

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

English designer Vivienne Westwood dies at 81

December 29, 2022



Ms. Westwood passed peacefully in Clapham, South London at the age of 81. Image credit: Shutterstock

By AMIRAH KEATON

English fashion designer Dame Vivienne Westwood has died at 81.

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The creative has passed away peacefully on Dec. 29, in Clapham, South London. Ms. Westwood is widely regarded for her role in bringing Britain's punk fashion movement of the 1970s mainstream, having also involved herself as an activist, the work of which underlined the Dame's entire career and concerned her into her latter years.

"Vivienne continued to do the things she loved, up until the last moment, designing, working on her art, writing her book, and changing the world for the better," said brand representatives, via a statement posted to social media.

"She led an amazing life," the statement says. "Her innovation and impact over the last 60 years has been immense and will continue into the future."

Fashion mourns

One of the most influential designers of the 20th century, the self-taught designer leaves an impressive legacy behind.

Born Vivienne Isabel Swire in Derbyshire, England in 1941, the designer's career spans many decades and eras, taking root in edgy wear.

Starting out as a seamstress, and having first opened shop in 1971, the designer would go on to establish her eponymous label, global in scale. Ms. Westwood's notoriety is largely based on having pioneered fashion's punk movement.

Representatives shared the news of Ms. Westwood's passing on social media this afternoon.



[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by Vivienne Westwood (@viviennewestwood)

Originating as a response to the rough socioeconomic conditions of 1970s Britain, the punk style of dress would make waves in the U.K. before moving from the streets of London to the runways of worldwide fashion weeks.

Ms. Westwood's first collection took form in 1981.

Titled "Pirates," the presentation would eventually make room for a transition into the New Romantic movement, an aesthetic the designer would also help popularize in the following years.

Vivienne Westwood's orb pendant, a logo first used in 1986 to "symbolize taking tradition into the future," according to the brand, remains an iconic motif.

Corset tops from one of the designer's most notable presentations, the 1990 Spring/Summer Portrait Collection, have also landed on many a resale site as of late.



Supermodel Naomi Campbell walks in the Vivienne Westwood Fall 1994 fashion show in Paris, France. Image credit: Vivienne Westwood

"I thought the idea of one pearl earring or three strands of pearls with a pearl drop in the middle was typical of all jewelry," the designer said, of the collection.

"You could fit it with practically any period and it would look great," she said. "So I chose things in that way, I wanted them to be complete, and as archetypal as they could be."

As recently as this year, the fashion-forward activist continued to advocate for a number of human rights issues including **climate change** with force. In 2010, she launched Climate Revolution, a site and activist platform to which

Ms. Westwood contributed regularly.

According to the social post, the designer was surrounded by family members during her final moments. She is survived by her husband and creative partner, and two children, Ben Westwood and Joe Corr.

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