Press Release: 20th October 2015
Vivienne Westwood speaks at the Cambridge Union

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Fashion designer, businesswoman and environmental activist, Dame Vivienne Westwood, gave a powerful speech at The Cambridge Union on Tuesday 20th October.

Westwood’s “main reason for coming to Cambridge” was to “recruit student activists” to join the fight against the “destruction of our Earth”. Pleading for a world without ISDS, fracking and “monopolising big banks”, Westwood warned us against the investable: “a world in which everyone is either poor or dead.”

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The importance of demonstration and protest cannot be downplayed with such a toxic press.

“Mass propaganda, organised lying – it is the press, they repeat what the politicians tell you. Their biggest weapon is non-distraction. But the biggest lie of all is the constant pretence that nothing has changed. If you keep hearing that all the time, you’re not going to worry. You don’t realise to yourself that this is the beginning of the end,” Westwood told an inspired crowd.

Westwood went on to invite students to join her protest. “On the 29th November, there is going to be a mass demonstration in London. I will be there. I hope you will too.”

The demonstration aims to achieve the “green economy”, an economy that, Westwood believes, “is the only way of bringing about justice”. Such a belief is what led her to start work with Climate Revolution, a charity which works to “save the world from mass extinction”.

“The way out of our difficulties is a green planet. What is good for the earth is good for the economy. And what’s good for the economy is good for its people. We’ve got to mirror the world.”

As well as mirroring the world through protest, Westwood went on to discuss how we can “mirror the world through art”.

“Art is perfection. This goes back to Aristotle, the artist doesn’t paint an image of what the world is but what it ought to be.”

Vivienne Westwood ended by reminding the students of Cambridge that they had a responsibility to join the call to arms: “you’ve got to pay for your good fortune by making the world a better place.”

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For footage of the event go to https://www.youtube.com/user/cambridgeunionsoc