

Bread & Butter

*Alice Toomer
Exhibition Catalogue*

*Twentysix Gallery
27 March – 14 April 2024*

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Exhibition Statement

Who do you invite to take place at your proverbial table? Or rather, who invites you?

Food, as always, is the clearest indication of our daily participation in the divide between the ordinary and the luxurious — who can partake, and who must merely watch. Alice Toomer's latest exhibition, 'Bread & Butter' casts us as the voyeurs and holds the untouchable within reach just a little longer, preserving their ephemerality with her decisive clarity.

At the outset, Toomer's depictions of fine cheeses and sourdough are complimentary, the exhibition title itself — Bread & Butter — honouring food's essentiality in life. She stands back and paints with intent, every inch of her works laboured over and formed with care, inciting perfection as a practice. It is a commitment to understanding her subject, both in form and in symbolism — each work adding to the open letter she writes of both the adoration of these indulgences, alongside lingering critique.

As more time is spent with these goods, the fine line between nourishment and indulgence becomes far too easy to tip. Essentiality becomes lost with each new trimming — as the commercialization of the food industry gets restless for more. More luxury, more unreachability, more desire. The market behind this artisanal food pushes them toward us, with more bows and boxes, wrapping and strings. Toomer grazes this line, with crisp borders of white paper wrapping and charcuterie hung by string.

We, the voyeurs, are held back from our feast just a little longer, tangled in the unattainability our purse strings may bind us within. 'Bottle Bags' being our most tangible encounter with what we are not yet allowed to have. Hidden inside wrinkled brown paper, we know the familiar image enough to recognize what we may be missing, but Toomer grants us no access to what we desire.

Her critiques are slight. Subtle, but thoughtfully placed throughout the collection. 'Smoked Gouda' is emblematic of Toomer's precise intricacy. No longer is our table of goods fresh from its maker's hands, but rather intercepted by a longing. In our absence, the cheese begins to decay amongst its own fleeting nature — fauna stepping in before we can. These luxuries we so desire return back to their most raw beginning once again, as they are undressed of affluence in their ageing state.

And so 'Bread & Butter' comes back on itself, Toomer stretching to critique, but eventually meeting us back at appreciation. A collection of indulgent goods, held in an offering to us for a little longer. Their taste lingers, a smell of fresh wheat follows. What we perhaps cannot enjoy daily is merely what we will savour on occasion. Alice Toomer adeptly laying out the laden table, one by one.

— Claudia Munro

Featured Work



'Jake's Sourdough' (Sold)

2023

370mm x 670mm (artwork size), framed in oak

acrylic on panel

\$4,800



'Blue Cheese' (Sold)

2023
220mm x 280mm (artwork size), framed in black walnut
acrylic on panel
\$2,900



'Butter' (Sold)

2024
300mm x 390mm (artwork size), framed in black walnut
acrylic on panel
\$3,500



‘Salami’ (Sold)
 2024
 500mm x 535mm (artwork size), framed in oak
 acrylic on panel
 \$5,500



‘Bottle Bags’ (Sold)
 2024
 550mm x 650mm (artwork size), framed in oak
 acrylic on panel
 \$7,500



‘Smoked Gouda’ (Sold)

2024
220mm x 280mm (artwork size), framed in black walnut
acrylic on panel
\$2,900



‘Camembert du Bocage’ (Sold)

2024
220mm x 310mm (artwork size), framed in black walnut
acrylic on panel
\$2,900



‘Sardines’ (Sold)

2024
175mm x 240mm (artwork size), framed in black walnut
acrylic on panel
\$2,600



‘Peaches’ (Sold)

2023
600mm x 475mm (artwork size), framed in black timber
acrylic on panel
\$6,800

Prints



‘Nectarines’

2023

440mm x 670mm (print size), framed in black timber

1 of 5 limited edition canvas print

\$1,250



'Jake's Sourdough'

2023
420mm x 670mm (print size), unframed
1 of 5 limited edition canvas print
\$450



'Lemons'

2023
400mm x 590mm (print size), framed in black timber
1 of 5 limited edition canvas print
\$1,250

More print options available at: www.alicetoomer.com

Purchasing Information

All featured pieces will be available to purchase from the 27th March – 14th April at Twentysix Gallery, Newtown. Any unsold pieces will be listed at www.alicetoomer.com, along with a wider range of prints not featured in this catalogue.

For any enquiries, please email alice.toomer@gmail.com or hello@twentysix.co.nz

Facebook: [/alicetoomerart](https://www.facebook.com/alicetoomerart)
Instagram: [@alicetoomerart](https://www.instagram.com/alicetoomerart)

Acknowledgements

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