



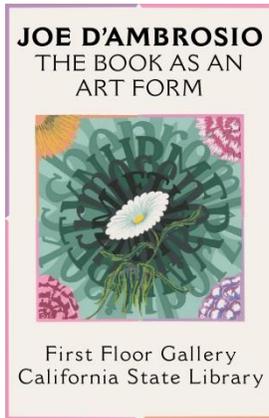
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CONTACT: Deborah Lynch
Communications Officer
(916) 651-6452

deborah.lynch@library.ca.gov

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Joe D’Ambrosio: The Book as an Art Form
New Exhibit at the State Library



Sacramento, Calif. – On display now in the First Floor Gallery of the State Library Branch at 900 N Street, is an exhibit devoted to famed, whimsical book artist, Joe D’Ambrosio. **The Book as an Art Form** exhibit currently on display is free and open to the public Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. It will be on exhibit through the fall.

D’Ambrosio, who was primarily known as a book artist, also designed the terrazzo floor in the Library’s rotunda.



The design was inspired from a poster featured in his miniature book entitled *Daisies Never Tell* (1982). Commissioned by then State Librarian Gary E. Strong, the floor was installed while the building was still under construction in 1993. The letters CSL (California State Library) replaced the flower at the center of the original design. The floor was created by embedding colored marble chips into colored concrete. The concentric letters around the edges of the design do not spell out words but are there to celebrate the Roman alphabet. The poster that inspired the design is in the library’s first floor window display and can be viewed from the street.



Several of D’Ambrosio’s whimsical and creative designs are on display. Made from a variety of materials from feathers to dyed crumbled paper, he produced a number of projects including bookplates, posters and of course, the State Library’s rotunda floor. An item of note in the display includes *A Nest of Robins* (1999), which features four books nesting inside progressively smaller ones. Other than using an antique press, all of D’Ambrosio’s books were handmade.

The exhibit also features a book he created that was inspired by Gloria Stewart's Bonsai garden, *The Small Garden of Gloria Stewart (1986)*. An artist and actress, Stewart was best known for her Oscar nominated role playing 100 year-old Rose Dawson in James Cameron's *Titanic*.



Of his reason for creating books as art, D'Ambrosio said, "My goal is to create a visual environment for the written word." D'Ambrosio passed away in 2009 leaving behind a legacy of books, posters, bookplates, and special projects like the terrazzo floor in the State Library.

The exhibit was curated by Gary Kurutz, Special Collections Librarian Emeritus.

About the State Library: Founded in 1850, the California State Library is the central reference and research library for the Governor's office, legislature, state employees, and the general public. The State Library administers federal and state grants for programs in historical preservation, library construction, civil liberties education, literacy, volunteering, and broadband connectivity in public libraries. For more information, visit www.library.ca.gov.

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