

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Last Chance to Experience The Bowes Museum's Blockbuster Vivienne Westwood Exhibition



Vivienne Westwood: Rebel – Storyteller – Visionary at The Bowes Museum, featuring ensembles inspired by art history displayed alongside objects from the museum's collection.

Visitors have just a few weeks left to experience The Bowes Museum's most ambitious Vivienne Westwood exhibition to date before it closes on Sunday 6 September 2026.

Vivienne Westwood: Rebel – Storyteller – Visionary opened in March 2026 and has welcomed fashion, art and design enthusiasts throughout the summer. The multi-gallery exhibition honours one of fashion's most provocative and imaginative British designers, charting Westwood's extraordinary journey from the rebellious energy of punk and her

early partnership with Malcolm McLaren (1946–2010), to her reinvention of historical dress and couture in the 1980s and 1990s.

Highlights from the exhibition include calico toiles and garments digitally deconstructed by the Fashion Department at Northumbria University, revealing Westwood's construction techniques, from bias cutting and pleating to screen printing and distressed fabrics.

This is also the last chance to enjoy *Meg Fletcher: Character Studies – 3 Acts*, a series of flags designed specifically to accompany the Westwood exhibition. These three flags, designed by Northumberland-based artist, Meg Fletcher, link the rebellious spirit and visual legacy of Dame Vivienne Westwood with the pioneering vision of The Bowes Museum's co-founder, Joséphine Bowes.

Final Curator-Led Tour

Alongside the exhibition, the museum has been running a full programme of Westwood-inspired events and activities for adults and children. The programme will conclude with a *Vivienne Westwood: Rebel – Storyteller – Visionary* Spotlight tour led by Curator of Fashion and Textiles, Rachel Whitworth, at 11am on Thursday 3 September 2026.

Rachel worked closely with Associate Curator and Vivienne Westwood collector Peter Smithson and her tours reveal the stories behind the pieces and how they mirror objects from The Bowes Museum's permanent collection. This special spotlight tour and entry to the exhibition are both included in museum admission.

A select number of items from the exhibition will remain on display in the Fashion and Textiles Gallery after the exhibition closes, offering visitors a continuing insight into Westwood's creative practice.

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Notes to Editors:

PRESS IMAGES can be found [here](#)

www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk

About The Bowes Museum

The Bowes Museum is a charity managing a Grade 1 listed accredited museum and Grade 2 listed parkland in Barnard Castle. Founded by Joséphine & John Bowes 150+ years ago, this purpose-built museum brings together an extraordinary, designated collection of European fine and decorative art as a cultural resource for the people of Northern

England, where today we celebrate artists, designers and makers. The Bowes Museum receives funding from Durham County Council and, as a National Portfolio Organisation, receives support from Arts Council England. Arts Council England is the national development body for arts and culture across England, working to enrich people's lives. [artscouncil.org.uk](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

The Bowes Museum is a member of the Discover Durham partnership of attractions, whose commitment is to promote Durham as an exciting and vibrant group travel destination and to provide the travel trade with a professional and knowledgeable service. [discoverdurham.co.uk](https://www.discoverdurham.co.uk)

Year round admission to The Bowes Museum is £25 for local members (residents of County Durham and Darlington), £28 for members (residents elsewhere), £20 for a day ticket, £22 for a day ticket including gift aid. Under 18s, full-time students and carers are free. As a registered charity (number 1079639) The Bowes Museum needs to generate more than half of its income each year to care for the historic collection, buildings and parkland. Your donations are vital to that work. Visit thebowesmuseum.org.uk/support/ for more information.