

Designers

Dame Vivienne Westwood

Sarah Pook
July 2020
Final version

© Hampshire County Council



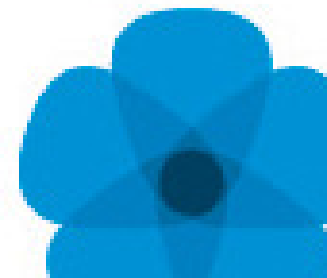
Overview

This document contains...

Information about the life and work of Dame Vivienne Westwood

Points to consider when using this resource

Please add and amend as necessary



Designers

Dame Vivienne Westwood

Dame Vivienne Westwood (8 April 1941)

Dame Vivienne Isabel Westwood is a British fashion designer and businesswoman, largely responsible for bringing modern punk and new wave fashions into the mainstream.

Westwood came to public notice when she made clothes for Malcolm McLaren's boutique in the King's Road, which became known as "SEX". It was their ability to synthesise clothing and music that shaped the 1970s UK punk scene, dominated by McLaren's band, the Sex Pistols. She was inspired by the shock-value of punk—"seeing if one could put a spoke in the system".

Westwood went on to open four shops in London, eventually expanding throughout the United Kingdom and the world, selling an increasingly varied range of merchandise, some of it linked to her many political causes such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, climate change and civil rights groups.



Vivienne Westwood

Characteristics of Vivienne Westwood's work

The "Bondage" suit epitomized the maverick creative collaboration between Westwood and McLaren. McLaren brought some standard-issue cotton army trousers back from a trip to the United States, which Vivienne then copied in a shiny black sateen McLaren had seen on the back of British rail clerks' waistcoats and sourced in Manchester. McLaren added the bondage straps between the knees, which were an extension of the sado-masochistic look they promoted at the time for its shock value. Pushing this traumatic aesthetic to its obvious conclusion creates the feel of a straightjacket and plays with all of the implications of the insane. Ultimately, they had created one of the most iconic garments of punk style, one that is still in production to this day.





Characteristics of Vivienne Westwood's work

"Vivienne struck an odd combination of the dominatrix and pantomime principal boy in leather jodhpurs, or tiny leather miniskirt with appliquéd motorcycle badges, a thick American leather jacket, fluffy mohair sweater and little pointy booties. With her spiky, white-peroxidized hair and pale skin providing a neutral background for her luscious purple lips, she was simply stunning" (Nils Stevenson, *Vacant: A Diary of the Punk Years, 1976–79* [New York, 1999], p. 15).

Common mohair sweaters had been seen everywhere in London since the 1950s, but Westwood made her own version with a looser knit and bolder, asymmetrical color blocks that was decidedly different from the predictable stripes and colors of past decades.

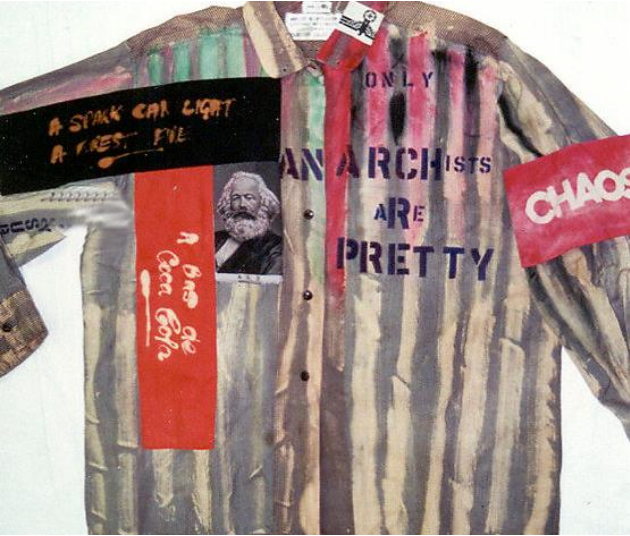




Characteristics of Vivienne Westwood's work

"When the 'Dolls' folded Malcolm returned to Vivienne. Her latest design was an anarchy shirt—distressed to look old, with bleached-out stripes, and appliquéd with badges, flags and slogans: 'Only anarchists are Pretty!', 'Dangerously close to Love,' 'We are not afraid of Ruins,' 'Chaos,' and a woven label from Chinatown of the portrait of Karl Marx, to which Malcolm added a swastika. This shirt looked as if it belonged to an urban guerilla and Malcolm saw in it the key to a new collection of clothes. All the current themes—rips, zips, porn, slogans, bondage and chains—were pressed into service and punk style was born" (Gene Krell, *Vivienne Westwood* [New York, 1997], p. 12). This shirt epitomizes punk style and ideology. A similar shirt has been well documented in period photography as being worn by Johnny Rotten, lead singer of the Sex Pistols, and Sid Vicious, the group's bass player. It is thought that many of the expensive SEX garments worn by the Sex Pistols, which were given to them by McLaren and Westwood for promotion, were single garments passed around from band member to band member on a day-to-day basis.







Why is she an iconic designer?

Westwood will always be known for her part in the creation of punk. But in the 30-plus years since her split from partner and collaborator Malcolm McLaren, she has forged a rebel aesthetic that is truly her own. Her trademark mix of provocation and respect for tradition have been captured in her fashion collections of edgy printed T-shirts through to sumptuously elegant ballgowns and everything in-between.

Pair of shoes, Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren,
1974, England. Museum no. T.82:1, 2-2002. © Vivienne
Westwood and Malcolm McLaren/Victoria and Albert
Museum, London





Left to right: Bondage suit, Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren, 1976, England. Museum no. T.252&A-1989. Seditonaries ensemble, Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren, 1976, England. Museum no. T.405 to 7-1995. © Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren/Victoria and Albert Museum, London



Left to right: Top, Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren, 1976, England. Museum no. T.93-2002. Top, Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren, 1976, England. Museum no. T.90-2002. © Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren/Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Left to right: Shirt, Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren, 1977, England. Museum no. T.773-1995. T-shirt, Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren, 1981, England. Museum no. T.240-1991. © Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren/Victoria and Albert Museum, London





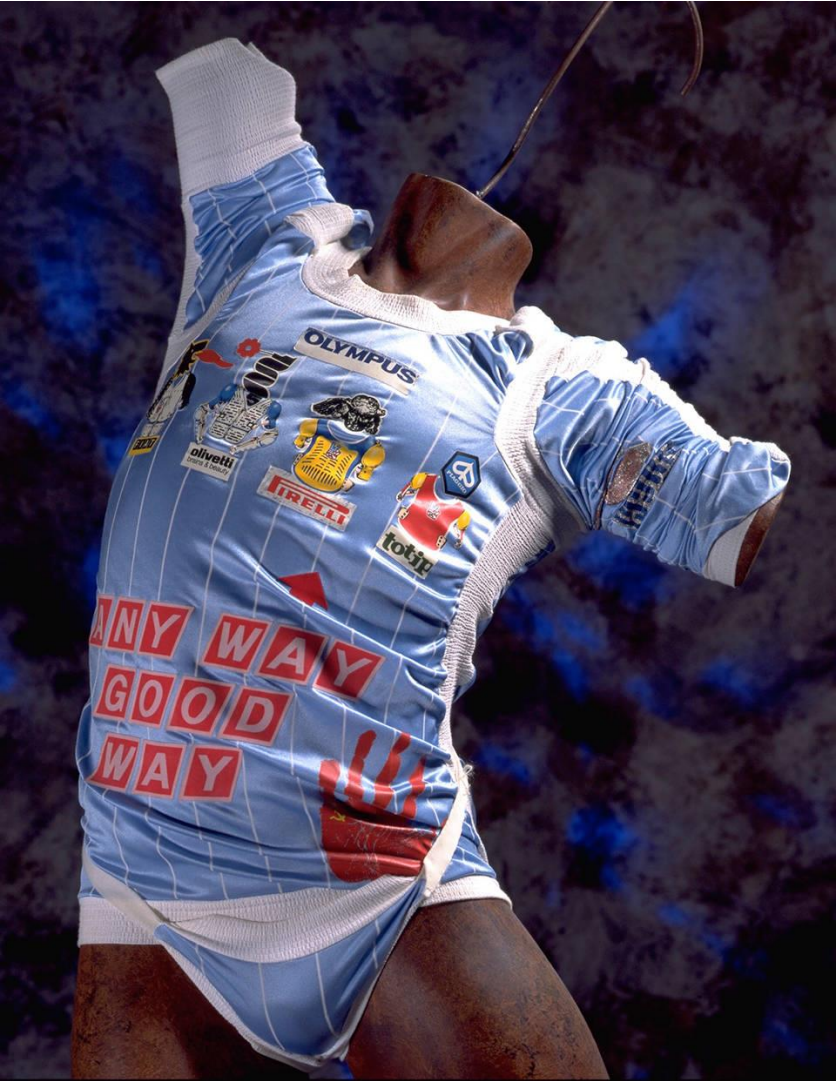
Pirate ensemble, Vivienne Westwood, 1981 – 2, England.
Museum no. T.334 to I-1982. © Vivienne Westwood/Victoria
and Albert Museum, London



Left to right: Ensemble, Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren, 1982, England. Museum no. T.140:1, 2-2002. Mud bra, Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren, 1982, England. Museum no. T.238-1985. © Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren/Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Witches raincoat and belt, Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren, 1983, England. Museum no. T.268:1, 2-1991. © Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren/Victoria and Albert Museum, London





Leotard, Vivienne Westwood, 1984, England. Museum no. T.238-1991. © Vivienne Westwood/Victoria and Albert Museum, London



Left to right: Time Machine suit, Vivienne Westwood, 1988, England. Museum no. T.261:1, 2-1991. Corset and sleeves, Vivienne Westwood, 1988, England. Museum no. T.203:1, 2-2002. © Vivienne Westwood/Victoria and Albert Museum, London



Left to right: Cut, Slash & Pull ensemble, Vivienne Westwood, 1990, England. Museum no. T.229:2 to 3-2002. Cut, Slash & Pull ensemble, Vivienne Westwood, 1990, England. Museum no. T.230:1 to 5-2002. © Vivienne Westwood/Victoria and Albert Museum, London





Watteau evening dress, Vivienne Westwood, 1996, England.
Museum no. T.438:1 to 4-1996. © Vivienne
Westwood/Victoria and Albert Museum, London



Exam style questions

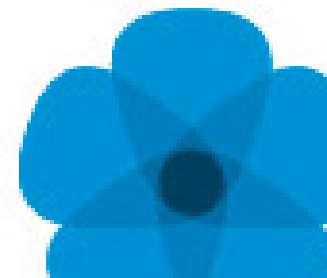
1. How would you identify the work of Vivienne Westwood?
 2. Describe the influence that Vivienne Westwood has had on the world of Design and Technology.
 3. Name 3 key 'looks' from Vivienne Westwood.
-

Design and Technology

sarah.pook2@hants.gov.uk

For further details on the full range of services available please contact us using the following details:

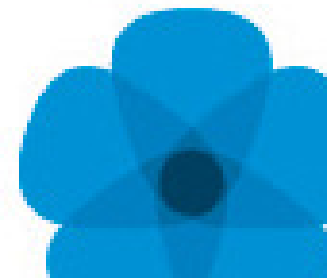
Tel: 01962 874820 or email: hias.enquiries@hants.gov.uk



Upcoming Courses

Keep up-to-date with our learning opportunities for each subject through our Upcoming Course pages linked below. To browse the full catalogue of learning offers, visit our new Learning Zone. Full details of how to access the site to make a booking are provided [here](#).

- [English](#)
- [Maths](#)
- [Science](#)
- [Geography](#)
- [RE](#)
- [History](#)
- [Leadership](#)
- [Computing](#)
- [Art](#)
- [D&T](#)
- [Assessment](#)
- [Support Staff](#)
- [SEN](#)



Terms and Conditions

Terms of licence

Moodle+ subscribers are licenced to access and use this resource and have agreed to pay the annual subscription fee. This authority starts when the fee is paid and ends when the subscription period expired unless it is renewed. This file is for personal or classroom use only. By using it, you agree that you will not copy or reproduce this file except for your own personal, non-commercial use. HIAS have the right to modify the terms of this agreement at any time; the modification will be effective immediately and shall replace all prior agreements.

You are welcome to:

- download this resource
- save this resource on your computer
- print as many copies as you would like to use in your school
- amend this electronic resource so long as you acknowledge its source and do not share as your own work.

You may not:

- claim this resource as your own
- sell or in any way profit from this resource
- store or distribute this resource on any other website or another location where others are able to electronically retrieve it
- email this resource to anyone outside your school or transmit it in any other fashion.

