



VIVIENNE WESTWOOD

«» A REFLECTION ON CULTURE «»«»«»

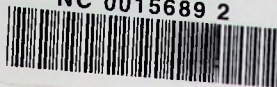
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## PREFACE:

'We are all products of our own history'  
(1)

History, as described by the Oxford English Dictionary, is an aggregate of past events; The course of human affairs; the whole train of events connected with the nation, the person, or the thing. From the moment when we first enter this world as a child we become part of this formation of history and throughout our lifetimes a series of historical happenings on varying levels; personal; regional or international, serve us as a continual reference point through which we can discover and comprehend our place in human society.

The importance of having this historical background cannot be overstated. as it is the most vital ingredient to the creation of a peoples cultural identity. There are many languages through which our history speaks to us; in the main these include politics, war, religion, and economics and entertainment; the latter encompassing the world of music, sport, fashion and the arts. A culture does not depend on any of these elements in isolation, but on the inter-relation between them, which serves to weave the fabric of each particular society. It is the constant changing of these elements which contributes to the movement and advance of a nation.

The importance of mere clothing in this 'wheel of life'



may seem unjustified but we must realise that the use of bodily covering precedes recorded history. Biblically speaking, Adam and Eve were both created without any form of clothing, and remained that way until the forbidden fruit was eaten and their shame forced them to don fig leaves to cover up their nakedness. The use of bodily adornment has moved a long way from the animal skins used by the earliest cavemen.

There are a variety of reasons why human beings should choose to transform their original appearance: The basic functions of clothing are to protect the body from harsh climatic environments; to promote an element of modesty, to foster the human instinct for creative expression, and as a means of communication with other members of the human species.

Throughout the ages, peoples have fitted form with function to create an array of styles in costume and these ever changing fashions have always been seen as reflecting changes in society. Stella Brun States in 'Fashion - The mirror of History'.

'Nothing so graphically and consistently reflects social and cultural patterns as the manner in which individuals within society alter their original appearance'.

(2)

Until the end of the Eighteen Century in Europe, fashion



had been created for, and set by the court circles and was then gradually filtered down through the social scale. The Industrial Revolution in the Nineteenth Century resulted in the creation of an increased affluence within the middle classes, who began to have an important bearing on the world of fashion. However it has been during the last eighty years of the present century that the most rapid and revolutionary changes in dress have been witnessed.

These changes have largely been presented to the public through the work of the fashion designer. This concept of one person or organisation dictating the desirable mode of dress was not realised until 1858, with the emergence of Charles Frederick Worth as the first acknowledged couturier. During the Twentieth Century the phenomena became widespread and through the designers, countless new Fashion styles were born; each reflecting the state of the culture into which it was introduced.

To cite some examples of this, the clothes of Paul Poiret during the 1920's which dispensed with heavy corsetting and introduced a more natural look with loosely marked waistlines and straighter silhouette, directly related the active lifestyle of women after the first World War. Low waisted dresses with fringed or glitter embroidered bodices and loose knee length skirts were influenced by the blossoming Hollywood Film Industry and the popularity of dance music at the time.

The economic crisis of 1929, with the Wall Street Crash,



decreed an end to the good times of the twenties and the silhouette began to soften. Colours became more subdued and all fashion lines, as if reflecting the slump, began to drop downwards. Skirts became longer and their dipping points flopped limply to the ground.

Again after the second World War, the French designers began to promote a more rounded feminine silhouette and in the Spring of 1947, Christian Dior launched his legendary New Look with a sloping natural shoulder line, tiny waistline and huge gathered or pleated skirts. It was a natural reaction to the Austerity of the war years.

Since the end of World War II, with the improvement of tele-communications networks on a global scale, the world has been able to keep in touch with day to day events as they occur. This in turn has resulted in a much faster change-over rate in fashion styles which has continued and increased in momentum until the present day.

The British designer, Vivienne Westwood (see Fig 1) has occupied a keyrole in the frontline of fashion for the past decade:

'Year after year she has been a relentless innovator, a fashion visionary with a unique capacity to capture the mood of any particular moment'



IN SEASON

# Vivienne Westwood

MAKEUP BY PAUL STARR (REPRESENTED BY CAMILLA LOWTHER) HAIR BY KEVIN RYAN

1. Vivienne Westwood.



As has already been mentioned, we use our history as a continual source of reference and relate it to our present experiences. Fashion designers tend to look back in time in an effort to glean inspiration for their work. Ms Westwood has also followed this trend and she fully understands the importance of looking at things in an historical context, noting that:

'It is not possible to do anything unless you have tradition'

(4)

However Vivienne Westwood has also made a conscious effort to work with history in the making as well as with traditional inspirations: past collections have used imagery from Victorian street urchins and witches, alongside Science fiction film stills and 1980's New York, Graffiti prints. By mixing the two aspects, Westwood's work provides a powerfully graphic picture of Western Culture in the 1970's and 1980's.

The emergence of street fashion, the shock value of sex and the importance of the promotion of our culture are topics that I aim to discuss over the following chapters, whilst referring to the work of Vivienne Westwood and the various relationships between society, history and fashion.

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## CHAPTER ONE: THE MELTING POT OF HISTORY.

Vivienne Westwood was born in Derbyshire in 1941, at the beginning of a decade where the energies of the peoples of the Western World were being devoted to coping with the ravages of the Second World War and its after-effects. The postwar era has been an era characterized by rapid change; during the past forty years a catalogue of events have occurred which have shaped the face of our culture. Increased industrialization and automation, the advent of the space age, huge developments in telecommunications and changes in the distribution of wealth have endowed Ms. Westwood with an acute awareness of being part of the creation of history.

This experience has been brought to bear on her work in fashion design over the last fifteen years, where she has been hailed as one of the most influential and innovative people in the business. Alongside this acclaim her unorthodox approach to dress has meant that Westwood's designs have attracted continual controversy.

'She is cast as the subversive and slightly barmy heroine of an inaccessible and faintly threatening underworld of cultish fashion'.

(1)

Vivienne Westwood did not have a formal fashion training, but entered the business by chance through her work with Malcolm McLaren, an ex - Art school rebel and would be

entrepreneur. with whom she liaised until 1984. In 1971 they opened a shop together at 430 Kings Road, Chelsea and these premises formed a base for their actions over the following years and still remain part of the business today. The influence of their partnership during the next decade cannot be overestimated; Malcolm, through the various incarnations of the shop (see chronology) managed to predict major fashion movements; the fifties Rockrevival, fetishism and street punk, with extraordinary accuracy.

The sixties had been an eventful decade, incorporating major social changes, daring young fashions and new styles in popular music. The rebuilding of the economy after the war culminated in an affluence on a scale not known since the Twenties with the revolutionary appearance of the mini skirt pioneered by André Courrèges and Mary Quant, fashion began to cater for and to be influenced by youth-orientated styles. The energetic pop music of the Beatles and the unconventional, less class-conscious clothes gave 'Swinging London' an international reputation for its lively fun-loving outlook. By 1967 the enthusiasm and vitality of the earlier years had begun to wane; the horrors of the Vietnam war persuaded many young people to take an anti-aggressive stance and aim for peace, at one with nature. Flower Power became an important cult movement and the hippies, with their long shoulder length hair and ethnic inspired clothing, became an important fashion influence. The rock group, 'The Rolling Stones'



captured this disorientated mood. as did the lengthening of skirts and the yearning for escapist eastern clothing and psychedelic drug influenced prints. Until the end of the sixties. skirt lengths see-sawed between the mini and the floor length maxi and a less rigorous approach to following fashion became established.

With the onset of the Seventies there were no dramatic social changes with which to influence the direction of fashion, but the mood at the end of the previous decade suggested that the party of the Sixties was over. It was into this climate that McLaren and Westwood launched their onslaught on the world of fashion. Westwood states in 'Time Out' magazine.

'The Age of Nostalgia was being born... my generation had been politicized by hippies and by all those great magazines like 'Ink' and 'Oz'. Then Malcolm, myself, and people all over Europe and the United States started looking at our own lifetimes culture to find the motives for rebellion because the hippies were no longer saying enough.

(2)

The elements of their own era which they choose to look at included the Teddy Boy, the Biker and the Fetishist. This pre-occupation with youth or subversive cults has been a constant source of reference throughout the Westwood collections, and is studied in more detail in the following Chapters. At this stage, although the clothes were being

designed and sold primarily to make a living, rather than with any great pretence to original design, these choices of reference are typical of Westwood and her interest in the recent and the not-so-recent past.

The shop in the Kings Road became known as 'Let it Rock' and it sold Teddy Boy clothes to the London Revivalists of the fifties cult. Original tailored drape jackets and 'pegs' could be worn with the 'Rock' T-Shirt (see Fig. 2) - a black t-shirt with the word Rock emblazoned across it, formed by a combination of chicken bones and chains. The original fifties teds had of course looked to history to form their look, which was a combination of Edwardian gentlemen's suiting with a contrasting collar and thick crepe soled shoes worn by East coast American college kids. The shop subsequently became known as 'Too Fast to Live Too Young to Die'. Now selling Bikers clothing based around the Black Leather Jacket, the duo capitalised on the mid seventies trend towards Heavy Metal music and the cool macho imagery it portrayed. The motorcycle had gained an image as a weapon of power and its association with celluloid rebels such as James Dean and Marlon Brando aided the promotion of the 'tough-guy' image in the absence of any identifiable youth cults at the time.

The arrival of sexual fetishist clothing in the shop was a natural progression from the leather and chains of the biker period. London had always had a link with the darker sides of sexuality through its notorious red-light





Fig. 2. A 1972 Design from 'Let it Rock'

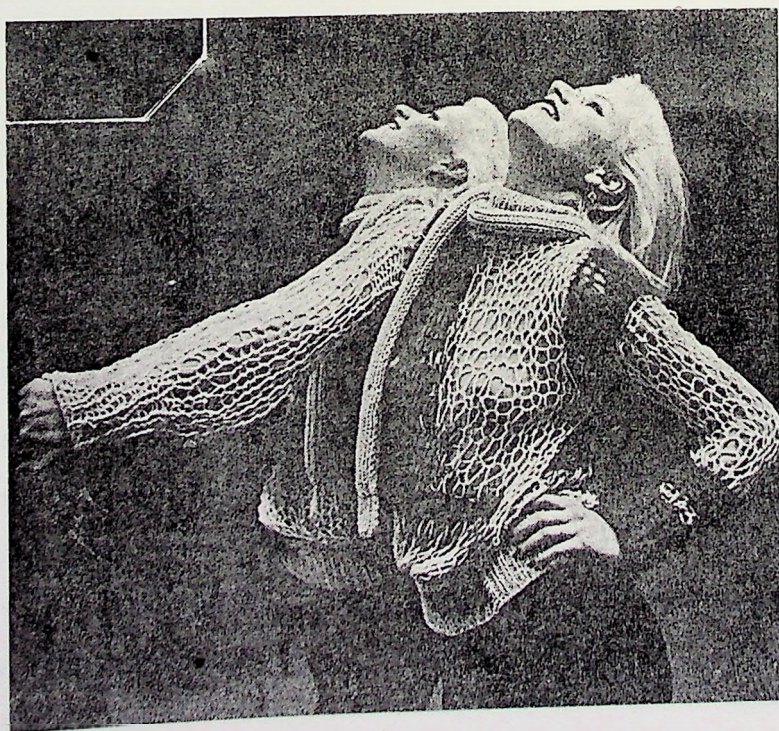


Fig. 3. Mohair Sweater from 'Seditionanes'

district, Soho. The idea of this type of clothing being sold openly in the Kings Road however, was frowned upon by many members of Society including the Daily Mirror Newspaper who tried to have the shop which was now called 'Sex' closed down. The campaign failed and 'Sex' remained to face the revolutionary new development of late 1976: Punk Rock.

'Fashion design is almost like mathematics; you have a vocabulary of ideas which you add and subtract from each other to come up with an equation which is right for the times.

(3)

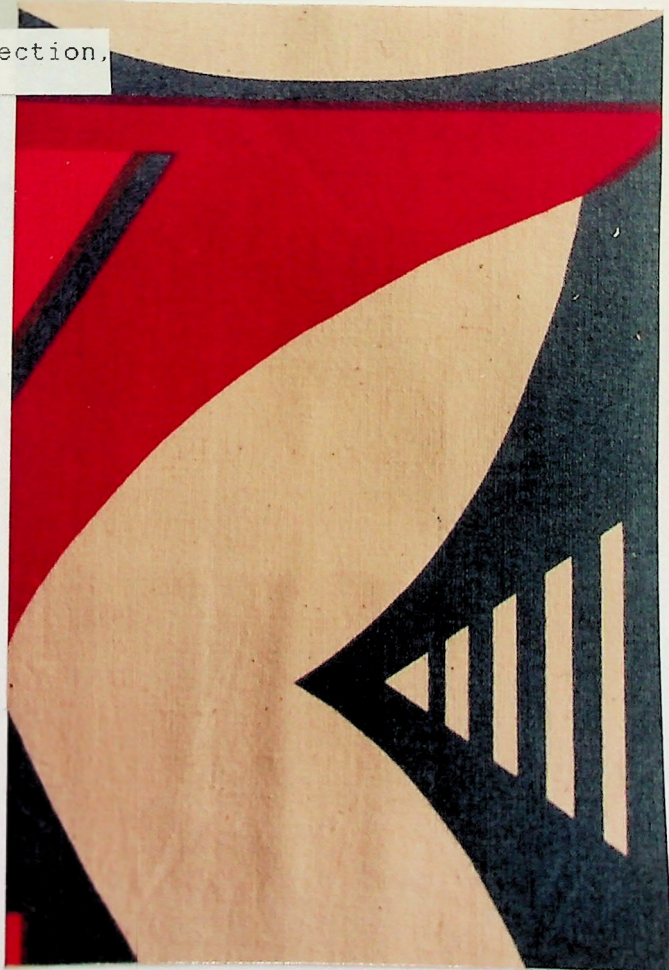
This theory of fashion design explained by Westwood in 1987 has proved to be a driving force in all her collections since 1976. The emergence of Punk with its attendant upsurge caused the work of McLaren and Westwood to be publically examined by the World. Although its like had never been seen before, many of the elements had been around a long time: The fetishist imagery which was already being sold by the duo was given a new twist by being mixed with torn and slashed t-shirts, and sweaters knitted out of scraps of mohair and string (see fig.3) with dropped stitches here and there. The random addition of safety pins, hypodermic needles and Nazi symbolism combined to create a powerful image of the disgust of youth with the society in which they lived. In 1980, Vivienne and Malcolm left the remnants of Punk behind them, and came striding back into the fashion scene with a collection





Fig. 4.

An ensemble from the 'Savages' Collection, 1982, with fabric sample.





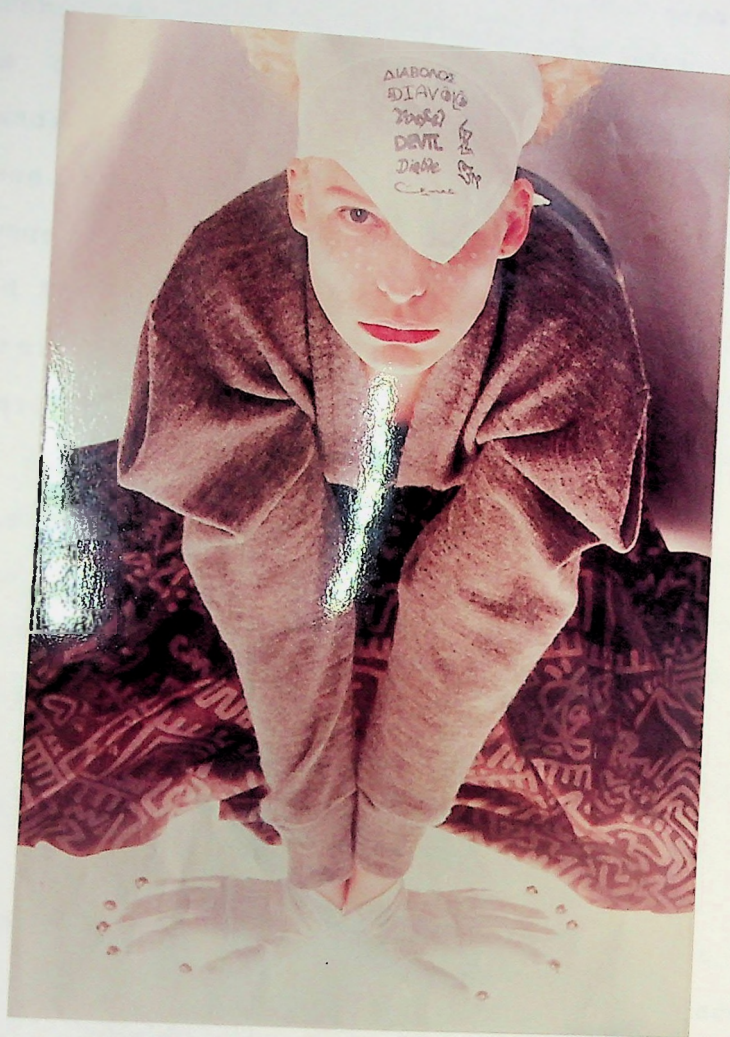


Fig. 5. Witches 1984.

based on Pirates. The swash buckling pirate imagery was mixed with bright modern squiggle printed fabrics and hailed a move towards escapist romantic dressing after the harsh, 'No future' attitude of punk. Although the economy was continuing to decline and unemployment figures rose steadily, the fashion world no longer wanted to confront these problems directly. Westwoods next collection, 'Savages' in 1982 looked to the Art world for inspiration; Bold Aztec prints in primary colours were incorporated into oversized garments made in rough fabrics with exposed seam detail (see fig. 4) This return to a tougher translation of source material was also repeated in the next collection, 'Buffalo Gals' which verified the success of their collaboration. The clothes were inspired by square-dancing Tennessee Hillbillies and rugged sheepskin wraps and layers of wool and cotton in earthy swampy shades were sold through their new shop 'Nostalgia of Mind' in St. Christophers Place.

In 1984, Hobo's forged its link into the past through the image of Street urchins and 18th century almanacs, it also gave a literal indication of the present day culture by the inclusion of clothes made from fabric printed with stills from the 1982 cult film, 'Blade Runner'. This direct quotation from current art movements continued in the Witches collection which incorporated graffiti prints by the New York Street artist, Keith Haring in conjunction with a modern translation of Witches, complete with gold balls at the end of their fingertips (see fig. 5).





Fig. 6. Dipping Hems, Slashes and Flourescents in  
'Punkature'





Fig. 7. 1986 - The Mini Crini Collection.



A brief look backwards at the Punk scene was shown in 'Punkature' in 1985. This time around, Punk resurfaced in a more colourful disguise, bondage trousers and fluorescent combined with earth shades and primaries. Tin lids became buttons and patchwork samples were used as Pockets. Seams were askew, jackets fell from shoulders and skirt hemlines dipped from mid calf to floor length (see fig. 6).

The 'mini-crinini' was the first collection that Vivienne completed without the aid of Malcolm McLaren, and it was her revolutionary revival of the nineteenth century <sup>crinoline which</sup> formed the basis of the look and which ultimately led to her being seen as a unique innovator and inventor of fashions. Spurned as unwearable when first shown late in 1985, The mini cinni was a pouf-like mini shirt with innumerable hoops (see fig. 7). Its introduction at the height of the aggressive shoulder pad era showed Westwood's determination yet again, to go against the grain and ignore prevailing trends. Her intuition was proved right when, the following season all the major designers included a pared down version of the crinoline in their collections, in the form of bubble or ra-ra-skirts.

In her 1988 range, Vivienne at last looked to British things as an inspiration. Always concerned with the more unorthodox elements of society, Westwood noted that Queen Elizabeth II, a woman who pays scant regard to fashion, had



Fig. 8.

A slimmer version of the mini  
Part of the





**westwood**

Fig. 9. The various guises of Sherlock Holmes.



retained the same personal image for so long that she managed to end up looking unorthodox. Using Royalty as her theme, Westwood mixed twin sets and pearls, blazers and pinstripes and twisted them round, including a new slimmed down version of the mini crini (see fig 8.) She used the vibrant colours of Harris Tweed to create a hat in the form of a crown to be worn with a small cloak of synthetic ermine over bare shoulders. Westwood continued her interest in all things British the following season, again using tweeds, this time with the use of leather and sheepskin to portray that old British detective, Sherlock Holmes. Jackets were designed so that they could be unbuckled at the shoulder and the sleeves removed, Eighteenth century 'stomacher's' were mixed with short sheath skirts and bunny-girl ballet inspired tutu's. (see fig. 9)

Westwood's most recent collection, 'Civilizade', takes a giant step backwards, to pagan times, in the hope that the freedom of argument will continue. This collection will be discussed in more detail in chapter 7.

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## CHAPTER TWO: CLOTHING, SOCIETY AND THE 'STREET'

Up until the beginning of the Twentieth Century, Fashion started at the top with the wealthy and upper classes and then gradually worked its way down the social scale. The conspicuous show of wealth continued unabashed and women such as the Empress Eugénie of Paris could easily afford the luxury of being dressed by the top couturiers. The emergence of Charles Fredrick Worth, and later, Paul Poiret slowly changed the ruling hand of fashion and the designers began to hold as much if not more sway than the people they dressed. Until the end of the Second World War, the world looked exclusively to the Salons of Paris for fashion direction and designers such as Molyneux, Schiaparelli and Balenciaga produced a multitude of Couture garments worked to the highest standards and made to fit each client exactly.

The amount of work which was involved in the creation of couture garments and the expensive fabrics used defined the high price at which it was sold. A decrease in the importance of the court, combined with an increased appetite for faster changes in dress styles, meant that the couture could no longer profitably support itself and, although it still exists today it has largely given way to the 'Ready to Wear' clothing trade. The mass production of clothing, pioneered by the United States, resulted in a desirable image which was still largely influenced by Couture designers's Ready to Wear ranges, being much more readily available to the public at a price which they could



afford.

An increase in prosperity after the rationing of the war years meant that for the first time in history, the younger generation cornered a niche in the fashion market. Prior to this, young people had dressed in the same fashion as their elders; however now that they had the freedom to choose their own styles, they began to question the dress and indeed the social codes of their peers, and Anti Establishment fashion began to make its mark.

Anthropologists maintain that there are at least two major cultures within each society:

'One authorized by ideal aesthetics and laws, and another unconscious version which is expressed in products and practises that the official culture would like to suppress or ignore'

(1)

One of the most popular ways of rebelling against the official culture has been through the wearing of an alternative mode of dress. This is by no means a new concept: Anti-establishment clothing has been around since the French Revolution when the aristocrats wore their wigs back to front and, later in the emergence of the nineteenth century 'dandy'.

Street clothes, as they became known in the fifties, presumed that there was an establishment, and they were

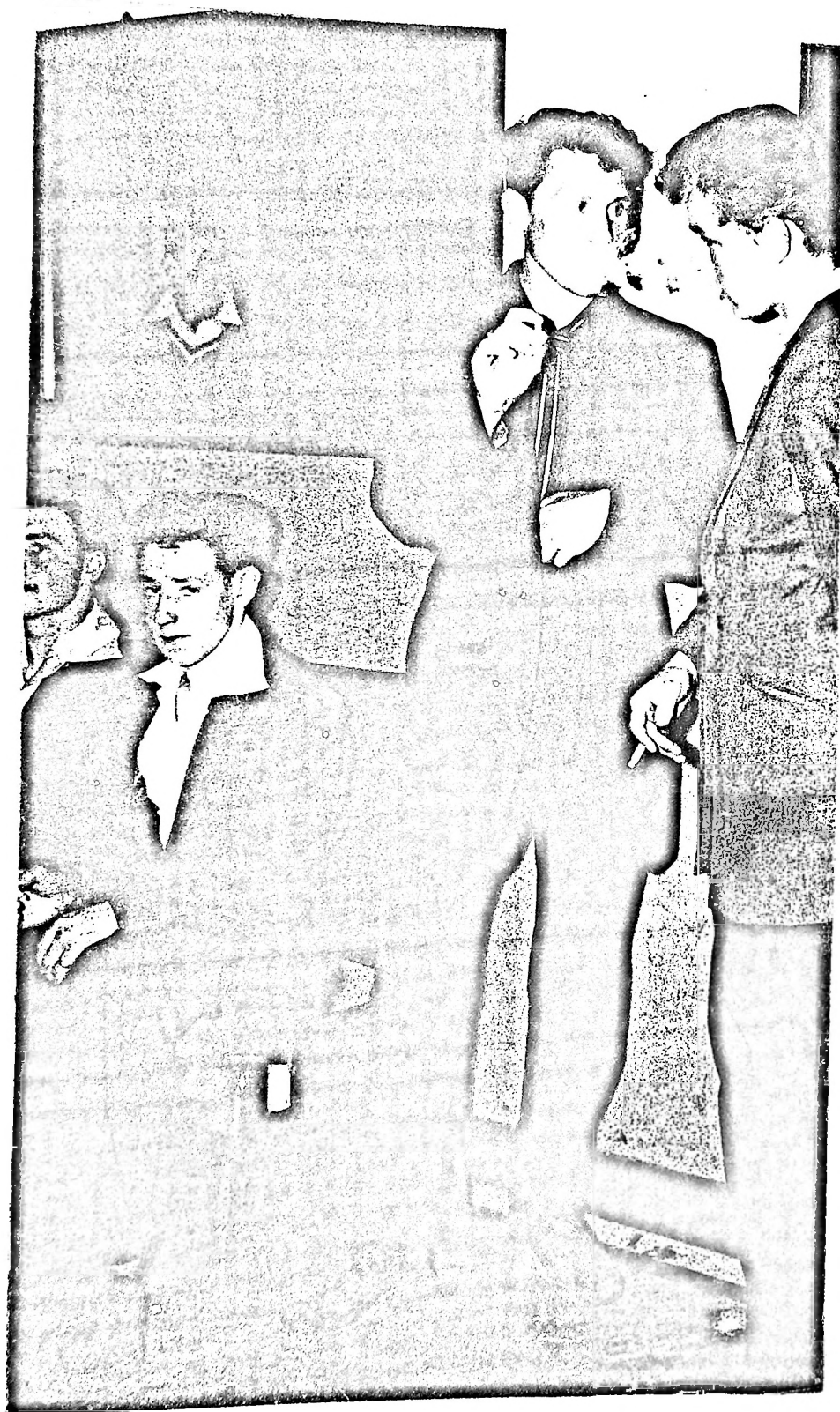


Fig. 10 1950's Teddy Boys.

therefore anti-establishment. The young working class of this period did not want to look like Edwardian gentlemen, as their fathers were now doing, so instead they adapted the styles giving the jacket a longer, looser shape and pairing it with tight drainpipe trousers which slopped just above the ankle to show brightly coloured socks and thick crêpe soled shoes. These teddyboys (see fig. 10) were the first of a series of youth cults which disposed with accepted dress codes in an effort to proclaim their own identity. The teds were followed by the beatniks and the mods of the early sixties.

Although these cults made it clear that the views of the younger generation should not be ignored, the hippies, in the late sixties were the first group to use their collective voice politically. Until the sixties, war had, in the main, been seen as an unattractive but necessary part in the growth of society. The first and second world wars had their share of conscientious objectors, but with the availability of increased information through the medium of television, the atrocities of the Vietnam war (1965-1973) created a massive anti-war feeling. The hippies advocated a return to peace and love. They organised peaceful demonstrations: often through rock concerts, put flowers in their hair and asked that we 'Make love - not War' (see fig 11).

Simultaneously the sexual revolution was in full swing. The hippies desire to return to a natural way of living





Fig. 11. 'Hippy Dress - Psychedelia and escapism.'

free from the problems created by capitalism and war combined with the development of the contraceptive pill, to signal the age of promiscuity and the breaking down of sexual barriers. The hippies took the naturalistic mode of living literally: The Hedonistic hit musical 'Hair' (1968), the first Broadway show to reveal avant garde nudity to the general public, led to the presence of nude bathers at the Woodstock Rock festival, proclaiming 'Free Love' for all. The political weight of the hippy movement was also felt in the field of education - the need for an education system which was no longer the preserve of the elite but which would be available to all classes in society, culminated in the student uprisings of 1968.

Although students have been campaigning ever since, the 1968 demonstrations remain the most successful, with many concessions being granted.

Though both their actions and their mode of dress, the hippies registered their dissatisfaction with establishment ways and illustrated the importance of youth cults in the provision of comment on the social matters of the day.

At tea-time on a December day in 1976, the British working public arrived home and sat down in front of their television sets to watch the B.B.C.'s 'Today' programme hosted by Bill Grundy. The material on the normally sedate current affairs programme, sent a wave of horror and outrage through authoritarian Britain. The following day in a blaze of publicity Newspaper headlines screamed 'The



Filth and the Fury"!

The cause of the furore was Malcolm McLaren's new rock group: 'The Sex Pistols'.

The group had been formed in mid 1976 and had been playing a few concerts since then, attracting some media attention; however it was not until their use of swear words on the show that the 'Punk Rock' cult received national coverage. McLaren had sensed an increasing dissatisfaction among the nations youth and its need for a new forceful group identity.

Punk accepted that Western Civilization, controlled by the nuclear threat of the superpowers, was on the brink of collapse. The reality of mass unemployment was once again becoming evident and they reacted by creating an image which portrayed a complete set of negatives: anger, violence and hostility. This was an extreme reaction to the youth attitudes of the sixties. The punks held the hippies in total contempt for what they saw as their failure to effect change to the problems which had filtered through the late sixties. The punks thus coined the phrase 'Never trust a hippy' and the Sex Pistols summed it up in two words in their song 'No Future'.

The image that so entranced the Western World was one of deprivation and self abuse. The clothes were created by Vivienne Westwood. As has been mentioned before, Vivienne has always taken her inspiration from the more rebellious



Fig. 13. The God Save the Queen T-Shirt.



aspects of the present society as well as delving into the past traditions of ancient civilizations. She maintains that,

'The vitality of a culture lies on the line between what is orthodox and what is not; I always try to be on that line'.

(2)

Her designs echoed the aggression and the subversive rhythms of the era, and they first appeared in a flurry of headlines, the daily newspapers denouncing the phenomenon of Punk Rock. Grainy black and white photographs of highly decorated punks crowded the newstands, dressed in

'The look that launched a thousand rebellions - Tight, sexy and out to shock. Anti-power dressing for a generation'.

(3)

The Sex Pistols were dressed in a variety of t-shirts; one such design was made from two squares of muslin stitched together with obscene literature printed on it; another more infamous shirt was the 'God Save the Queen' design (see fig. 13) which displayed a photograph of Queen Elizabeth II with a safety pin through her nose and mouth and Nazi Swastika's in place of her eyeballs. This t-shirt coincided with the release of the Sex Pistols single of the same name, to 'commemorate' the Queen's silver Jubilee in the summer of 1977. Westwood sewed zips into the backs of baggy trousers and tied the two legs together with a restrictive strap. They were available in either black or



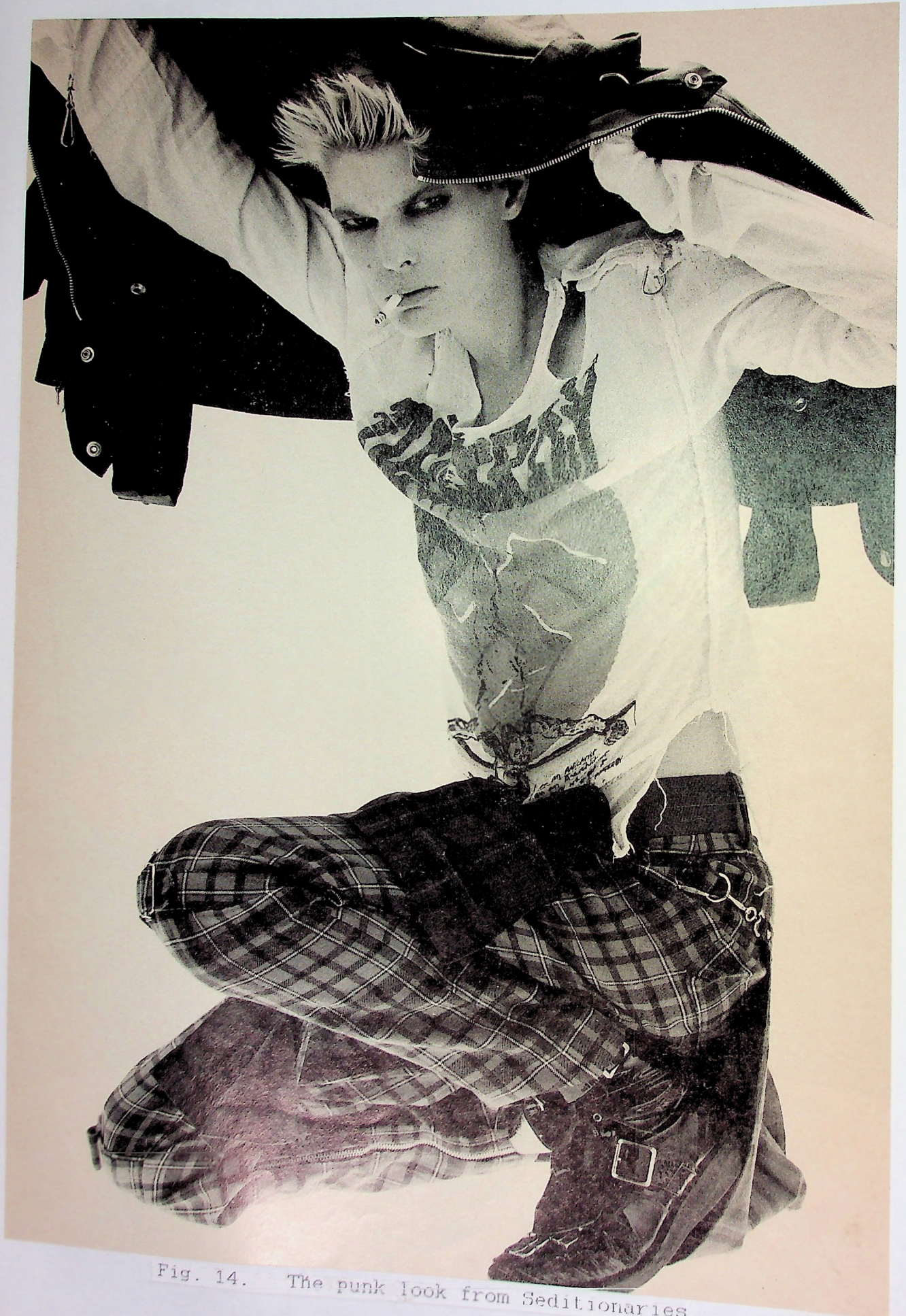


Fig. 14. The punk look from Seditiousaries.



red Highland tartan and became known as Bondage Trousers. Ripped and torn clothes held together with clips and safety pins, or revealing the naked flesh portrayed an image that seemingly undermined the reasons for wearing clothes in the first place. The raw aggression of this look was an intentional insult to both the authorities and to conservative fashion (see fig. 14).

The do-it-yourself approach to clothing which Punk fostered, appealed to sections of the generations youth: in an age of increasing poverty the prospect of having to spend very little money on clothing struck a chord which has remained a key aspect of street fashion to the present day.

'Street Fashion in Britain is world renowned, probably more innovative, and certainly more versatile than in any other Country. It is the product of circumstance: economic depression, unemployment, the joint influences of music and the media. It is a form of self expression and a mark of individuality, an outward sign of security, or the desire to be part of an elect tribe. (4)

We can all rest assured that the 'elect tribe' which have made the most important contribution to street fashion this century are the punk rockers of the late seventies.

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### CHAPTER 3: SEX.

The function of clothing as a means of communication is a very important one; the wealth, occupation, status and the innate character of a person can often be judged in terms of the dress which they are wearing. The display of sexuality can also be communicated through clothing and it appears that this display of sexual attraction, rather than the shame of the naked body has served as one of the major purposes of bodily decoration.

The requirement of procreation to prolong the survival of the human species results in this need for sexual communication; throughout all cultures men and women dress in different ways to attract a sexual partner. It is a fact that the covering or adornment of certain areas of the body, rather than absolute nakedness, will create a much greater desire in their partners.

The position of the erogenous zones of the body varies from society to society and from generation to generation, and conversely this also applies to the location of 'shameful' or 'immodest' bodily areas. Throughout the centuries the human body has endured the imposition of these codes of society. In Ancient China the size of the foot was equated with the size of the vagina, with the idea that small was beautiful. This resulted in the feet of Chinese women being bound from birth to stop their natural growth; known as the Lotus Foot it was seldom more than four inches long



Fig. 15. The deformed look of the Chinese 'Lotus Foot'



(see fig 15). Women who did not have their feet bound were subjects of dishonour as it suggested that they were not a subject of their husband's domination. More recently, in eighteenth century France the sight of the tip of a woman's shoulder or elbow was decidedly risqué where-as in the late nineteenth century an honourable woman's legs should always have stayed hidden.

In Western culture the Christian Church decided that the genitals were unacceptable reminders of human frailty, displayed in the bible by Adam and Eve, and this induced a guilt about sex which still remains today.

As a result of this, aspects of sexuality have become a prime weapon with which to confront the standards of Western Society and have therefore been embraced by the purveyors of an Anti-Establishment code. Although sexuality had been paraded through the medium of clothes for centuries, the actual practise of the subject has never been blatantly addressed. All this changed with the advent of the youth cults of the Twentieth Century as discussed in the previous chapter. To quote Mick Farren from his book 'The Black Leather Jacket'.

Shock, is, of course, also a demonstration of vulnerability and it's been the major responsibility of any would-be counter culture from Da Da to hard core, to go after that vulnerability at every chance they get. One of the time honoured tactics is to

# BOWIE PINUPS



Fig. 16. David Bowie.



take what was once bedroom-private and parade it on the streets.

(1)

In the fifties Rock Singers became the new popular idols and Elvis Presley became one of the most influential faces of the decade. During his singing Elvis often thrust his hips forward and rotated his pelvis and this visual mimicry of the sexual act which was avidly copied by his younger fans, was considered very shocking at the time. The hippies, for their part, put Elvis's mockery into practise and again their attitude to 'Free Love' away from the constraints of marriage, left established society aghast. In fact, since the fifties, sexuality has been a traditional trait in rock clothing, with performers such as Jim Morrison of the 'The Doors', David Bowie, and Tina Turner wearing outfits on stage which made a direct statement of their sex, (see fig 16).

Malcolm McLaren stood outside his shop in the Kings Road in 1974 and asked himself. 'What can I really affront this place with?' The answer of course, was sex. Malcolm's ideas had always been couched in the politics of subversion. He knew that the way to annoy the establishment was by attacking sexual attitudes, particularly the 'No Sex, we're British' element; and undermining the puritan basis of its culture. Naturally, the logical follow up to this idea was to name his group 'The Sex Pistols'. (see fig 17)

The shock value of sex was carried through to the clothing

Fig. 17. Johnny Rotten of the Sex Pistols sports one of Westwood's pornographic t-shirts.

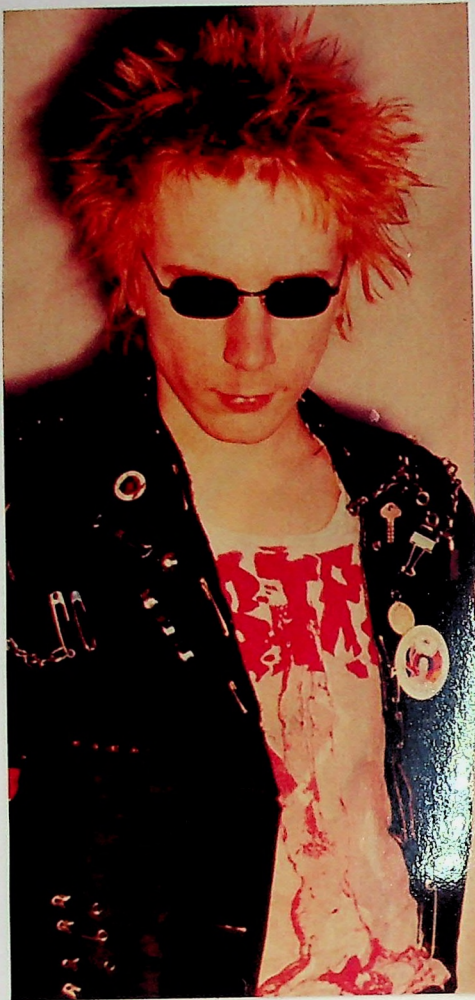


Fig. 18. Jordan - As Westwoods shop assistante, she was one of the main promoters of the punk look.



of the Punk Rock era. McLaren and Westwood's retail outlet in the Kings Road had for the past number of years carried a stock of Fetishist clothing, and these Sado Machocistic fashions became part of the uniform of punk. At the height of the cult, in 1977 Mick Farren sighted.

'A leather clad punkette leading her friend on a dog collar and leash; her female friend was dressed in shoes, stockings, suspenders, a clear garbage sack and a belt.

(2)

At the same time, Jordan, Vivienne Westwood's shop assistant was allowed to travel on the first class compartment of British Rail trains, as her short vinyl mini skirt with transparent centre panel had caused complaints from travellers in the busier second class carriages (see fig. 18).

This public display of taboo areas of the body was contrary to every moral standard in the Britain culture.

Vivienne Westwood was all too aware of the effects of flaunting this moral code and of course she used this knowledge to her advantage in her designs. Her clothes suited the anarchic youth of the day who wished to find a new way to shock the bourgeoisie, and alter the concepts of good taste.

'Time Out' magazine points out that

'The clothes were inspired by elements of mainstream culture, inverted to make them aggressive. Bondage trousers, instead of being a symbol of submission, were transformed into powerful statements of aggression'.

(3)

Vivienne's razor slashed t-shirts had been inspired by an earlier culture.

'One day I put a hole for the neck of a t-shirt at the breast and I knew it would do something with the body in an extremely sexy way. All those ripped things came from pictures I'd seen of film stars looking really sexy in ripped clothes.

(4)

The look was in fact inspired by Marlon Brando as Stanley Kowalski in the film 'A street-car named desire' (1951) / this use of ripped clothes to imply the collapse of society was a visual format which could be easily understood: The hippies, with their obtrusively patched jeans had already explored the idea of putting imperfections up front.

One facet of sexuality which has always attracted a great deal of controversy, is pornography, therefore Westwood used its elements to clothe the subversive British public. Graphic images of 'Masturbating Cowboys' and images of paedophilia were stencilled into ripped and pinned t-shirts. The establishment could take no more, and the police prosecuted



for obscenity. Through the use of sex in its various guises Punk had achieved what it set out to do. It awakened society to recognise the concerns of its youth: and it's documentation by the international media put the name of Vivienne Westwood on the map.

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#### CHAPTER 4: MUSIC.

In the company of Art, Ballet and the Theatre and Cinema, music is a reflection of the society in which we live. and therefore an influence on the way we dress. This can be traced back to the 1920's and the Jazz Age. The new medium of radio brought the sounds of New Orleans musicians like Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington to the ears of the young post war audience. The popularity of this music and its affinity with dance raised the skirt to knee length and caused a sensation. Clothes which were cut in a flat silhouette and made from flimsy fabrics, skimmed the figure without emphasising it and a lavish use of colour, fringing and beading echoed the mood of the Roaring Twenties. (see Fig. 19)

As opposed to other Art forms, music tends to have a greater influence over the younger members of society, and the upsurge of youth movements in the 1950's was, in part, due to an allegiance with new musical styles. The arrival of Elvis Presley on the music scene totally changed the record business which until then, had marketed to the older Music Hall generation of the thirties and forties. The increased youth affluence meant that Presleys records sold in such huge numbers that the industry was forced to have a total re-think on its position, and the clientèle it catered for.

The new 'Rock 'n' Roll' music of the fifties, as performed





Fig. 19. Fashions of the Roaring 20's

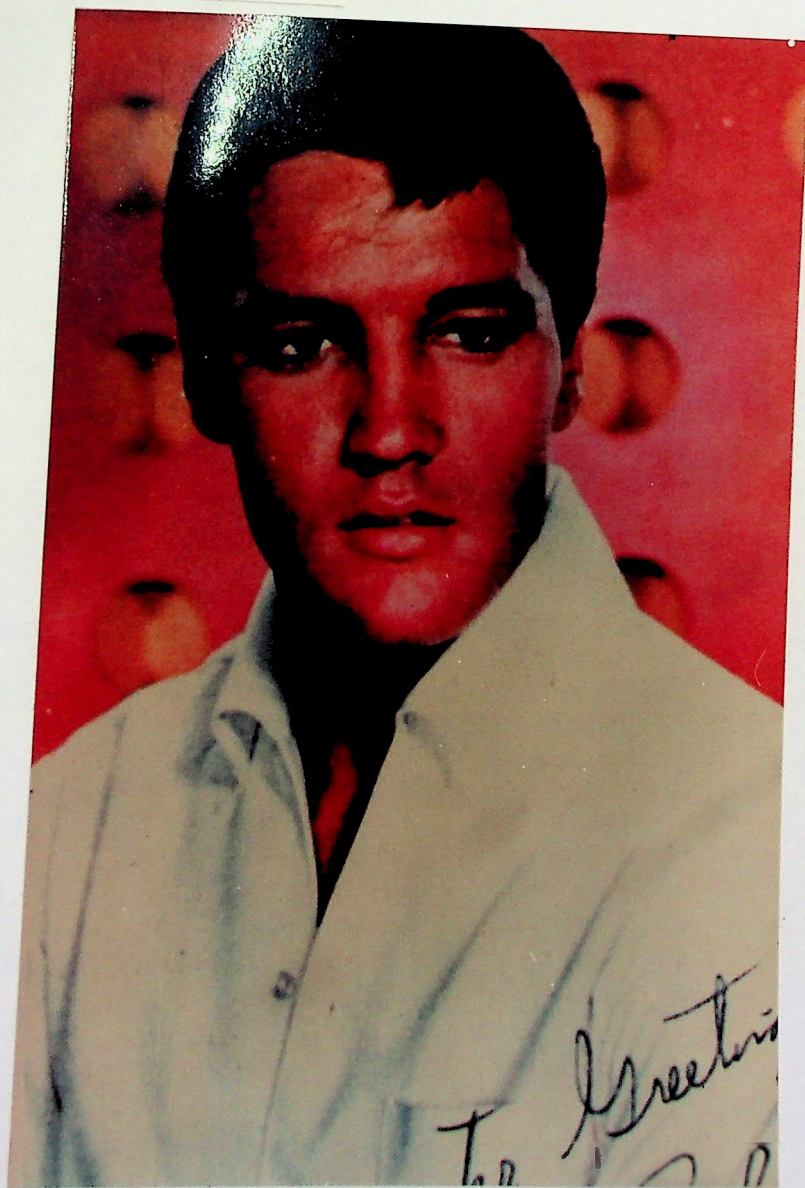


Fig. 20. Elvis Presley, hearthrob of the 1950's

by Elvis Presley, Bill Haley and Gene Vincent, to name but a few, was an immediate hit with the young generation. Of course the world of Fashion witnessed immediate effects (see fig. 20).

'Bill Haley's 'Shake, Rattle and Roll' and 'Rock a around the Clock' charged a whole generation with an inexhaustible energy for dancing. Dance floors were filled with brightly coloured skirts twirling out with every turn, ponytails swung and flat shoes tapped out the beat. Boys swinging the girls through turns were dressed in loose shirts, or big sweaters and narrow trousers or tight blue jeans.

(1)

Gene Vincent's stage apparel, all black leather accentuated with touches of gold jewellery, and his abrupt sexual love songs: 'I'm lookin' for a woman with a one track mind, a huggin' and a-kissin' and a smoochin' all the time' portrayed the more rebellious side of Rock 'n' Roll. His Black Leather jacket, which had also been popularised in film by Marlon Brando and James Dean; became an important garment in the wardrobes of rebellious youth.

The Rock 'n' Roll revolution, launched on a wave of teenage hysteria in 1955, had run out of steam by 1962. In its place the youth heralded the arrival of 'Beatle maina', which took the world by storm over the following decade. The Beatles slim-fitting high collared or collarless suits and jackets, worn with narrow trousers and elastic sided





Fig. 21. The Beatles: Their Image influenced a Generation.



Fig. 22. Gary Glitter; promoter of Glam Rock.

Chelsea' Boots , were instantly copied and led to the prevalence of a much simpler line of dress. The Beatles hair cut, with its straight across the forehead fringe, was copied by countless young men and Vidal Sassoon introduced the bob hair cut for girls, again incorporating the straight fringe line. (see fig. 21).

As the sixties progressed into the hippy era, so did the image of the Beatles. The protest songs of American singer, Bob Dylan: 'Blowing in the wind', and 'The times they are a Changing' became anthems of the growing peace movement, and the hippies dressed accordingly. Their escapist mood of dress displayed the wish communicated by the music, for a utopian, 'no hassle' existence.

Of all the influences on street fashion, music is the most powerful, quickly providing a common denominator amongst its young listeners.

Where a couture house may take months in which to establish the simplicity of a new hemline, a type of music can inspire a new fashion overnight'.

(2)

During the early seventies this statement was borne out by the emergence of an increasing number of Bands and Images. The scottish group 'The Bay City Rollers' started a craze for the wearing of tartan: Gary Glitter spear-headed the Glam Rock movement with glittering lame suits and huge layered platform boots, and David Bowie pioneered many forms of



androgyny with his high camp styles (see fig 22) .

The arrival of Punk in 1976 created a peculiar symbolic relationship between fashion and music. Whereas beforehand it had been music which had influenced dress styles, Punk started an argument as to whether it was the sound or the style which appeared first. It would seem logical that they both worked side by side since both the elements were created largely by one source: McLaren and Westwood. Undesirable social issues were only one of the elements which led to the development of punk. In the years preceding its arrival, pop music had no real direction, it was a sluggish mix of 'Kiddy' pop on the one hand, and bland heavy rock formula on the other. With rock stars being raised to a position of élitism well above that which their talents had earned. The point of punk was that every street corner kid could buy himself a cheap guitar and form a group. It brought pop music back from the <sup>forty minute</sup> voyages of 'Cream' or the Grateful Dead and returned it to its original two and half minute, three chord mode.

Rock garb visually reinforces the content of the songs; what usually establishes stars as rebels is a abrogation of good taste. They demonstrate opposition to normality and decorum by accentuating voluptuous and vulgar elements.

(3)

In terms of the above quotation, punk fashions certainly indicated the rebellious nature of the movement. Westwoods

Fig. 23. Adam Ant: The modern day pirate.



Fig. 24. Westwoods Pirate Look.



clothes related directly to the music, of which they were such a large part.

Of all the popular media, music most openly reveals the collective fears, hopes and passions of a generation. In the past, rock costume often became far removed from everyday dress, and stars such as Elton John built up elaborate images around his stage persona. These escapist costumes were often mixes of mysticism and Romance, with their visual elements leaping among the past, present and future.

This random mixing of past and present histories struck a familiar chord with Vivienne Westwood. In 1980, as a reaction to the slouching angst of Punk, which was by then clearly dated, Westwood produced the 'Pirate' collection which bestowed her with massive acclaim as Fashion designer. Malcolm McLaren's new rock group, 'Adam and the Ants' (see fig 23) functioned as a showcase for the look, indeed it was whilst searching for an image for his new band, that McLaren seized on the idea, and again reflected the culture into which it was introduced.

' In london at that time people were taping of the radio instead of buying records; these people were modern pirates, stealing from their own culture.

(4)

The pirate collection was a statement of swash-buckling arrogance which coincided beautifully with the 'Ant music'. Colours were bright and bold: a profusion of red against



Fig. 25. Bow Wow Wow go 'Wild in the Country'

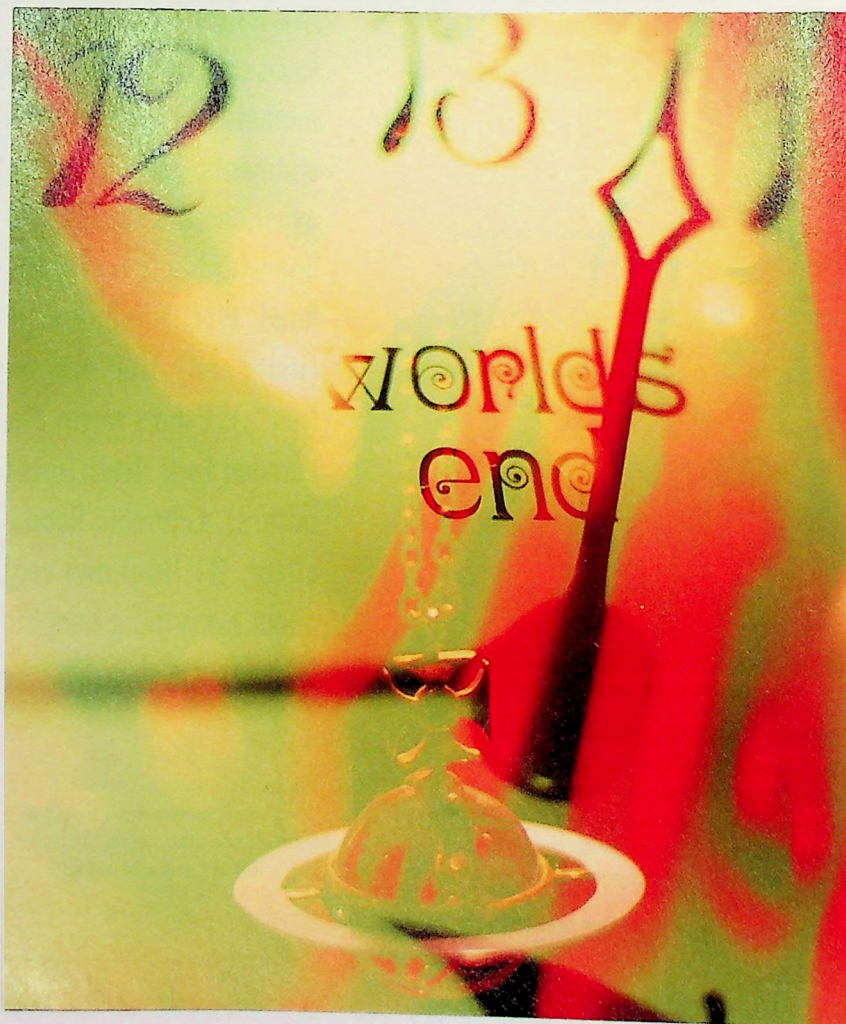


Fig. 26. The Worlds end clock.



yellow squiggle prints on shirts, skirts with sashes worn under jackets, pirate hats with square toed boots and shoes (see fig 24).

Striped suitings were also employed and teamed with delicate lawn and lace, pioneer cottons and madras checks, the layered romantic look contrasted sharply with the neat slim silhouette which the Paris designers, notably Saint Laurent and RYKIEL, were promoting for the season. Another protégé of McLaren, Annabella Lu Win (See fig 25) also promoted the pirate look through the band 'Bow-Wow-Wow'.

The pirate look was the fore runner to London's new street cult, the New Romantics. The look was unashamedly escapist; unemployment in the under twenties in Britain had reached the quarter of a million mark, and the hardships of a Country under the rule of Margaret Thatcher were <sup>becoming evident</sup>. The look of the New Romantics portrayed a much needed element of grandeur in the midst of harsh reality.

Westwood's shop in the Kings Road became known as 'World's End'. Decked out like a galleon with a listing floor and a clock that ran backwards it symbolised the pull towards the past (see fig. 26).

The Westwood collection of 1984, Buffalo Girls, almost certainly drew its inspiration from McLaren's latest Musical Project, this time with himself as part of the star line up (see fig 27). In collaboration with two black



Fig. 27. An advert for Malcolm McLaren's Record, Buffalo Gals.



New York 'rap' D-J's known as 'The World Famous Supreme team' Malcolm laid down a base track which was inspired by a group of sixty year old Tennessee Hillbillies who in an afternoon performed one of their original square dances, with Malcolm calling over the top. Calling is the term used for the person who gives the instructions to the dancers. The base track was then scratched; This is a technique practised by D J's and Kids in the South Bronx, New York. With the help of manual decks and a rhythm box the records were then scratched into each other with the voices of the World Famous Supreme Team being added over the top. like rapping. The records was named 'Buffalo Gals'.

The Buffalo Gals which Vivienne portrayed were dressed in roughly hemmed sheepskin coats on which many of the edges had been left raw. The bleached, worn quality of the sheepskin was teamed with layers of wool and cotton in earthy green, red and ~~dark~~ shades. Massive gathered skirts incorporated a border of naive printed dancers, layers of uneven dyed wadding skirts peered out from underneath the skirts and the look was completed with Masclero printed textured cotton sweaters and vests and lopped with appalachian Hillbilly hats and mud make up. (see fig. 28).

The shop, 'Nostalgia of Mud' was opened in St. Christophers Place, London to house the collection. The mix between the modern New York youth culture and that of the more distant hillbillies again indulged the designers love of cross







Fig. 28. Buffalo Gals, the look that spread Westwoods name around the world.



cultural fertilization, and it worked well.

The look and the music had gone hand in hand from start to finish and both were a critical and commercial success.

In recent years, the advent of the pop videos has been an essential medium in the communication of fashion through music. Since the early 1980's music and fashion have been inexorably linked with each other. fast turnover of pop music cults has meant that original street fashion becomes public through its appearance on pop musicians and is then filtered back to the street through the influence of the said star.

Although few manage to copy what musicians do on stage, all can emulate, to some degree, how they look; their outfits have had a profound effect on the course of fashion.

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## CHAPTER 5: ART.

If there's any chance for this world, it is in trying to get a perspective on our culture.  
1. ( Vivienne Westwood)

Traditionally, great masterpieces of Art were sponsored either by the government of the day, the church, or a group of wealthy individuals. This patronage can be traced back to Ancient Greece and Rome, where displays of Art, mainly in the form of sculpture, dominated all public buildings. This continued through the medieval and Renaissance periods, with the church acting as chief benefactor. However, with the onset of the nineteenth century, the age of industrialization and mechanization meant that a great deal of power was transferred to the middle classes, who became the new patrons of the arts. This signalled the end of an era in which the artist could enjoy the protection of either a rich and powerful sponsor, or the church.

According to Vivienne Westwood, the twentieth century has failed to provide great artistic masterpieces on the grand scale of past centuries, because of the lack of the equivalents of the cultivated wealthy patrons which dominated Europe in previous centuries.

Westwood holds a great interest in Art, and she chose to deal with the subject directly in her 'Witches' collection of 1985. Of course the direct influence of Art on fashion

is by no means new. During 1938, the Italian Designer Elsa Schiaparelli worked closely with the surrealist painter, Salvador Dali, to produce among other things, a dress that had printed tears all over it, made to look as if it was ripped to shreds. In the 1960's Yves St. Laurent produced a literal rendering of Mondrian's paintings in his collection of ladies dresses. In the 'Witches' collection Westwood uses drawings by the New York Graffiti Artists Keith Haring which are printed on to her thick sweatshirting fabric in fluorescent colours (see fig. 29) with references to the devil; his name in many different languages; being interspersed through the Graffiti print. Using this as the base fabric in the collection, Westwood then used the mythical 'pointy', spindly, aspect of witches, incorporating point detail elbows and shoulders under long waterproof macs and mantles with accessories which included the modernised witches hat, plastic visors and gloves with gold balls sewn to the fingertips.

Through her use of Graffiti Art in the collection. Westwood was in fact, using the medium of dress as an exhibition space for current art trends and by making her contribution to the display of Art, she was simultaneously reflecting her own culture.

By the 1960's, the vitality of the day to day world had been missed by mainstream art. All this changed with the arrival of Andy Warhol and pop art, with common objects



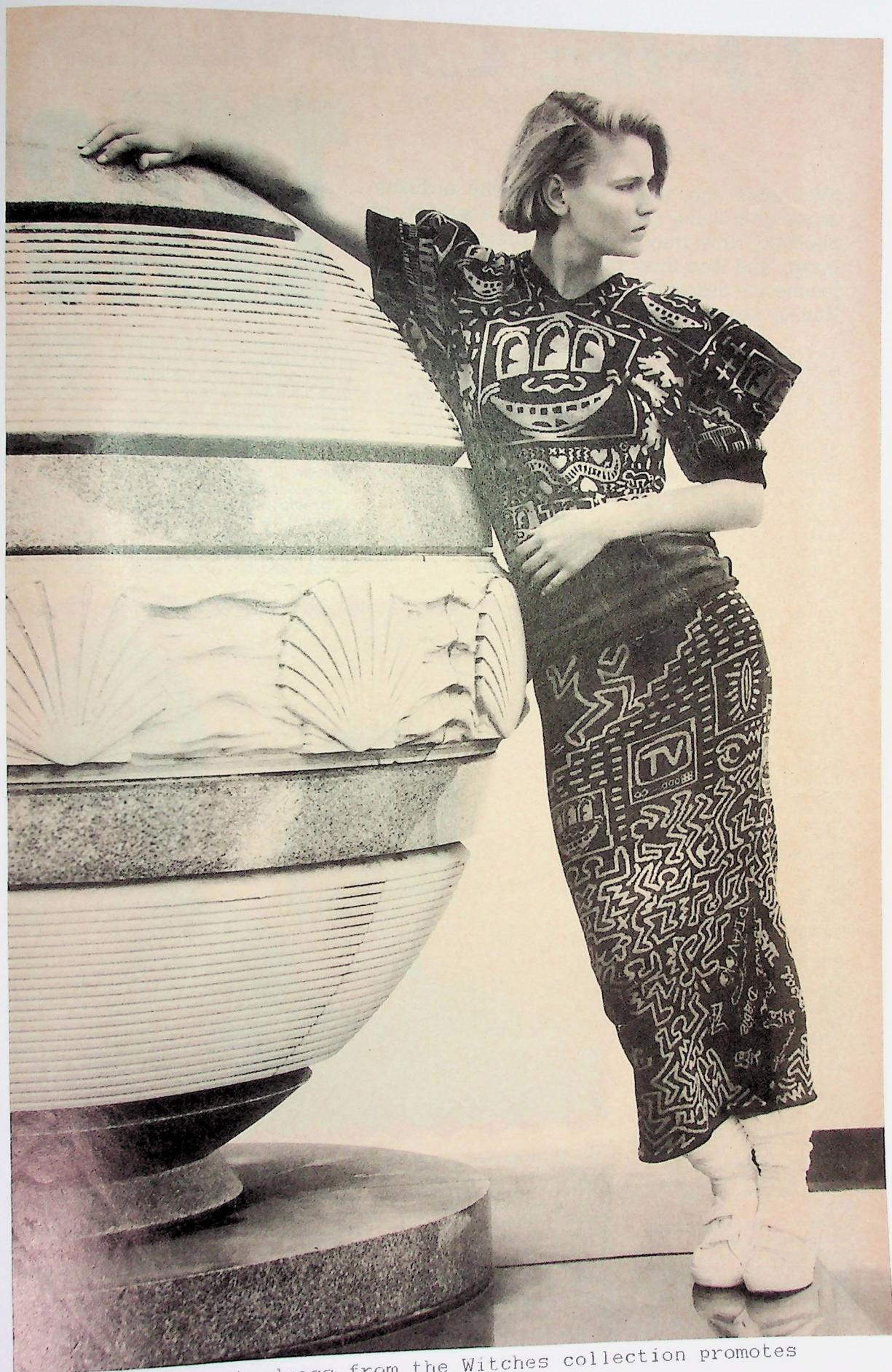


Fig. 29. This dress from the Witches collection promotes Keith Haring's Graffiti Art.



such as the 'Campbell's soup tin' being elevated to the position of Art. In the twentieth century, however, Art was increasingly put on display in obscure and stuffy museums and exhibition halls which were, for the most part, establishments frequented by an élite minority. Whereas in previous centuries art was constantly on public display, its position in the eighties meant that it was ignored by a great majority of people. In an effort to break away from these retractive practises and at the same time bring art back into the public arena a phenomonum which had its roots back in the sixties forced its way into the consciences of the eighties. It was known as graffiti art.

It took written language, the most legitimate form of communication and re-armed it.

(2)

The graffitists seized public space in the form of the New York trains and subways, for their own private advertisement and through this public arena they could communicate with vast numbers of people. In the quick change culture of the eighties, graffiti was an immediate Art form; The use of coloured aerosol cans of paint and crayons did not require the artist to wait for the paint to dry out, as with traditional painting, and the painters required no official art school training, so it meant that, like the participation in the punk music of the 70's, anyone could do it.



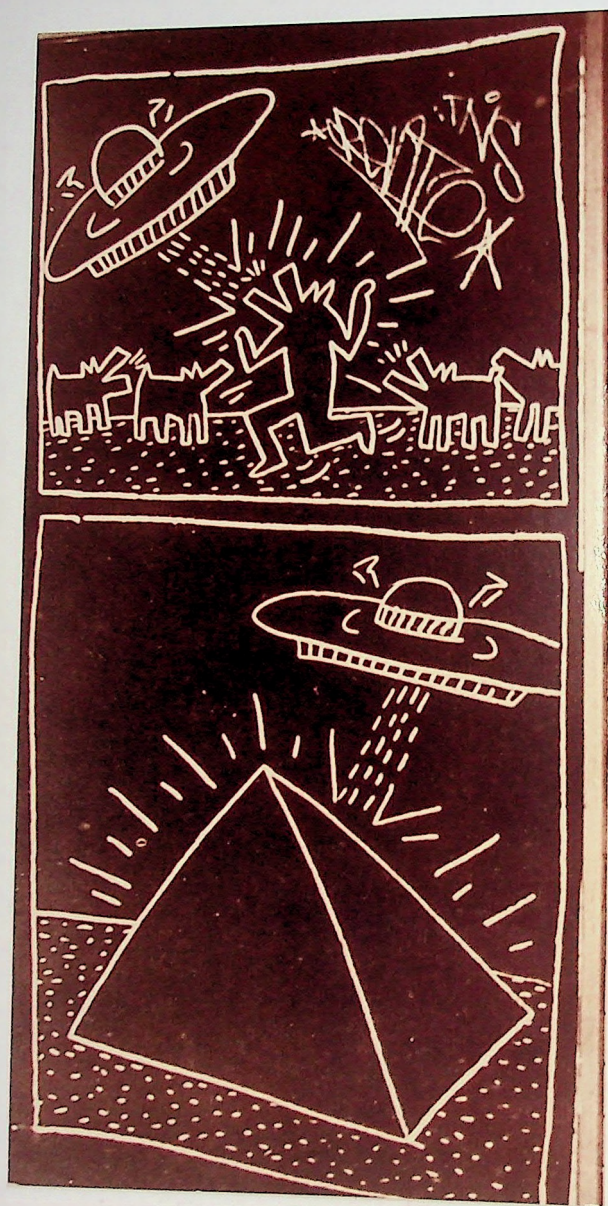


Fig. 30. Keith Haring's Subway Art.

Keith Haring did actually have an art school training and his images have infiltrated popular culture more than any other street artist. In 1980, he began doing his notorious subway drawings on the black paper which the transit authority glues to the placards when an advertisers paid time is up. While his drawings share the spontaneity of graffiti scrawls, his work has managed to veil controversial themes such as nuclear destruction, outer space conquest and homo-sexuality. (see fig. 30) Despite the initial subversive tendencies of street art, its look has indeed infiltrated the mainstream of art and life, hence its use by Vivienne Westwood as a valid reflection of eighties culture.

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## CHAPTER 6: FILM & TELEVISION.

The medium of film has always had a certain influence on fashion, but never to such great an extent as that exercised through Hollywood in the twenties and thirties. Celluloid stars such as Mary Pickford, Greta Garbo and Marlene Dietrich acted out looks which were eagerly absorbed by the younger generation.

The film 'Blade Runner' (see fig. 31) directed by Ridley Scott, was released in 1982 and it received huge critical acclaim, both for its intelligent portrayal of the near future, and the social comments which it observed. The film stars Harrison Ford as 'Deckard' The 'Blade Runner' in the Los Angeles of 2019 as a neo-bounty hunter hired to trail and exterminate the 'Replicants'. These 'Replicants' as the robots are known, are described in October Magazine as follows.

'The Replicants are perfect 'skin-jobs', they look like humans they talk like them, they even have feelings and emotions... what they lack is a history.  
(1)

The film is full of quotations from various time spans and cultures, a facet which is carried through from present day living, in an effort to explain the post-industrial society. One of the main traits of this society is its feeling and look of decay, and this is best illustrated in the layout of the futurist city mentioned in the film.



Fig. 31. Advertisement poster for the film 'Blade Runner'.



Contrary to the clinically clean image displayed by many other science fiction films, the city of Blade Runner exposes the dark side of technology, the process of disintegration. Next to high-tech Buildings, junk heaps are visible: many, once majestic buildings are left to fall into ill repair and decay. It is a place of vast immigration from countries of over population and poverty and the film is populated by crowds of faceless people; oriental merchants, punks and Hari Krishnas fill the streets.

We can find parallels with all of these aspects on the streets of any large Western City today. How many once grand buildings are boarded up in our own cities, vandalised and broken up inside, by the rebellious dissatisfied youth of the Thatcher Era. The mass exodus of young people from Dublin to the larger cultural centres such as New York, over the past few years, speaks volumes as far as emmigration/immigration terms are concerned.

This was <sup>the</sup> scenario with which Vivienne Westwood was faced when she incorporated still prints from the film into her 'Hobo's' collection of 1984. (see fig 32). This was basically a 'do-it-yourself' collection, a mish-mash of the cultures into which Westwood was so fond of delving. Still pictures of the film were combined with those from eighteenth century almanacs and with a wide mix of antique colours and modern fabrics such as velour and stockinette. This melting pot of time produced the Hobo; a barefooted





Fig. 32. The Hobo's Collection.



modern day version of the Eighteenth Century street urchin. The Blade Runner skirts are distressed as if they are a hundred years old. The outward appearance of the skirt symbolising the decay that is so prominent in the film.

Westwood comments on her constant mixing of cultures.

'Its a question of keeping something modern,

while establishing a symbolic connection with

the past'.

(2)

She cites that in doing this there are certain elements which will be recognisable, but its the way that they are put together, presenting them with things that have never been quite like this before, which contributes to a totally modern image.

The importance of television as a cultural medium has only emerged since the 1950's; never-the-less its influence on fashion, mainly through the communication of pop music trends has been massive. It can be suggested that the younger generation of post 1970 will continue to mix and match their influences on dress sense. The fact that the images of television have constantly been embedded in the minds of this generation from birth, has obviously left todays youth with a huge subconscious reservoir of images and pop symbols and has given them a complete lack of

reserve about mixing them together in whatever hap-hazard fashion they please.

The fashion world waits in anticipation.

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## CHAPTER 7 - CIVILIZADE.

On the twelfth of October 1988, the fashion columnist of the Daily Express contested that,

'Britain's former Queen of Punk, Vivienne Westwood is still a fashion Rebel'. (1)

This blasé statement was a reaction to the showing during London Fashion Week, of Vivienne Westwood's collection for this Summer, 1989. The style, christened 'Civilizade', apparently left international buyers 'amused and bemused'. It included bandage sized hipster skirts made from stretch lace, 'impractical' sequinned bikinis revealing vast expanses of tattooed flesh, and boned corselettes with cut-away arcs in the position of the breasts, which were covered over with the same lace as the skirt. (see fig. 34).

The brochure which accompanied the launch of the collection, informs us that it has been inspired by paganism, and it contains many references to the ideals and happenings of the present day and Westwood's attitudes to them.

The pagan culture signifies a lack of religious belief and it is through their refusal to blindly follow an accepted code of religion, that is; Christianity, that Westwood's rejection of the orthodox and her quest for intellectual



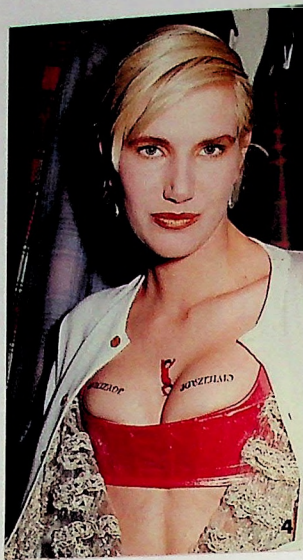


Fig. 33. A combination of looks from Civilizade



enrichment through the questioning of conventional attitudes is displayed.

She mentions that,

' There is talk of Victorian values, but the Victorian values were an insistence on interminable argumentative dinner parties, not middle class puritanism'. (2)

This is an obvious reference to the continuing position of Margaret Thatcher as British Prime Minister. In 1989 Mrs. Thatcher entered her tenth consecutive year in this office. At the beginning of her term, her policies attracted widespread condemnation; she herself advocated a return to Victorian values which she saw as a return to the importance of family unit as part of society. Her policies however, spoke of a slightly different transaltion. The widening gap between the rich and the poor during the early 1980's, brought about by increasing youth unemployment and huge tax concessions for the rich, pointed to the restriction of the freedoms which had been won throughout the century and a return to an era where the lower classes dare not question the voice of authority.

As Thatcher's term in office continues, the public, who were once screaming for her blood, have now become apathetic and because of the lack of credible opposition, they feel resigned to living under her rule indefinitely.

The pagans were a materialistic and barbaric society, and Vivienne Westwood obviously feels that we have a parallel situation in Thatcher's Britain today.

The reign of Margaret Thatcher has not however been the only constant element of the last decade. Vivienne Westwood, with her steadfast belief in argument and the constant questioning of our culture, has also reigned supreme over this period, and, like Mrs. Thatcher, she looks set to continue for quite a while.

With Civilizade, she again asks us to keep the argument alive.

' Scepticism engenders ideas and belief kills them.

Elitism is not power and money: it is the cultivation of ideas and art made possible by money and power? (3)

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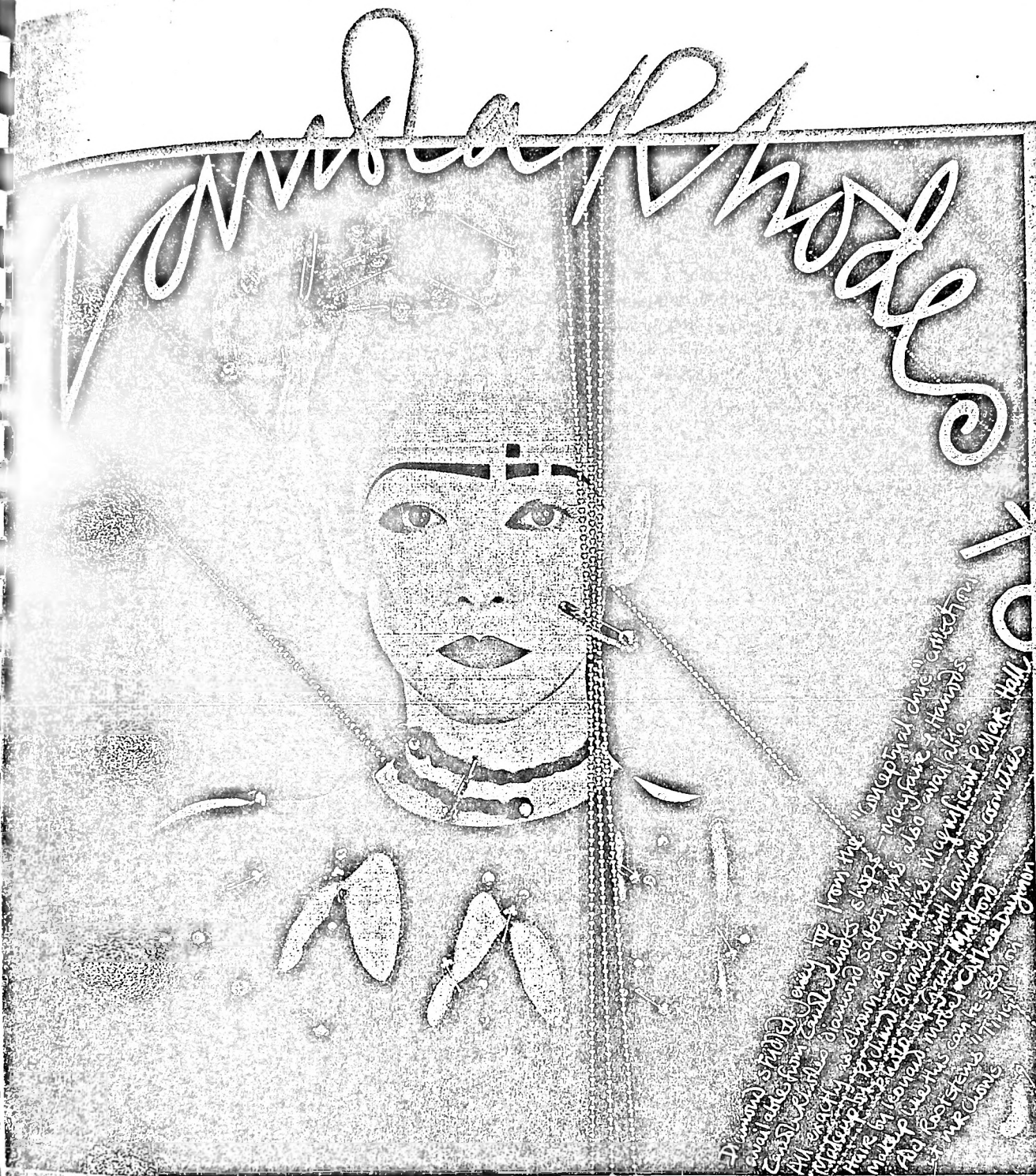
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## CONCLUSION.

Fashion and style magazines repeatedly speak of the enormous influence that Vivienne Westwood has had on fashion over the years. This aspect of her work cannot be ignored; Her designs were first introduced to the public through the shock rock of punk and in 1980 with the launch of the 'Pirates' collection, Vivienne gave the World a style that caught the collective imagination and established her as an international designer of high repute. Her subsequent collections; Savages; Buffalo Gals, Hobos, Witches and the mini crini have been plagiarised worldwide. After showing her Buffalo Gals collection in a Parisien Cafe, she was regularly invited to show her collections at the Louvre - in fact she was the only British designer to be asked to do so for some time.

Westwood's influence was not selective; it was taken up by both the Haute Couture and by the street. The emergence of punk inspired Zandra Rhodes to produce her version of the look, with torn body hugging dresses being held together with jewelled safety pins. (see fig. 34) There have been no rules in street fashion since Westwood's pioneering images dismissed with the taboo of mixing a number of styles together to form a new hybrid. By 1984 London's street culture had cornered the international market and after a long time in the doldrums the ideas.



I chose Olympia's  
Pillar Hall for my June 78 show  
because it is one of the  
most beautiful I  
have ever seen.

Fig. 34.

Zandra Rhodes advertises her punk inspired collection.





Fig. 35. Jean Paul Gaultiers designs of 1984

imagination and flair of young London Designers such as 'Body Map' and Katherine Hamnett put the city back on the Fashion map.

Westwood's 'Buffalo Gals', Hobo, and Witches collections were rich in ideas and the falling down socks and brassieres worn as outerwear influenced the dress of popstar Madonna and the French Designer Jean - Paul Gaultier, who was greatly influenced by the fetishist and androgynous elements of her clothes. (see fig 35)

In Tokyo, Westwood's revolutionary cut, exposed seams, slit fabrics and use of layering struck a chord with many of the Japanese Designers. As explained by Vogue,

'The Japanese defined established methods of dress making, eliminated colour and played games with androgyny and garment details, for example, cutting an extra armhole to gape across a torso, tearing and shredding materials, using tops as bottoms, and cutting one leg shorter than the other.

Westwood's emphasis on textures and unstructured styles appealed to the Japanese, with their sensitivity to the naturalistic forms of the material (see fig. 36)

The use of graffiti art in the 'Witches' collection was another element of Westwood's design to be copied by other





Fig. 36. The Japanese mix of texture and layering was greatly influenced by Westwood.

designers. Jean Charles de Castelbajac commissioned avant garde artists to decorate his simple canvas-like shifts and the American, Stephen Sprouse combined graffiti with zeroxes and video silk screen, to adorn his designs.

The mini-crini, which was laughed at when first introduced, became a tremendously popular style a season later with bubble skirts and ra-ra's being hailed as an antidote to the Dallas and Dynasty influenced shoulder pad era.

Critics of Westwood have suggested that her success over the years has been due to a combination of efficient public relations and gimmicry. In my opinion the truth or untruth of this statement is irrelevant; in this day and age the acid test of a style is its ability to be sold, and Westwood's designs have certainly passed that test.

For the present, Vivienne Westwood has just opened a new shop in Davies Street in London and her clothes are being produced and distributed in Italy by the New York Industrie Company.

The question of what will happen next in fashion, or how Westwood will deal with it, is any bodies guess. Will the fashion world continue to look in to it's recent past as displayed recently by the revival of psychedelia led by the 'Acid House' movement, or will a brand new concept of fashion emerge as we enter the 1990's?



Whatever happens, fashion, like history and the arts, will never remain static but will continue to paint a new picture of the culture of the day.

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## CIVILIZADE

*Britain goes pagan. We believe in scepticism, argument and elitism as the pagans valued intellectual freedom and mistrusted belief.*

*Death is so gothic; life is so greek, as Wilde said. There is talk of Victorian values but true Victorian values were an insistence on interminable argumentative dinner parties, not middle class puritanism.*

*Not Pecksniff's business but Peacock's. As was said, "we don't want a Crusade: we want a Civilizade".*

*The French Revolution destroyed aristocracy because it ignored other classes.*

  
**Vivienne  
Westwood**

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VIVIENNE WESTWOOD, THE MOST GIFTED AND FAMOUS ENGLISH STYLIST  
SINCE THE DAYS OF MARY QUANT, WILL HOLD A FASHION SHOW IN MILAN ON  
THE 3rd OF OCTOBER AT PAVILION No. 31 AT THE MILAN TRADE FAIR.

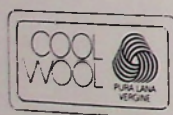
1988

♥ ♥ ♥  
**VIVIENNE**

MAKE-UP BY  
MARIUCCIA TASSINI  
& ELLIE WAKAMATSU  
LYNDA BURNS

KANGOL

Hats by Kangol



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## THE TIMES

P.O Box 481, Virginia Street, London E1 9BD Telephone: (01) 822 9840

28.11.88

If it is not too late — a cutting  
(not mine) on Vivienne Westwood.  
Which you may find helpful for  
your thesis. Also a press release  
from the last Milan collections.  
She opens her second London

From: Liz Smith Fashion Editor

with regards to (micro-skirts artfully devised), Vivienne  
consacrated on the international fashion scene by way of a memorable,  
semi-clandestine fashion show held on the tables of Café Angelina in Rue  
St. Honoré in Paris at which some of the most influential fashion  
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1988

After her international success of the past collections presented in Paris  
and London, Vivienne Westwood has chosen Milan for the presentation of  
her next Spring/Summer '89 collection.

In the wake of other great names of fashion from the other side of the  
Alps and the English Channel, likewise in Italy Vivienne Westwood has found  
the most suitable partners for the production - with the necessary  
competence - and the most efficacious distribution of her models which  
are characterised by the most daring, irreverent and radical creative  
imagination. In fact, the collection which will be presented in Milan will

distributed - throughout the world - by the New York  
ing Vivienne Westwood's line with its own ones.

in her activity as a fashion designer at the end of  
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concentrated. Involved in the "scandalous" affair  
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which marked youth's image during the past decade  
the 1980's, and thanks to having made her shop a

T-shirts bearing designs somewhat disrespectful  
Royal Family (not to mention trousers and  
micro-skirts and devised), Vivienne Westwood's success was

consacrated on the international fashion scene by way of a memorable,  
semi-clandestine fashion show held on the tables of Café Angelina in Rue  
St. Honoré in Paris at which some of the most influential fashion  
journalists present at the fashion shows being held in the nearby Carrée du  
Louvre stopped by, partly by chance and partly due to curiosity.

**Vivienne  
Westwood**

World's End, 430 Kings Rd., SW10 Tel: 352-6551  
6 Davies St., Mayfair, W1 Tel: 629-3757

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LONDON WC2 - 27/29 MACKLIN ST.  
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TEL 02/4986879 - 4985709

Shop this Thursday, Dec.1, in  
Davies Street in London.

Her studio address is:-

Vivienne Westwood  
12 Greenland Street  
London NW1.

Tel. no. 01-284.0723

Best wishes  
Liz Smith



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Vivienne Westwood began her activity as a fashion designer at the end of the 1970's with a small atelier in King's Road, that London street where traditionally the most advanced and creative milieu of the European capital of Pop Culture is concentrated. Involved in the "scandalous" affair of Punk fashion for having invented more than one of the characteristic models of that style which marked youth's image during the past decade and the opening years of the 1980's, and thanks to having made her shop a centre for the sale of T-shirts bearing designs somewhat disrespectful with regards to the Royal Family (not to mention trousers and micro-skirts artfully devised), Vivienne Westwood's success was consecrated on the international fashion scene by way of a memorable, semi-clandestine fashion show held on the tables of Café Angelina in Rue St. Honoré in Paris at which some of the most influential fashion journalists present at the fashion shows being held in the nearby Carrée du Louvre stopped by, partly by chance and partly due to curiosity.

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VIVIENNE

Shop this Thursday, Dec. 1, in  
Davies Street in London.

Her studio address is:-



Best wigs  
Liz Quinn

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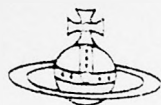
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This took place in 1981. The success was such that during the years which followed Vivienne Westwood was regularly invited to show in Paris - although inside, at the Cour Carrée du Louvre. And it is also for this reason that Vivienne Westwood's name is often cited together with the most imaginative and inventive designers such as Therry Mugler, J.P. Gaultier and Yoshi Yamamoto who have Paris as their hinterland. In 1984, for the collection created together with the American graffiti artist, Keith Haring (the then budding star of contemporary art), the prestigious Woman's Wear Daily of New York awarded Vivienne Westwood with the coveted "OSCAR OF FASHION" with which the important American daily each year awards the prize to the designer who has most distinguished him or herself on the level of creativity.

From amongst the most recent creations of Vivienne Westwood's inexhaustible, ironic and joyful vein one can list the "MINI CRINOLINE", a pouf mini-skirt with innumerable hoops that raise it on the bottoms of the teenagers who wear it and which has contributed to a considerable degree to the pleasure of those who have taken part at the concerts held by Madonna - one of Vivienne's fans - such as Boy George and Patty Kensit; or the "STATUE OF LIBERTY" top which reproduces the generous neckline of the provocative sculpture that dominates the harbour of New York; or else the exhilarating little Harris Tweed hat, in the form of a crown, designed following the model of Queen Elizabeth's crown in gold and precious stones, to be worn with a small cloak of sham, synthetic ermine over bare shoulders.

The presentation of Vivienne Westwood's collection in Milan represents a prestigious element for Milanese fashion events, in the same way that the production of her collection in Italy goes toward enriching our "Made in Italy" with an innovatory and perhaps overdue contribution whereby to continue to be foremost on the international market.





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Dear *Daphne Kelly*

Thank you for your letter enquiring about information on Vivienne Westwood.

Unfortunately we do not have any promotional brochures or catalogues at the present time. However we are putting together a press pack for the future.

I am sorry that we cannot be of more help to you.

Yours sincerely,

*Rachel Parsons.*

RACHEL PARSONS  
assistant to Ms. Westwood

EFW/jesf,

7th November 1988,

Miss Daphne Kelly,  
14 Stamer Street,  
Portobello,  
Dublin 8,  
EIRE.


Dear Miss Kelly,

We do frequently photograph Vivienne Westwood clothes and you will generally find them in our younger pages in our March and September issues when we tend to cover the collections.

I am afraid we do not have sufficient staff to be able to dedicate more time to giving you more precise page numbers etc.

Good luck with your thesis.

Yours sincerely,



ELIZABETH WALKER  
Executive Fashion Editor.





# BLITZ

3. 11. 88

Dear Daphne,

Firstly. Vivienne Westbrook's  
company can be contacted at

CAZENOVE LTD  
12 GREENLAND ST  
LONDON NW1  
tel 284 0723

IF you can actually speak to her  
you will be helped enormously.

She is a wonderfully inspiring  
woman — I am enclosing a couple  
of bits + pieces for you

Best Wishes  
Kim Bowen.

P.T.O.

There is a 10 page Fashion  
editorial in issue 68 but  
we have run out of back  
issues.

the photocopied interview is from  
Time Out

Good Luck

Ann Bowen.

---



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Yours faithfully,

*pp Anne Matthews*

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## CHRONOLOGY.

- 1941: Vivinne Westwood Born in Derbyshire
- 1971: 'Paradise Garage' shop opened at 430 Kings Road, with Malcolm McLaren.
- 1971: Shop changed its name to 'Let it Rock'  
-This Shop sold old fifties records and Teddy Boy clothes.
- 1972 - The shop became known as 'Too fast to Live,
- 1974: Too young to Die': It sold black leather jackets and bikers paraphenalia.
- 1974 - Again the shop changed its name. Now known  
1977: as 'Sex' it sold Rubber, plastic and leather fetishist clothing.
- 1976: Malcolm McLaren launched his group - 'The Sex Pistols'.
- 1977 - Seditionaries, as the shop is now known. sells  
1980: 'Punk Rock' clothing - Ripped T-Shirts, Bondage Trousers and Mohair Sweaters complete with holes.
- 1980: Shop changes its name to 'Worlds End'
- 1980: Vivienne Westwood launches her Pirate collection.
- 1980: Malcolm McLaren launches the band 'Adam & the Ants'
- 1981: Another new band - 'Bow Wow Wow'
- 1982: McLaren releases the single 'Buffalo Girls' featuring himself and 'The world famous supreme team'.
- 1982: Shop 'Nostalgia of mud' opens in St. Christophers Place.
- 1982/3: Westwood launches her 'Buffalo Girls' collection.
- 1984: 'Hobos' collection. featuring 'Blade Runner' stills.
- 1984/5: 'Witches' collection, with Keith Haring prints.
- 1985: 'Punkature' collection.



- 1986: 'Mini-crini' collection.
- 1987: Criniscule - Regal collection.
- 1988: 'Sherlock Holmes' collection.
- 1988: 'Civilizade' collection.
- 1988: Vivienne Westwood Shop opens in Davies  
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