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Obituary:

Ada

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Ada

BELINDA É. SAMARI

Ada is like a piece of music, just when you are getting comfortable in your front row seat, suddenly the trombone rolls in on a scooter, and you realize you have never heard such a piece before. For those who knew her, depending on which facet of Ada they saw, Ada could be described as Puccini's *Nessun Dorma* or pretty much anything by Rage Against the Machine, and all in between! Ada, a woman, an orchestra.

In 2014 I had the pleasure of organizing Ada's retirement party at University College London, and we asked all the guests to send us a word that reminded them of Ada. The list bore testament to the many attempts to capture her mysterious essence, and below is a snapshot of "Ada-ness":

powerhouse | fabulous | big smile | force of nature | charisma |
delightful | impressive | awe-inspiring | vocal | suntan | irreplaceable |
courageous | rather tall | matron | hair | fear and trembling | feminist |
inspirational | strong | friendly | fireworks | compassionate | radiant |
innovative | inclusive | voice | eccentric | sovereign | unconventional |
vital | eyes | unique

Nestled within the exterior shell of academician *par excellence* was Ada the artist and musician, and one could often find her at the Royal Opera House, feasting her soul. As someone who shares Ada's shells, though inversely, for me Ada will always be a beautiful piece of music, both invigorating and soothing, complex and contrary, and one to listen to until the vinyl wears out.

Ada, *femme extraordinaire* who trod the soil of many a soul and left lasting imprints.

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