

NWU Gallery, Visual Narrative and ViNCO present the exhibition *Decolonising the Book*

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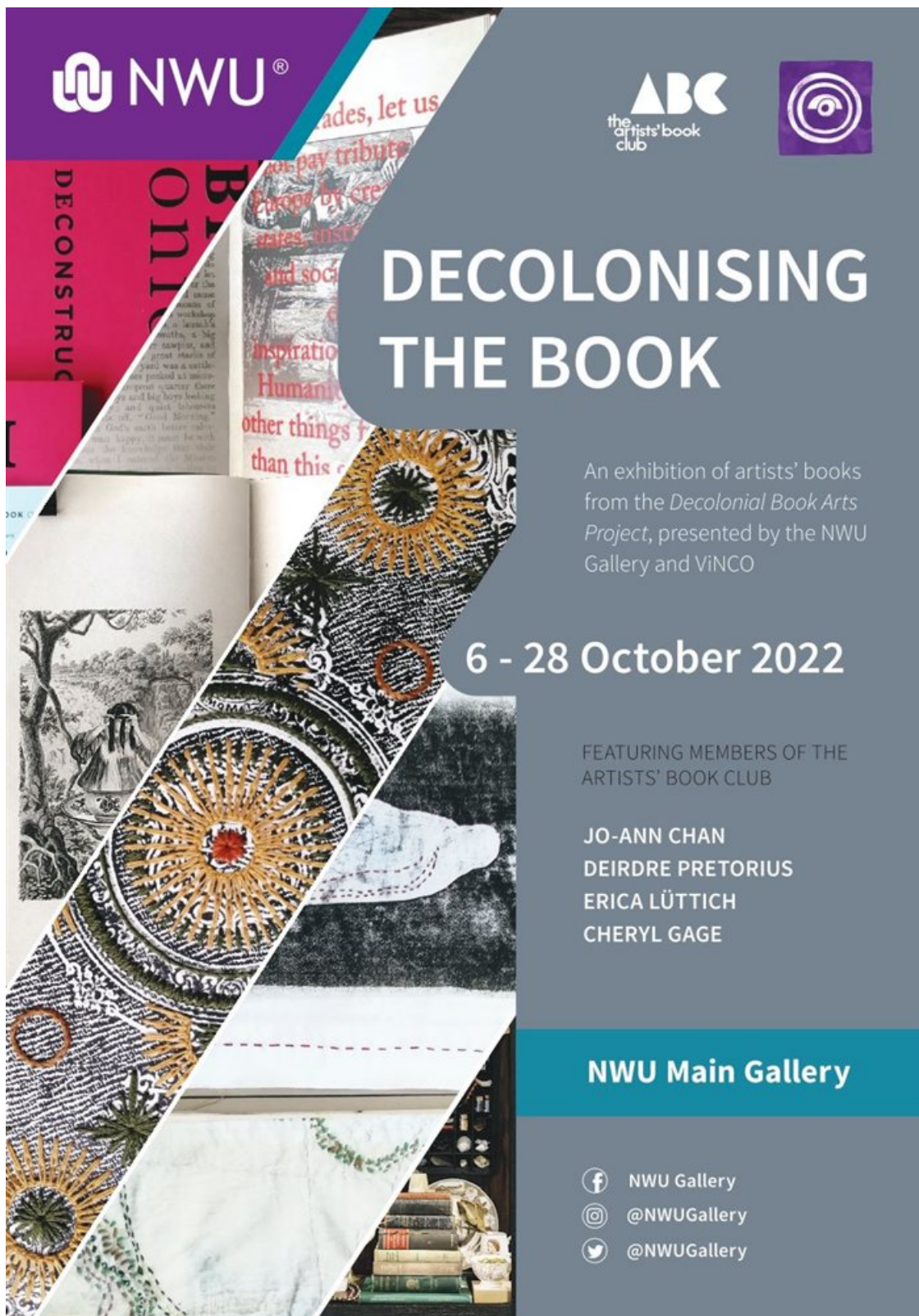
Venue: NWU Art Gallery (North-West University, Building E7, Hoffman Street, Potchefstroom. 2520)

Exhibition title: *Decolonising the Book*

Time: 12.30-2.30pm

Opening date: 6 October 2022

Closing date: 28 October 2022



The NWU Gallery in collaboration with Visual Narratives and Creative Outputs (ViNCO) and the Artists' Book Club presents the exhibition *Decolonising the Book*. The exhibition will be available for viewing from 6-28 October 2022 at the NWU Main Gallery.

Decolonising the Book is a product of the "Decolonial Book Arts Project" that was initiated in 2018 by artist and former bookseller Chris Reinders (of The African Moon Press) and developed further over the next few years by the Johannesburg Chapter of the Artist's Book Club. This arts project's inception was the result of the prominent, and still ongoing, calls for decolonisation, particularly those which had been driven by students in South Africa's higher education sector.

Reinders invited a group of individuals to engage with the theme of decolonisation through the book arts at an open meeting held at the studio of artist and lecturer Gordon Froud in Johannesburg. To avoid over-controlling the project. Reinders

provided only two things – firstly, an open brief, consisting of a few quotes taken from publicity for the book *Apartheid: Britain's Bastard Child (Transgenerational Trauma)*, and a personal reflection on the project theme; and secondly, a collection of Africana, colonial and apartheid era books, and ephemera that he had amassed during his time as a bookseller. Project participants were tasked with choosing a book from the selection provided and to use it as the starting point from which to respond to the project theme.

The artists' books in this exhibition are the extended responses to this invitation by Jo-Ann Chan, Cheryl Gage (who sadly passed in 2020), Erica Lüttich and Deirdre Pretorius (four members of the Artist's Book Club). The works range from mixed media objects and redesigned volumes to a carefully curated cabinet of curiosity. All, however, make use of found objects that have been refigured through needlework, experimental printmaking, juxtaposition or digital mash-up, to contest ideas or offer new ways of seeing the found objects; and in some instances, challenging the codex as the standard book form.

The exhibition opens at the NWU Gallery on 6 October 2022 and has a series of associated public events, ranging from online discussions and artist walkabouts to bookmaking workshops that will be hosted during the month of October.

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