# Tony Visconti playfully mocks Morrissey during Bowie tribute gig in Manchester



It has been an eventful few days for rock legends taking aim at the contemporary landscape from the vibrant stages of Manchester. While Bruce Springsteen delivered a scathing critique of US politics last week at Co-op Live, Tony Visconti’s light-hearted jibe aimed at Morrissey stood out as a more jovial performance. Visconti, a long-time collaborator of the late David Bowie, took to the stage at Manchester's O2 Ritz, where he emerged as both a musical icon and a wry commentator on the industry.

Visconti's career with Bowie spans several decades, starting with the 1968 single "In the Heat of the Morning" and culminating in the poignant final album, "Blackstar," released shortly before Bowie’s passing in 2016. During his illustrious career, he produced numerous iconic albums, including "The Man Who Sold the World" and "Heroes," while often stepping into the role of bass player in Bowie's band. His connection to Manchester was ever-present as he entertained the audience with tales from his extensive musical journey.

During the concert, the atmosphere turned playful when Visconti reflected on his work with Morrissey, particularly on the latter's 2006 album "Ringleader of the Tormentors." As he recounted an amusing anecdote about Morrissey's noted obsession with chart standings, the audience responded with mixed feelings—boos mingled with laughter, signalling that public sentiment regarding Morrissey’s recent political views remains contentious. “What went wrong?” Visconti quipped, before painting a picture of an uncharacteristically happy Morrissey upon learning that their collaboration topped UK charts: “Can you imagine seeing Morrissey smile? I’ve actually seen it. It was just a glimpse.”

At 81, Visconti shows no signs of slowing down, humourously asserting on social media that he is “still alive and working my butt off.” The performance featured his band Holy Holy, which also includes acclaimed drummer Mick "Woody" Woodmansey, the last surviving member of Bowie’s famed backing band, The Spiders from Mars. The setlist celebrated the golden years of Bowie’s music, offering attendees a nostalgic experience akin to being present at a live Bowie concert.

The recent tensions surrounding Morrissey’s public persona are echoed in his planned return to the UK and Ireland in 2025, which includes a much-anticipated homecoming gig in Manchester. As he continues to navigate his contentious brand of celebrity, engagements such as this highlight the diverging paths taken by former collaborators. For Visconti, it seems that conjuring the legacy of Bowie not only fosters a space for reflection but also for light-hearted, if pointed, commentary on the twists and turns of musical careers and personal beliefs that shape them.

As audiences continue to engage with the rich tapestry of rock history, events like Visconti's performances remind us of the enduring connections forged through music and the ever-evolving narratives of artists who once walked the same stage.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: (1), (2)
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6. Paragraph 6: (1), (4)
7. Paragraph 7: (5)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.prolificnorth.co.uk/news/longtime-david-bowie-producer-tony-visconti-drops-hilarious-morrissey-takedown-at-manchester-gig/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.prolificnorth.co.uk/news/longtime-david-bowie-producer-tony-visconti-drops-hilarious-morrissey-takedown-at-manchester-gig/> - Tony Visconti, renowned for his extensive collaboration with David Bowie, humorously addressed Morrissey's recent political statements during a performance at Manchester's O2 Ritz. Visconti recounted their work together on Morrissey's 2006 album 'Ringleader of the Tormentors' and playfully commented on Morrissey's obsession with chart positions, eliciting laughter from the audience. The event featured Visconti's band, Holy Holy, which includes drummer Mick 'Woody' Woodmansey, a former member of Bowie's backing band, The Spiders from Mars.
3. <https://www.ents24.com/manchester-events/o2-ritz/tony-visconti-and-woody-woodmansey/7251566> - Tony Visconti and Woody Woodmansey, former members of David Bowie's band, performed at Manchester's O2 Ritz on May 18, 2025. Their band, Holy Holy, celebrated Bowie's music from 1969 to 1973, with vocals by Glenn Gregory of Heaven 17. The event was described as one of the closest experiences to a Bowie gig, featuring original band members bringing the magic back to life. ([ents24.com](https://www.ents24.com/manchester-events/o2-ritz/tony-visconti-and-woody-woodmansey/7251566?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://bangpremier.com/story/2/3244644/morrissey-announces-2025-uk-and-ireland-shows> - Morrissey announced his 2025 UK and Ireland tour dates, including a homecoming gig in Manchester. The tour features performances in Dublin, Glasgow, and Manchester, with Chicago band Brigitte Calls Me Baby as the support act in Dublin and Manchester. Tickets went on sale on February 14, 2025. ([bangpremier.com](https://bangpremier.com/story/2/3244644/morrissey-announces-2025-uk-and-ireland-shows?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/music/tony-visconti-the-thing-with-phil-lynott-was-that-he-was-visibly-dying-1.3332539> - In an interview, Tony Visconti discussed his work with Phil Lynott, noting that Lynott was 'visibly dying' during their collaboration. Visconti also mentioned his past work with Morrissey on the 2005 album 'Ringleader of the Tormentors' and expressed a willingness to work with him again, despite not being in touch. ([irishtimes.com](https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/music/tony-visconti-the-thing-with-phil-lynott-was-that-he-was-visibly-dying-1.3332539?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/whats-on/music/men-onlines-gigs-of-the-year-1051977> - The Manchester Evening News highlighted notable gigs of the year, including Morrissey's performance at the Apollo on May 6. The review praised the show, noting that Morrissey's collaboration with producer Tony Visconti on the album 'Ringleader of the Tormentors' was widely regarded as elevating the material. ([manchestereveningnews.co.uk](https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/whats-on/music/men-onlines-gigs-of-the-year-1051977?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://mancunion.com/2022/10/18/live-review-a-triumphant-return-to-manchester-from-morrissey/> - Morrissey returned to Manchester on October 4, 2022, marking 40 years since The Smiths' first performance in the city. The set included solo hits and Smiths classics, with Morrissey acknowledging the significance of the date and referencing the band's early days. ([mancunion.com](https://mancunion.com/2022/10/18/live-review-a-triumphant-return-to-manchester-from-morrissey/?utm_source=openai))