

to spent more and more time in the country. They received both friends and clients there, having renovated a building next to their main house for their collection of paintings (mostly by Eugène Leroy), sculptures by the Surrealist Benoit, and many other objects, including ones he had collected in the course of his travels. He chose not to come to Paris any more, preferring to stay with his parrot, Coco, his four cats, a few sheep, and a donkey. He was especially preoccupied with his outstanding library.

My husband, Philippe, and I went to see them every month. We talked at length about everything and nothing, including death, and he was very clear about not wanting any ceremony upon his passing. “May I be forgotten,” he said. Sorry, Pierre, but that can’t happen. You have left us with all of the objects you found and collected on your expeditions, objects that you loved, and that we can now see and admire in many museums and private collections. Thank you for the wonderful memories.

Hélène Leloup

Dr Monni Adams

Dr. Monni Adams passed away on December 24, 2014, at age ninety-four. Born Jeanne Marie Grozanich in Portland, Oregon, on October 27, 1920, Monni rarely spoke of her childhood or her life before entering academia in the early 1960s. She earned a doctorate under the direction of Douglas Fraser in 1967 from Columbia University in what was then known as the field of primitive art. Her 660-page dissertation, “System and Meaning in East Sumba Textile Design: A Study in Traditional Indonesian Art,” was based on extensive ethnographic field research in Indonesia. Riding the wave of Lévi-Straussian structuralism in the 1970s, Monni published a seminal essay on the anthropology of art and the relationship between the compositional principles of textile design in East Sumba and patterns of social organization (“Structural Aspects of a Village Art,” *American Anthropologist*, 1973).

Shortly after joining the faculty at Harvard University in the mid 1970s, Monni shifted her primary research focus from Indonesia to sub-Saharan Africa. For almost four decades, Monni served as curator at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, where she oversaw the museum’s vast collection of African art and artifacts.

Throughout her distinguished career as a scholar and educator, Monni routinely taught courses in African art and aesthetics at various institutions in the Northeast, including Columbia, MIT, Wellesley, Tufts, and the Harvard Extension School. She also curated several important exhibitions, including *Threads of Life: A Private Collection of Textiles from Indonesia and Sarawak* (1981), *Designs for Living: Symbolic Communication in African Art* (1982), *Heads and Tales: Adornments from Africa* (1999), and *Masked Festivals of Canton Bo (Ivory Coast), West Africa* (2011).

Beginning in the late 1970s, Monni was a regular contributor to *African Arts*, publishing more than twenty articles and reviews on a wide range of topics, from her now-classic essay “Kuba Embroidered Cloth” (1978) to her last publication, “Locating the Mano Mask” (2010), which she authored at age eighty-nine. In her mid sixties,



Dr. Monni Adams speaking in 2011 at her exhibition *Masked Festivals of Canton Bo (Ivory Coast), West Africa* at the Tozzer Library, Harvard University.

Monni embarked on a new fieldwork project among the Wè (Guéré) in western Côte d’Ivoire, where she documented masked festivals and interviewed men and women about the changing role of masks in the re-

gion of Canton Bo. The results of that research were published in “Women and Masks among the Western Wè of Ivory Coast” (*African Arts*, 1986). The following year she wrote what remains the last comprehensive historiography of the field of African art history, “African Visual Arts from an Art Historical Perspective” (*African Studies Review*, 1987).

Monni will be remembered for her significant contributions to the anthropology of textile arts (Indonesian ikat, Kuba embroidered panels, Fon appliqués, and Dida woven raffia skirts); for her scholarship on the relationship between gender and masquerades in western Côte d’Ivoire; and for her extensive research on the Liberian masks collected in the 1930–40s for the Peabody Museum by medical missionary Dr. George W. Harley.

Cutting a tiny figure at less than five feet tall, Monni was a giant in her discipline. Her high spirit, affable quiriness, and lightning-fast creative mind will be sorely missed by those fortunate enough to have studied and worked with her. In a letter from Monni, sent to me while I was conducting my doctoral field research in Abidjan during the late 1980s, she concluded by saying, “Off to give two papers in Denver. So next time I should have lots of news—whether suburban banalities or new gratte-ciel notions I cannot say.” Her next letter was of course filled with insights about cutting-edge anthropological theory and radical new approaches to the study of African art. There was, in the end, no room and no time for suburban banalities in the universe of her towering intellect.

Christopher B. Steiner