

all over the shop

THE CULT SHOP

louisa guinness gallery

Exquisite jewellery by contemporary artists and past masters is mounted like artwork in this chic Mayfair boutique

Discreetly tucked above a West End hairdressing salon is a cool, calm space gleaming with an engaging display of artist jewellery. Mounted like artworks on pale-grey walls or presented in glass cases, these one-off designs are signed, numbered extensions of their creators' artistic oeuvres. "These are more than pieces of jewellery. They're wearable artworks also designed to sit as sculpture on a coffee table or hang on a wall," says gallery owner Louisa Guinness.

Inspired by a necklace her mother-in-law wears by 20th-century sculptor Alexander Calder, Guinness (who is married to fine art gallery-owner Ben Brown) started dealing privately in jewellery designed by past masters – Calder, Max Ernst, Lucio Fontana, Pablo

Picasso, Man Ray – in 2003. In 2013 she opened her shop-cum-exhibition space to introduce this remarkable work to a wider clientele. Here, historic pieces rub shoulders with contemporary work by Claude Lalanne (leafy copper necklaces, £9,600), Sophia Vari (silver Amazonas brooch, edition of six, £7,150, pictured below left), Jeff Koons (platinum Rabbit necklace, edition of 50, £53,700) and Damien Hirst (silver Pill Charm bracelet, edition of 50, £11,400).

"The market for artist jewellery has changed over the past decade, with initial surprise seguing into a real fervour," says Guinness. Prices for the very best pieces are soaring. "Ten years ago you'd pay \$5,000 for a Calder necklace. Last year Sotheby's sold one for \$1.9m."

While passionate about historic work, what really excites Guinness is coaxing contemporary sculptors and painters to create new designs. Early collaborators included Antony Gormley and Anish Kapoor; then Marc Quinn, Dinos Chapman and Ed Ruscha accepted her challenge. More recently she has worked with Yinka Shonibare, Cornelia Parker and Mariko Mori. "I discuss ideas with each artist, offer advice on materials and wearability, check prototypes and find the fabricator – possibly a Hatton Garden goldsmith – until everyone is happy," says Guinness.

Retaining the essence of an artist's work generates a wide variety of



materials and styles. Anish Kapoor's latest rings (£21,600) and pendants (£21,000) in yellow and rose gold or white and pink gold gleam like his mirrored sculptures. Tim Noble and Sue Webster's Skinny Leaping Frog silver necklace (edition of 10, £3,600) and Crow's Claw silver earrings (edition of 10, £4,200) echo their taxidermy artworks. Mariko Mori's Planets series (earrings, £7,800; necklace, £10,800; brooch, £9,000) combines white gold and pearls and reflects her visual exploration of the

cosmos. The batik-fabric core of Yinka Shonibare's Toy Painting pendant (£8,400) is surrounded by vintage silver charms, while batik sails grace his Ship in a Bottle (edition of 10, £8,400); when not worn as a necklace it sits on a wooden magnetic plinth, perfectly replicating the artist's Fourth Plinth project for Trafalgar Square. Worn or displayed, these mini masterpieces are made to be treasured. **NICOLE SWENGLEY**
45 Conduit Street, London W1 (020-7494 4664; www.louisaguinnessgallery.com).