

# MILLER, FLOURNOY E., 1886-1971.

## Flournoy E. Miller papers, 1924-1995

Emory University  
Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library  
Atlanta, GA 30322  
404-727-6887  
rose.library@emory.edu

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### Descriptive Summary

**Creator:** Miller, Flournoy E., 1886-1971.  
**Title:** Flournoy E. Miller papers, 1924-1995  
**Call Number:** Manuscript Collection No. 1002  
**Extent:** 3.25 linear ft. (7 boxes), 1 oversized papers box (OP), 1 bound volume (BV), 1 oversized bound volume (OBV), and AV Masters: .25 linear ft.  
**Abstract:** Papers of Flournoy Miller, African American actor, entertainer and playwright, and his daughter Olivette Miller, jazz harpist. Papers include photographs, printed material relating to productions, lyrics, drafts of scripts, correspondence, scores, sheet music, and scrapbooks.  
**Language:** Materials entirely in English.

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### Administrative Information

#### Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

#### Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

All requests subject to limitations noted in departmental policies on reproduction.

#### Related Materials in Other Repositories

[Flournoy Miller collection](#), Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library.

#### Source

Purchase, 2004.

#### Citation

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**Processing**Sarah Quigley, 2011

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**Collection Description****Biographical Note**

Flournoy E. Miller, African-American actor, comedian, playwright, lyricist, and producer, was born in Columbia, Tennessee on April 14, 1887. While attending Fisk University in Nashville, he started his entertainment career, joining with his childhood friend, Aubrey Lyles, to form a 25-year partnership in 1903. They performed in college theatricals, and in 1907, Miller and Lyles were offered their first professional positions as playwrights for the Pekin Theater Stock Company in Chicago, Illinois. While there, they co-wrote their first play, "The Mayor of Dixie." In 1907, they also wrote "The Oyster Man" for Ernest Hogan, who starred in the musical until his death in 1909. In 1915, they starred in "Darkydom," which entered them into stardom and was the first major black musical comedy.

Their biggest success came in 1921, when they joined with Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle to write and produce "Shuffle Along." After the closing of "Shuffle Along" in 1924, they produced a variety of musical comedies, including "Runnin' Wild" (1924) and "Rang Tang" (1927). After the successful run of their production "Keep Shufflin'" (1928), Miller and Lyles broke up. Miller went on to write and appear in Lew Leslie's "Blackbirds" in 1930. In the following year, the team reunited and produced "Sugar Hill" with James P. Johnson.

After Aubrey Lyles' death in 1932, Miller teamed up with comedian Mantan Moreland, and they toured the vaudeville circuits. They appeared together in the motion picture, "Harlem on the Prairie," the first all-Black western. In the 1950s, Miller wrote for the television show, "Amos and Andy."

Flournoy E. Miller died in Hollywood, California on June 6, 1971. He and wife, Bessie Miller, had one daughter, Olivette, who was a renowned jazz harpist in Chicago, Illinois in the 1940s and 1950s.

**Scope and Content Note**

This collection contains the papers of Flournoy E. Miller and his daughter, Olivette Miller, from 1924-1995. The papers include financial and legal records, draft manuscripts and lyrics, correspondence, printed material relating to productions, sheet music, scrapbooks, photographs and artifacts.

**Arrangement Note**

Organized into four series: (1) Flournoy E. Miller papers, (2) Olivette Miller papers, (3) Photographs, and (4) Audiovisual.

## **Description of Series**

[Series 1: Flournoy E. Miller papers, 1924-1988](#)

[Series 2: Olivette Miller papers, 1953-1995](#)

[Series 3: Photographs](#)

[Subseries 3.1: Flournoy E. Miller](#)

[Subseries 3.2: Olivette Miller](#)

[Series 4: Audiovisual](#)

**Series 1**  
**Flournoy E. Miller papers, 1924-1988**  
**Boxes 1-4;**

**Scope and Content Note**

The series contains the papers of Flournoy E. Miller from 1924-1995, including financial and legal records, and correspondence. The papers also contain writings, scores, sheet music, and printed materials relating to performances and productions. Writings are predominantly by Miller and include scripts for "Shuffle Along" and "Runnin' Wild." Also present are works by Bessie Miller, including the manuscript of an unpublished biography of Flournoy Miller.

**Arrangement Note**

Arranged by record type, then alphabetically.

**Personal papers**

Box	Folder	Content
1	1	Articles of incorporation of the Flournoy E. Miller Foundation, June 27, 1979
1	2	Certificates of registration, 1952-1959
1	3	Contracts, 1921-1960
1	4	Copyright applications, no date
1	5	Correspondence, 1938-1976
1	6	Death certificate of Flournoy E. Miller, June 9, 1971
1	7	Deed
1	8	Masonic banner
1	9	Mayor's ribbon from "Runnin Wild"
OP1	1	Proclamation, City of Los Angeles Flournoy Miller Day, 1979
1	10	Receipts, 1923-1960
OBV1		Scrapbook
1	11	Title registration, no date

**Writings**

1	12	"Amos and Andy", 1949-1954
1	13	"Autobiography", no date
1	14	"Blue Grass", no date
1	15	"But the World Goes Round" by Casey Collins, no date
1	16	Comedy sketches, no date
2	1	"The Comic Side of the Life of the Famous Flournoy E. Miller" by Bessie Miller, no date [1 of 2]
2	2	"The Comic Side of the Life of the Famous Flournoy E. Miller" by Bessie Miller, no date [2 of 2]
2	3	"Flournoy Miller: Author-Actor-Gentleman," by an unknown author, no date
2	4	"The Gentleman Friend" by Bessie Miller, no date

- |   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| 2 | 5  | "Hittin' the Stride", no date   |
| 2 | 6  | "Keep Shufflin'" and "Shuffle Along," 1928-1933 [1 of 2]  |
| 2 | 7  | "Keep Shufflin'" and "Shuffle Along," 1928-1933 [2 of 2]  |
| 2 | 8  | "Mamma Charleston's Board House", no date   |
| 2 | 9  | "My Fifty Years in Show Business", no date  |
| 2 | 10 | Notes and script fragments, no date [1 of 2]  |
| 2 | 11 | Notes and script fragments, no date [1 of 2]  |
| 3 | 1  | Script fragments, no date   |
| 3 | 2  | "Shuffle Along", extra scenes, no date  |
| 3 | 3  | "Shuffle Along", no date  |
| 3 | 4  | "Shuffle Along", no date  |
| 3 | 5  | "Shuffle Along," biographical narrative by Noble Sissle, no date [includes related, but untitled and incomplete, narrative] |
| 3 | 6  | "Slim Pickins", no date   |

**Scores**

- |     |    |                                     |
|-----|----|-------------------------------------|
| 3   | 7  | "Boogie Production", no date        |
| 3   | 8  | "Boogy-Woogy-Beguine", no date      |
| 3   | 9  | Fragments, no date [1 of 2]         |
| 3   | 10 | Fragments, no date [2 of 2]         |
| 3   | 11 | "Happy as the Day is Long", no date |
| 3   | 12 | "Harps-My Dear", no date            |
| OP1 | 2  | "I Was There"                       |
| 3   | 13 | "I Don't Want No Labor", no date    |
| 3   | 14 | "Let's Sing a Happy Song," no date  |
| 3   | 15 | "Me and My Shadow", no date         |
| 3   | 16 | "Middle Number", no date            |
| 3   | 17 | "Soft Shoe Specialty", no date      |
| 3   | 18 | "St. Louis Blues", no date          |
| 3   | 19 | "You're the Whole Show", no date    |
| 4   | 1  | "Far-Away Love", no date            |

**Sheet Music**

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 4 | 2 | "I Don't Want Any Labor In My Job", no date |
| 4 | 3 | "I've Got to Be Lonely to Harry", no date   |
| 4 | 4 | "Keep 'Em Guessing", no date                |
| 4 | 5 | "My Sweet Hunk O'Trash", no date            |
| 4 | 6 | "Peace, Sister, Peace", no date             |
| 4 | 7 | "You Can't Lose a Broken Heart", no date    |
| 4 | 8 | "You're My Rose", no date                   |

**Printed Materials**

4	9	Flyers
4	10	Magazine clippings, no date
4	11	Newsletter, "Negro Actor's Guild of America," January 1962
4	12	Newspaper clippings, 1923-1979
4	13	Programs, 1929-1988
4	14	Program booklets

**Series 2**  
**Olivette Miller papers, 1953-1995**  
**Boxes 5-6;**

**Scope and Content Note**

The series contains the papers of Olivette Miller from 1953-1995, including personal papers such as financial and legal records, correspondence, and a scrapbook. The series also contains writings, scores, sheet music, and printed material. The writings consist mostly of lyrics and play scripts.

**Arrangement Note**

Arranged by record type, then alphabetically.

**Personal papers**

Box	Folder	Content
5	1	Copyright, 1977-1992
5	2	Correspondence, 1961-1979
5	3	Correspondence, 1980-1992
5	4	Contracts, 1962
5	5	Harp amplification instruction sheet, no date
5	6	Lawsuits, 1972-1973
5	7	Power of Attorney, 1953-1968
5	8	Scrapbook, 1942-1965

**Writings**

5	9	Biography
5	10	Dialogue
5	11	"Everybody Shout"
5	12	Fragments
5	13	Original lyrics
5	14	Show instructions
5	15	"The Laughmaker"
5	16	"They Went That-Away" or "Which Way Did He Go?"

**Scores**

6	1	"As You Are"
6	2	"Basin Street Opening"
6	3	"Betty"
6	4	"Blackberries"
6	5	"Boggie"
6	6	"Bounce Your Bustle"
6	7	"Can't Get Together"

6	8	"Class"
6	9	"Come to Africa"
6	10	"Creole Cuties"
6	11	"Dancing Book of Love"
6	12	"Diamonds"
OP1	3	"Every Hour-Every Day"
6	13	"Everybody Shout"
6	14	"Fat Women"
6	15	"Foolish"
6	16	"Great-Grandddad"
6	17	"Harlem"
6	18	"Heck of a Time"
6	19	"Hear You Come Again"
6	20	"I Love to Love"
6	21	"It's the People"
6	22	"I Wish"
6	23	"Judgement Day"
6	24	"Looking For a Song"
6	25	"Look Up"
6	26	"Magnolia"
6	27	"Make 'Em Say Please"
6	28	"Man's Got Taps"
6	29	"My Hometown"
6	30	"Night Cry"
6	31	"Night Was Made for You"
6	32	"Pay Day"
6	33	"Peace, Sister, Peace"
6	34	"Pralines"
6	35	"Retirement Blues"
6	36	"Shame on You"
6	37	"Shim Sham Shimmy"
6	38	"Shivaree"
6	39	"Spain"
6	40	"Swamp Land"
6	41	"The Lucky Bird"
6	42	"Windy City"
6	43	Fragments

**Sheet Music**

6	44	"Arias Duets" by G. Schirmer, annotated by Olivette Miller
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6 45 "Invictus" by Bruno Huhn

**Printed Materials**

6 46 Conference program, "History and Evolution of Jazz Tap," 1987

6 47 Consolidated National Film Exchange stationery

6 48 Hollywood Beat, press review, no date

6 49 Magazines, circa 1947

6 50 Newspaper clippings, 1937-1981

6 51 Performance programs, no date

**Series 3**  
**Photographs**  
**Box 7;**

**Scope and Content Note**

The series contains photographs that were collected by Flournoy E. Miller and Olivette Miller. The photographs are of entertainers, scenes from movies, and plays. Many photographs are autographed. Also present are a number of photographs of Flournoy Miller and Olivette Miller, negatives and several unidentified photographs.

**Arrangement Note**

Organized into 2 subseries: (3.1) Flournoy E. Miller and (3.2) Olivette Miller.

**Subseries 3.1**  
**Flournoy E. Miller**  
**Box 7;**

**Arrangement Note**

Arranged in alphabetical order.

**Individuals**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Content</b>
7	1	Armstrong, Louis
7	2	Arthurs, Sis
7	3	Bailey, Jim
7	4	Beavers, Louise
7	5	Blake, Eubie
7	6	Butera, Sam
7	7	Callaway, Cab
7	8	Du Bois, Janet
7	9	Ellington, Duke
7	10	Gentry, Pete
7	11	Gibson, Albert
7	12	Gordon, Freddie
7	13	Henderson, Jo Ann
7	14	Henry, Ann
7	15	Kemp, Viola
7	16	Lyles, Aubrey, 1930
7	17	Mabon, Willie
7	18	McCoy, Tim
7	19	McDaniel, Hattie
7	20	Miller, Flournoy E.
OP1	4	Miller, Flournoy E. and Aubrey Lyles
7	21	Miller, Flournoy E. and others
7	22	Moreland, Mantan
7	23	Morris, Greg
7	24	Murray, Ken
7	25	Neet
7	26	Robinson, Bill "Bojangles"
7	27	Robinson, Smokey
7	28	Rosebud
7	29	Saperstein, Abe
7	30	Saunders, "Red"

7	31	Tynes, Gwen
7	32	Tharp, Rosetta
7	33	Weston, Edward, 1936
7	34	Williams, Bert
7	35	Williams, Joe
7	36	Woods, Louise
7	37	Wugh, Kathy

**Groups**

7	51	The Chocolateers
7	39	Copa Sutton
7	40	The Delta Rhythm Boys
7	41	The Four Tops
7	42	Foxx, Redd and others
7	43	Gordon, Freddie and others
7	44	The International Inkspots
7	45	Johnson, Bobby and Foster
7	46	The Larri Sisters
7	38	Nat King Cole Trio
7	47	The Robinson Brothers
7	48	Rodriguez, Ted and Phyllis
7	49	Saperstein, Abe and Nikita Khrushchev
7	50	Ting and Tung
7	52	The Three Riffs
7	53	Unidentified Army unit, World War II

**Movies and Plays**

7	54	"Estella de Cuba"
7	55	"Everybody Shout"
7	56	"Harlem on the Prairie"
7	57	"Porgy and Bess"
OP1	9	"Shuffle Along"
7	58	"Song of the South"
7	59	"The Two Black Crows"
7	60	"Two Zephyrs"
7	61	Unidentified

**Subseries 3.2**  
**Olivette Miller**  
**Box 7;**

**Arrangement Note**

Arranged in alphabetical order.

**Individuals**

Box	Folder	Content
7	62	Allen, Stuart
7	63	Carlisle, Micki
7	64	Cooper, Audre
7	65	Covan, DeForrest
7	66	Dante
7	67	Harris, Vivian
7	68	Kay, Beatrice
7	69	Marshall, Lance
7	70	Miller, Olivette
7	71	Miller, Olivette, "Midnight" and "Everybody Shout"
OP1	5	Miller, Oivette, "Everybody Shout"
BV1		Miller, Olivette photo album
OP1	6	Miller, Olivette with Bessie Miller and Flournoy E. Miller
OP1	7	Miller, Olivette with her harp
7	72	Miller, Olivette with others
OP1	8	Miller, Olivette with others
7	73	Williamson, Fred

**Groups**

7	74	Arthurs, Sis and Sonny
7	75	Bredice, Tony and Joan Olsen
7	76	Calypso Boys
7	77	Coles, Honi and Cholly Atkins
7	78	Deep River Boys
7	79	Hope, Bob and Abe Saperstein
7	80	The Jeffreys
7	81	Kay and Kay
7	82	Woodie and Lorraine

**Negatives**

7	83	Negatives
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**Unidentified**

7 84 Unidentified photographs

## **Series 4**

### **Audiovisual**

#### **Scope and Content Note**

The series contains one audio recording by Flournoy E. Miller performing numbers from "Shuffle Along" and "Blackbirds."

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Content</b>
AV1	-	Songs from "Shuffle Along" and "Blackbirds" [original: LP] [Digital/digitized copy available in the Reading Room: id b7wn4][Digital/ digitized copy available in the Reading Room: id b7wp8]

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