

Photographer: Louis Samuelson

www.louisesamuelson.com

Stylist: Natalie Fleur Gubbins

Fashion assistant: Camilla de la Moriniere

Hair: Simaon Izzard at Mandy Coakley for

Daniel Herseron using L'Oréal products

Make-up: Claudine Hederson at nakedartists.com

Model: Helen Maier at Take Two

Location: Marville Properties, London

Eco Fashion

'Green is the new black' is the latest mantra in the fashion world where eco-conscious clothes are finally beginning to break through. And green does not have to be brown or lumpy. An increasing number of high fashion designers have recently embraced the trend

Katharine Hamnett led the way back in the 90s, when she started to rally against the use of pesticides and fight against the industry's apathy on social issues. Her new *E* line – 'e' for ethical and ecological – is produced with organic cotton from Mali and provides financial aid to the local farmers.

"When I decided to work in fashion I thought it was one of the most innocent jobs there is. Instead, I found myself in the middle of a nightmare. Conventional cotton is grown with pesticides derived from nerve gas, which is pretty hurtful to people. I was naive for a long time and thought that someone would tell the workers about the dangers, but the producers did not care, and I realised that it wasn't enough to make beautiful clothes. One needs to act," tells Hamnett, who last year also launched an organic line for the supermarket chain, Tesco, to reach a wider audience.

"We want to be the good guys, but in fact we are the opposite when we deteriorate the local peoples' living standards. When farmers grow cotton organically, it becomes much cheaper and they can grow twice as much, and in the end, they're left with soil that can be used to grow food crops. As a former colonial power it is our duty to help them back on the right track," says Hamnett, who today is joined by an increasing number of fashion houses.

Levi's are offering an eco-line, just as Ralph Lauren and Giorgio Armani, while Stella McCartney "tries to do the right things for the right reasons" and recently launched an organic skincare line by the name, *Care*.

American Loomstate creates hip and groovy fashion with homemade, organic cotton in environmentally friendly colours – virtues they describe as "an added value" in the fashion world. People don't just want to look good; they also want to feel good about what they buy, they say.

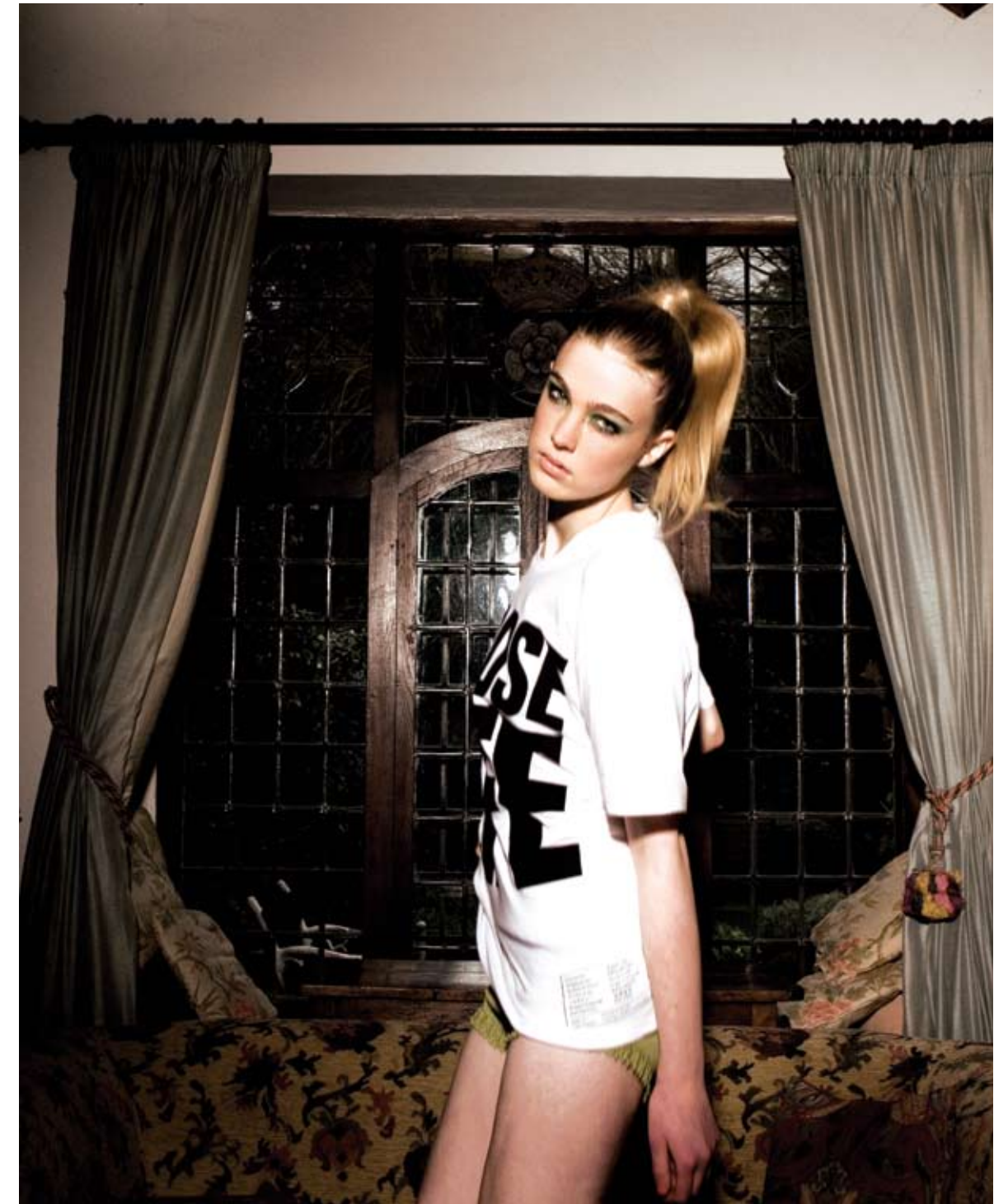
Rock star activist, Bono and his wife, Ali Hewson two years ago launched *Edun* – a socially conscious fashion label, where the collections are in organic materials and produced under fair labour practices. Bono, who pronounced the famous words, "Shopping is politics" also launched Project Red – a 'do-good' brand joined by heavy weights such as Armani, Apple, American Express and Nike which gives a portion of its profits to fight Aids in Africa. So far 9.25 million dollars has been sent to Rwanda and Swaziland.

While the whole trend may seem like a clever marketing ploy to some, it will hopefully go further than that. "The more we are, the greater the chances are to change the bad habits of the industry" says Hamnett.

"The most important thing is that the clothes are sexy and sophisticated; you've simply got to have them, even if you don't care about the environment or the situation in Africa."

Words by Camilla Alfthan

Pale pink sheer top with beaded details and black trousers both by Stella McCartney



White T-shirt with 'choose life' print by Katharine Hamnett worn with green hand-knitted wool briefs by Wear Downey



Beige V-neck jumper by Katharine Hamnett worn with pale pink skirt by Stella McCartney and patent black men's shoes from Old Hat Vintage



Purple T-shirt by Loomstate
worn under a pale pink beaded
dress from Circa Vintage



Gold dress and pale
straw shoes by Stella
McCartney



Stockists

Circa Vintage,
www.circavintage.com
Katharine Hamnett,
www.katharinehamnett.com
Loomstate,
www.loomstate.org
Stella McCartney,
www.stellamccartney.com
Wear Downey,
www.weardowney.com

White and silver print
jacket and white T-shirt,
both by Edun, worn with
white denim jeans by
Loomstate