



# Smithsonian

*National Museum of African Art*

Melville Herskovits photographs, EEPA 1986-029

Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives, National Museum of African Art  
National Museum of African Art

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<https://africa.si.edu/collection/eliot-elisofon-photographic-archives/>

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives, National Museum of African Art
<b>Title:</b>	Melville Herskovits photographs
<b>Date:</b>	1928-1934
<b>Identifier:</b>	EEPA.1986-029
<b>Creator:</b>	Herskovits, Melville J. (Melville Jean), 1895-1963 (Photographer)
<b>Extent:</b>	736 Negatives (photographic) (+contact prints (5 v.); black & white; 3 x 4 in.) 736 Photographic prints ((6 v.); black & white; 3 x 4 in.)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	Photographs taken by Melville J. Herskovits during his trips with his wife, Frances Shapiro Herskovits, to Surinam (1928-29); Dahomey, now Republic of Benin (1931); Haiti (1934); and Brazil (1941-42). From 1928 to 1943 Melville Herskovits and his wife, Frances Herskovits (nee Shapiro) traveled together throughout West Africa and the Americas to collect evidence of the legacy of African culture. The contributions of Frances Herskovits to her husband's research were fully recognized in an exhibition held by the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University, from April 2-August 9, 1998. Entitled, "Living Tradition in Africa & the America: The Legacy of Melville J. and Frances S. Herskovits," the brochure noted, "On each trip, Frances was a full partner in the research...Until Melville's death in 1963, they worked together on the analysis of their data and the writing of books and articles; and after he died, she edited a collection of his papers."

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## Administrative Information

### Provenance

Donated by Jean Herskovits, 1986.

### Restrictions

Use of original records requires an appointment. Contact Archives staff for more details.

### Conditions Governing Use

For study purposes only. Permission to reproduce images from the Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives must be obtained in advance. The collection is subject to all copyright laws.

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## Biographical Note

Melville J. Herskovits, 1895-1963, anthropologist. After receiving a Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1923, Dr. Herskovits began teaching at Northwestern University in 1927, where he was founder and first chair of the Department of Anthropology (1938) and founder and first director of the Program of African Studies (1948).

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## Arrangement

Images indexed by negative number.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Dahomey (Kingdom)

Types of Materials:

Photographic prints

Names:

Herskovits, Jean

Places:

Africa  
Benin  
Brazil  
Haiti  
Surinam

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## Container Listing

EEPA 1986-290495: Melville J. and Francis Shapiro Herskovits standing before the railroad tracks at Kabel, Suriname, 1929

1 Negatives (photographic) (b&w; 4x5 in.)

Photographer: Herskovits, Melville J. (Melville Jean), 1895-1963

Notes: 1986-29-006-2

Title source: Archives staff, not provided by photographer.

Citation source: Dr. Christraud Geary, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Anxious Moments: The Birth of Afro-American Anthropology (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003)

Topic: Portrait photography

Place: Africa

Suriname

Genre/Form: Black-and-white negatives

EEPA 1986-290517: The Herskovits's guide, Marcus J. Schloss (right) with Lalani in Lombe, Suriname, 1929

1 Negatives (photographic) (black and white; 4x5 in.)

Photographer: Herskovits, Melville J. (Melville Jean), 1895-1963

Language: Undetermined.

Notes: 1986-29-029-2

Title source: Archives staff, not provided by photographer.

Citation source: Drs. Richard and Sally Price, The College of William and Mary.

Anxious Moments: The Birth of Afro-American Anthropology (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003)

Topic: Portrait photography

Place: Africa

Suriname

Genre/Form: Black-and-white negatives

EEPA 1986-290564: Frances Herskovits and assistant Jacoba Abensitt in Paramaribo, Suriname, 1928

1 Negatives (photographic) (b&w; 4x5 in.)

Photographer: Herskovits, Melville J. (Melville Jean), 1895-1963

Language: Undetermined.

Notes: 1986-29-075-2

Title source: Archives staff, not provided by photographer.

Citation source: Dr. Christraud Geary, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Anxious Moments: The Birth of Afro-American Anthropology (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003)

Topic: Portrait photography

Place: Africa

Suriname

Genre/Form: Black-and-white negatives

EEPA 1986-290576: Rogalli a Guide in Suriname, 1929

1 Negatives (photographic) (b&w; 4x5 in.)

1 Slides (photographs) (col.)

Photographer: Herskovits, Melville J. (Melville Jean), 1895-1963

Language: Undetermined.

Notes: 1986-29-087-2

Title source: Archives staff, not provided by photographer.

Citation source: Drs. Richard and Sally Price, The College of William and Mary.

Melville J. Herskovits's guide, Rogalli, in his garden in Paramaribo, Suriname, 1929.

Anxious Moments: The Birth of Afro-American Anthropology (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003). LL03-0034

Topic: Portrait photography

Place: Africa

Suriname

Genre/Form: Black-and-white negatives

EEPA 1986-290578: Frances Herskovits and Rudolf Ubergen Suriname, 1928

1 Negatives (photographic) (b&w; 4x5 in.)

Photographer: Herskovits, Melville J. (Melville Jean), 1895-1963

Language: Undetermined.

Notes: 1986-29-089-2

Title source: Archives staff, not provided by photographer.

Citation source: Dr. Christraud Geary, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Frances Herskovits and Rudolf Ubergen, nickname Duffy, in Paramaribo, Suriname, 1928.

Anxious Moments: The Birth of Afro-American Anthropology (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003). LL03-0034

Topic: Portrait photography

Place: Africa

Suriname

Genre/Form: Black-and-white negatives

EEPA 1986-290579: Paramount chief of the Saramakas Suriname, 4 August 1929

1 Negatives (photographic) (b&w; 4x5 in.)

Photographer: Herskovits, Melville J. (Melville Jean), 1895-1963

Language: Undetermined.

Notes: 1986-29-090-2

Title source: Archives staff, not provided by photographer.

Citation source: Drs. Richard and Sally Price, The College of William and Mary.

Gaama Moana Djankuso, Paramount chief of the Saramakas in Suriname, 4 August 1929.

Anxious Moments: The Birth of Afro-American Anthropology (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003). LL03-0034

Topic: Portrait photography

Place: Africa  
Suriname  
Genre/Form: Black-and-white negatives

EEPA 1986-290634: Paramount chief of the Saramakas Suriname, 4 August 1929

1 Negatives (photographic) (b&w; 4x5 in.)

Photographer: Herskovits, Melville J. (Melville Jean), 1895-1963

Language: Undetermined.

Notes: 1986-29-145-2

Title source: Archives staff, not provided by photographer.

Citation source: Drs. Richard and Sally Price, The College of William and Mary.

Gaama Moana Djankuso, Paramount chief of the Saramakas in Suriname, 4 August 1929.

Anxious Moments: The Birth of Afro-American Anthropology (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003). LL03-0034

Topic: Portrait photography

Place: Africa

Suriname

Genre/Form: Black-and-white negatives

EEPA 1986-290090: Interior of the Royal Palace of Dahomey, Abomey. The palm ribs separated the royal women during ceremony, 1931

1 Negatives (photographic) (b/w; 4 x 5 in)

Notes: Title source: Archives staff, not provided by photographer.  
Citation source: Dr. Lynne Larsen, University of Arkansas, Little Rock.

EEPA 1986-290092: Interior of the Royal Palace of Dahomey, Abomey with two royal women, 1931

1 Negatives (photographic) (b/w; 4 x 5 in)

Notes: Title source: Archives staff, not provided by photographer.  
Citation source: Dr. Lynne Larsen, University of Arkansas, Little Rock.

EEPA 1986-290093: Interior of the Royal Palace of Dahomey, Abomey with the female warriors known as Amazons, 1931

1 Negatives (photographic) (b/w; 4 x 5 in)

Notes: Title source: Archives staff, not provided by photographer.  
Citation source: Dr. Lynne Larsen, University of Arkansas, Little Rock.

EEPA 1986-290094: Interior of the Royal Palace of Dahomey, Abomey with the King and the female warriors known as Amazons, 1931

1 Negatives (photographic) (b/w; 4 x 5 in)

Notes: Title source: Archives staff, not provided by photographer.  
Citation source: Dr. Lynne Larsen, University of Arkansas, Little Rock.