



# Smithsonian

*National Museum of African Art*

## Simon Ottenberg Collection (Olayinka Research)

Eden Orelove

December 2017

Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives, National Museum of African Art  
National Museum of African Art  
P.O. Box 37012  
MRC 708  
Washington, DC 20013-7012  
elisofonarchives@si.edu  
<https://africa.si.edu/collection/eliot-elisofon-photographic-archives/>

# Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	1
Administrative Information .....	1
Content Description.....	2
Biographical / Historical.....	1
Names and Subjects .....	2
Container Listing .....	

---

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives, National Museum of African Art
<b>Title:</b>	Simon Ottenberg Collection (Olayinka Research)
<b>Date:</b>	2007-2013
<b>Identifier:</b>	EEPA.2017-009
<b>Extent:</b>	11 Electronic discs (CD) (1 box) 4 Boxes (correspondence and research)
<b>Language:</b>	English .

---

## Administrative Information

### Related Materials

Related EEPA collections include: EEPA 1996-020 and EEPA 1994-012 (video-recorded interviews conducted by Ottenberg), EEPA 2000-007 (photographs taken in Southeastern Nigeria within the Afikpo Village group), EEPA 2012-011 (Ottenberg Nsukka Photo Collection), EEPA 2017-010 Simon Ottenberg Collection (Research on Nsukka artists). Simon Ottenberg Papers are located at the National Anthropological Archives, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution. Simon

### Preferred Citation

Simon Ottenberg Collection (Olayinka Research), EEPA 2017-009, Eliot Elisofon Photographic Archives, National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions

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

### Conditions Governing Use

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

---

## Biographical / Historical

Simon Ottenberg (1923-) is Emeritus Professor of Anthropology at the University of Washington. He studied under Melville J. Herskovits and William R. Bascom at Northwestern University. He was a 1970 Guggenheim fellow. He has written at least seven scholarly books including...He curated the exhibition...at the Smithsonian Institution.

Freetown artist Miranda Olayinka Burney Nicol (1927-1996) is known for her experimental art created from numerous art mediums. She moved to New York City in 1949 and then to London in 1954. She experimented with various art forms, including painting, murals, prints, drawing, sculpture, textile design and mixed media. In 1958, she returned to Freetown and became the Government Artist for Sierra Leone's Ministry of Education, but also continued making her own art, including creating murals on public buildings in Freetown. As a Harmon Foundation artist, she spent a year in Paris doing textile design and fashion. After she left government service in 1968 and until she went into exile from Sierra Leone in 1988, she continued

to create art and exhibited at home and abroad. After being exiled to London, Olayinka fell on hard times, and ultimately died in poverty in 1996.

---

## Content Description

Research collection of materials related to Freetown artist Miranda Olayinka Burney Nicol (1927-1996) created between 2007 and 2013. The collection includes 4 boxes of correspondence and research and 1 box containing 11 electronic discs (CD-ROMS) primarily of images of Oyalinka's artwork. This research was compiled during the preparation of Ottenberg's book, *Olayinka: a Woman's View: the Life of an African Modern Artist* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2014).

---

## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Research

Types of Materials:

Correspondence

Names:

Burney-Nicol, Olayinka, 1927-1996

Places:

Freetown (Sierra Leone)