

LOUISA GUINNESS GALLERY

..... FEBRUARY 2015

GOLDEN DELICIOUS BY GAVIN TURK

NEW JEWELLERY, WORKS ON PAPER AND SMALL SCULPTURE



PREVIEW: 25TH FEBRUARY 6 – 8PM
26TH FEBRUARY - 3RD APRIL

Golden Delicious continues to explore Turk's long established fascination with the ordinary. Focusing this time on nibbled Rich Tea biscuits (a plain and economic British tradition), and discarded apple cores, the show charts the artistic evolution of these transient objects under Turk's scrutiny; from tea-time accoutrement or habitual snack to artwork and jewel.

Tea and biscuits are an essential part of the clichéd cultural history of Britain as a tea-drinking nation. For Turk, the biscuit functions as a kind of symbolic part of the landscape as created and defined by Constable, Henry Moore and William Morris. Nowhere is this more apparent than "Tea Biscuit" in which the biscuit is painted quite literally in tea, the medium used by the great romantic watercolourists to prime their paper before applying paint.

Turk is known for juxtaposing medium and subject: Ceremonial Biscuit is a life size solid gold cast of a Rich Tea. Turk revels in the transformation; by capturing these humble edibles in 18k gold rather than watercolour or bronze, their symbolic importance is matched by their intrinsic value. Ceremonial Biscuit is published in an edition of 8 and is also available in silver. Turk has also created a reduced scale version of the piece, entitled Taking the Biscuit executed in gold or silver and in an edition of 8.

The apple - or rather, its exposed core once the edible flesh has been gnawed away- is likewise a recurring motif in Turk's work. It is a loaded symbol of the loss of innocence, of knowledge and of the utopian English garden, rotten to the core. Over the past ten years, abandoned and shrivelled apple cores have featured in Turk's uncannily realistic painted bronze sculptures and impressionistic watercolours. They are joined in Golden Delicious by a recently executed golden counterpart. Like the rich teas they have been given new life and new meaning as precious jewels in a medium to echo their symbolic importance. Realised in 18k gold, the apple pips are marked by garnets set into the gold. Each apple core is an edition of 8.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Gavin Turk (b 1967) is a British born, international artist. He has pioneered many forms of contemporary British sculpture, including the painted bronze, the waxwork, the recycled art-historical icon and the use of rubbish in art.

Turk's installations and sculptures deal with issues of authorship, authenticity and identity. Concerned with the myth of the artist and the authorship of a work, Turk's engagement with this modernist, avant-garde debate stretches back to the ready-mades of Marcel Duchamp. The artist's signature is a recurring and literal feature in Turk's oeuvre; indeed in some of his works 'signature' and 'work' are interchangeable. If, Turk reasons, an artist's signature is so important to a work's value why should it not be the aesthetic focus of a work?

In 1991, the Royal College of Art refused Turk a degree on the basis that his final show, 'Cave', consisted of a whitewashed studio space containing only a blue heritage plaque commemorating his presence: 'Gavin Turk worked here 1989-91'. Instantly gaining notoriety through this installation, Turk was spotted by Charles Saatchi and has since been exhibited by many major galleries and museums throughout the world.

ABOUT THE GALLERY

Louisa Guinness Gallery works with today's leading sculptors and painters to create jewellery as well as collecting and dealing in works by master artists. In 2013 the gallery moved to a new space at 45 Conduit Street. This space remains the first ever gallery space dedicated exclusively to exhibiting artists' jewels.

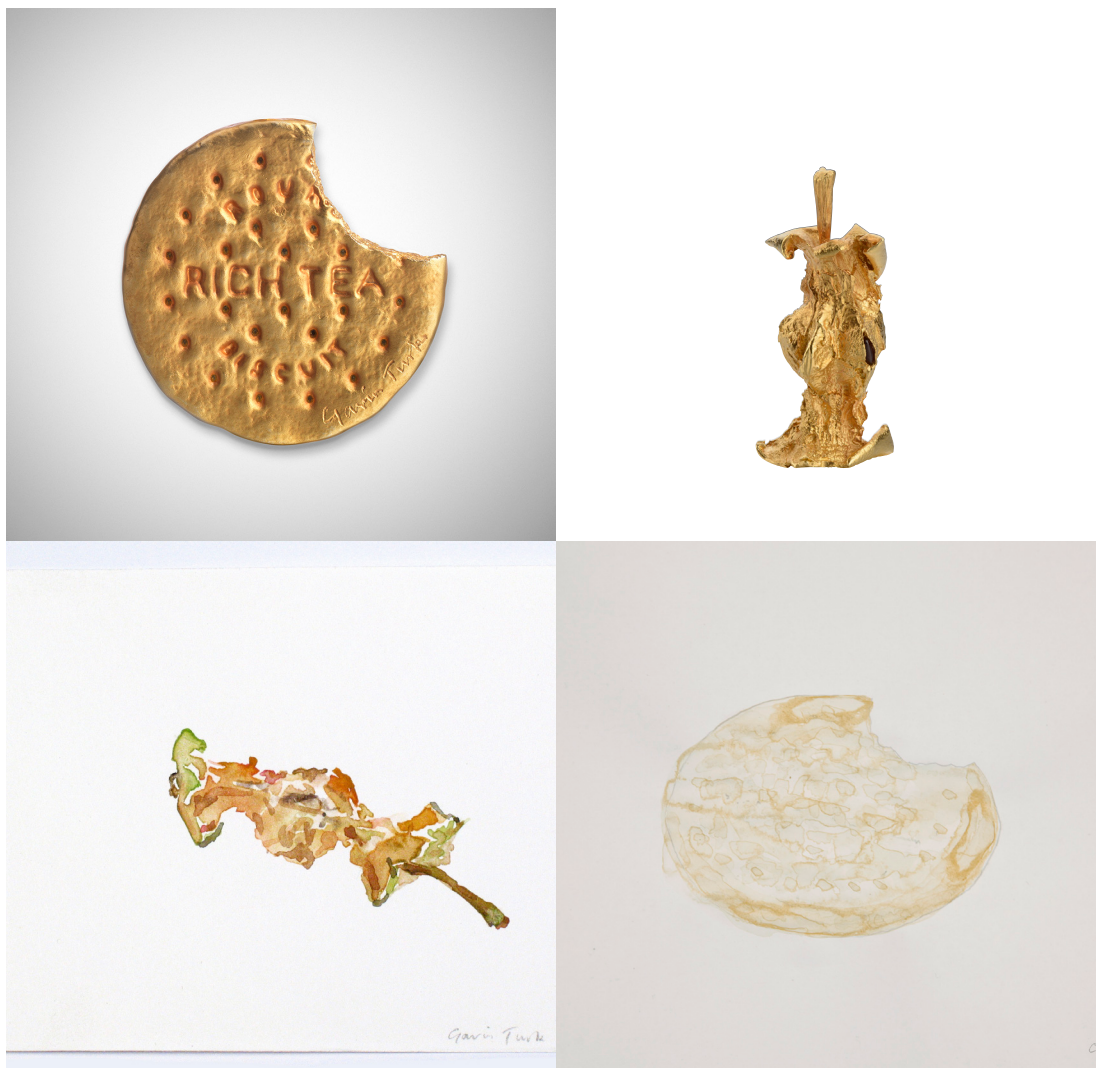
It houses a rotating exhibition programme, showing works by gallery artists such as Anish Kapoor, Sophia Vari, Claude Lalanne and Mariko Mori as well as pieces by 20th century masters such as Picasso, Man Ray and Fontana.

The gallery opened in May 2003 with its inaugural exhibition 'Past and Present; Jewellery by 20th Century Artists'. With this show Louisa Guinness departed from her original focus on artist-made furniture into the world of artist's jewels. Since then she has worked on over 18 separate projects with leading contemporary artists.

Each new work is published in a small edition to the highest standard. All works are made by hand either in London's famous Hatton Garden, or in the artist's studio, and each piece is signed and numbered. At once jewellery and mini-sculpture, each piece holds an important place in the artists' wider body of work.

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From left to right:
Ceremonial Biscuit, 2014, 18k gold, 6.5cm diameter x 0.5cm, Edition of 8
Ten Commandments, 2014, 18k gold with garnet pip 4.15 x 1.6 x 1.7cm,
 Edition of 8
The Doctor's Holiday, 2006 watercolour on paper, 21 x 30cm
Tea Biscuit, 2015, tea and pencil on paper, 21 x 30cm