

KAREN STEVENSON

Remembering Adrienne L. Kaeppler (1935–2022)



Figure 1. Ralph Regenvanu, Karen Stevenson, and Adrienne Kaeppler at the Pacific Arts Association XI International Symposium, Vancouver, Canada, 2013. Photograph courtesy of H. Scothorn

It is with heavy hearts that the Pacific Arts Association (PAA) acknowledges Adrienne L. Kaeppler’s passing on March 5, 2022, at the age of 86. Adrienne was a stalwart supporter of the PAA and one of its founding members. In 2003, she was awarded the association’s highest accolade, the *Manu Daula* (Frigate Bird) Award, which is given to an individual for outstanding achievement in, and dedication to, the arts of the Pacific.

Adrienne’s passion for the Pacific—its peoples, culture, and arts—was ignited while studying at the University of Hawai’i from 1959 to 1967. During this time, and her tenure at the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum in Honolulu, Adrienne began to develop a network of scholars and institutions that facilitated her research on Pacific collections around the globe. She found a “home” at the Smithsonian

Institution's National Museum of Natural History, where she worked for more than forty years, prior to her retirement at the end of 2021.



Figure 2. Adrienne Kaepler examining a nineteenth-century Sāmoan *siapo tasina* in a Smithsonian National Natural History Museum storage facility, Suitland, Maryland, 2003. Photograph courtesy of H. Scothorn

Throughout her distinguished career, Adrienne carried out research in many Pacific nations, in particular Tonga, Sāmoa, Hawai'i, and Rapa Nui, and focused on a wide range of art forms including visual arts, poetry, dance, and music. She published more than 300 peer-reviewed publications. Her scholarship was unsurpassed and her position within the communities of Pacific anthropology and arts unequalled.

Adrienne received many awards and accolades during her career. A highlight was her investiture as a Commander of the Royal Household Order by Tupou VI, King of Tonga and grandson of Queen Sālote, in June 2015.

For me, some of Adrienne's greatest attributes were her kindness and willingness to take young scholars under her wing. With this tutelage, not only did we acquire knowledge, we were able to expand the field to which she dedicated her life. Her legacy and our memories of her will live on forever.