

SINGER SAYS USING FAME TO CHAMPION GOOD CAUSES IS 'HER CALLING'

Annie issues advice to fellow pop stars

BY LUCY COLLINS

Singer Annie Lennox has said that pop stars who do not use their fame to promote good causes could be missing an opportunity.

However the former Eurythmics star and HIV awareness campaigner said artists should not "necessarily" use their elevated status to champion worthy causes.

Aberdeen-born Lennox, speaking ahead of her appearance at the Festival of Politics in Edinburgh today, said: "I don't believe in 'should', but I do feel for myself, that having come to a certain place in my life... this is very important to me."

The singer said that choosing to make a difference was her "calling".

She said music had the potential to provide a platform for all issues, adding: "It should be used in that way, the potential is there, it's a missed opportunity if people don't ever use it."

Lennox is of the same generation of 1980s pop stars such as Bob Geldof, Midge Ure and Bono who promoted humanitarian causes.

She said today's celebrity-

fixated culture made her "a little sad".

Lennox added: "That whole celebrity thing is a bit of a tangled mess. Remember Tony Blair with his Cool Britannia, asking Noel Gallagher to come to 10 Downing Street. It was a photo opportunity and it made him look good."

In recent years she has established The Sing Campaign to raise awareness of HIV and is an ambassador for many international organisations on the issue.

She confirmed that she would be visiting Malawi in February with former first minister Jack McConnell in her role as special envoy to the Scottish Branch of the

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA).

She said: "With this issue it really helps if you've been to a country outside your own culture and you look people in the eye and you're able to take an abstract statistic that you may have read and personify it with one individual."

Despite her role with the Scottish Parliament, Lennox does not back independence for Scotland. She said: "I understand the sort of desire for Scotland to have its autonomy and its separate identity, but at the same time I feel I don't want to see the breakdown of the United Kingdom."

She added: "There's all kind

of lives I could live. I've made a bob or two. But it's about my values, what I do with my time, my focus. To actually make a difference, to really contribute is immensely satisfying at a human level, I genuinely feel alive doing what I'm doing, it's my calling, it's what I need to do."

Annie Lennox will deliver the General Teaching Council for Scotland lecture about her Sing campaign at the Festival of Politics today.

Labour MSP Jack McConnell said: "There have been a number of discussions between Annie and I about her Sing campaign and the work she can do here in Scotland and Malawi."





CAMPAIGNER: Annie Lennox says that using her fame to promote good causes is "very important" to her

Ref: 38665134

