peoples, Burkina Faso
Mid-20th century
Wood, pigment, metal
2005-6-47, gift of Walt Disney
World Co., a subsidiary of
Walt Disney Company

Central Africa. Other major collections include: 3,000 black-and-white photographs of rural and urban life in South Africa during the 1930s and 1940s by Constance Stuart Larrabee; over 10,000 slides depicting Yoruba art and culture by Henry John Drewal and Margaret Thompson Drewal; and field slides and motion picture films of the Igbo peoples taken in Nigeria by Simon Ottenberg. Archives staff works with art historians, anthropologists, photographers, filmmakers and other specialists in acquiring and preserving these visual resources.



Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives



SAAMuseum Archives Section Working Group Example

Mgbom Village Njenje masquerade players parading at Ndibe Village (detail)
Igbo peoples, Afikpo, Nigeria
Photograph by Simon Ottenberg, 1960
EEPA 2000-070477

The Great Mosque (detail)
Mopti, Mali
Photograph by Eliot Elisofon, 1972
EEPA EECL 16313

Kuba men weaving fiber mat (detail)
Mushenge, Congo (Democratic Republic)
Photograph by Eliot Elisofon, 1947
EEPA EENG 03188

King of Porto-Novo at the Government's Hall (detail)
Dahomey (Republic of Benin)
Photographed by Edmond Fortier, c. 1908
Published by Collection générale Fortier, Dakar
EEPA Postcard collection, F3042

Daughter of Bale of Ketu showing facial scarifications and tattoos (detail)
Yoruba peoples, Ketu (Olori), Nigeria
Photograph by Margaret Thompson Drewal, 1973
EEPA D09098

Ndebele woman
Near Pretoria, South Africa
Photograph by Constance Stuart Larrabee, 1946
EEPA 1998-060464