

CHARACTER STUDIES – 3 ACTS

Meg Fletcher, 2026



Meg Fletcher is a Northumberland-based fashion and textile artist whose work explores identity, storytelling and the theatrical nature of dress. Her practice bridges fashion and performance, often drawing on heritage narratives and psychological research. She frequently examines how clothing shapes character and perception; ideas that also underpin her developing ready-to-wear label, *CHARACTERS*.

Created in response to *Vivienne Westwood: Rebel – Storyteller – Visionary*, this flag series links the visual legacy of Dame Vivienne Westwood (1941–2022) with the collecting legacy of Joséphine Bowes (1825–1874), whose vision founded The Bowes Museum. The three flags reimagine Bowes as a contemporary figure moving through three thematic eras, from left to right. Each is based on her pink-dress portrait (c.1858, attributed to Louis William Desanges) and merges elements of the original with silhouettes and references drawn from Westwood’s archive and wider research.

The first flag, *Rebel*, responds to Westwood’s 1981 *Pirates collection*, combining a recognisable silhouette with a colour palette and decorative influences from 16th- and 18th-century porcelain vases in the museum’s collection, as well as Commedia dell’Arte characters that link to Fletcher’s ongoing exploration of identity.

Storyteller, the second flag, draws on the *Mini-Crini* (1986) and *Harris Tweed* (1987/88) collections, reimaging jewellery and details from Bowes’s portrait through Westwood’s historic references.

The final flag, *Visionary*, references Westwood’s *Anglomania* (1993/94) collection, famously worn by Kate Moss, incorporating classical art such as *The Birth of Venus* (c.1727) by Pierre-Jacques Cazes from the museum’s collection.

The backgrounds explore Westwood’s activism years. Slogans, inspired by her political graphics, are reworked to reflect Bowes’s own convictions as a collector and cultural advocate.

The figures were first painted digitally, printed half-scale, and then layered with mixed media to create textured backdrops, with the original prints reapplied for clarity. Together, the flags highlight how archival material can inspire new narratives, connecting Bowes and Westwood through character, creativity and lasting influence.

To learn more about Meg and her practice, check out her website and social media accounts megfletcher.co.uk @meg__fletcher