

= Glass Spider Tour =

The Glass Spider Tour was an 1987 worldwide concert tour by David Bowie , launched in support of his album *Never Let Me Down* . It began in May 1987 and was preceded by a two @-@ week press tour that saw Bowie visit nine countries throughout Europe and North America to drum up public interest in the tour . The Glass Spider Tour was the first Bowie tour to visit Austria , Italy , Spain , Ireland and Wales . Through a sponsorship from Pepsi , the tour was intended to visit Russia and South America as well , but these plans were later cancelled . The tour was , at that point , the longest and most expensive tour Bowie had embarked upon in his career . At the time , the tour 's elaborate set was called " the largest touring set ever " .

Bowie conceived the tour as a theatrical show , and included spoken @-@ word introductions to some songs , vignettes , and employed visuals including projected videos , theatrical lighting and stage props . On stage , Bowie was joined by guitarist Peter Frampton and a troupe of five dancers (choreographed by long @-@ time Bowie collaborator Toni Basil) . With the theme " Rock stars vs Reality " , the show was divided into two acts and an encore . The set list was modified over the course of the tour as Bowie dropped some of his newer material in favour of older songs from his repertoire .

The tour was generally poorly received at the time for being overblown and pretentious . Despite the criticism , Bowie in 1991 remarked that this tour laid the groundwork for later successful theatrical tours by other artists , and the set 's design and the show 's integration of music and theatrics has inspired later acts by a variety of artists . Starting in the late 2000s , the tour began to collect accolades for its successes , and in 2010 the tour was named one of the top concert tour designs of all time .

The tour was financially successful and well @-@ attended (being seen by perhaps as many as six million fans worldwide) , but the poor critical reception of the album and tour led Bowie to not only abandon plans for other elaborate stage shows , but to reconsider his own motivations for making music . The tour was named after the album track " Glass Spider " , and performances from this tour were released on the VHS video *Glass Spider* (1988 , re @-@ released on DVD in 2007) .

= = Background = =

Preparations for the tour began as early as 1986 , when Bowie warned his band to " be ready for next year . " Bowie was initially mum on his plans for his tour , saying only " I 'm going to do a stage thing this year , which I 'm incredibly excited about , ' cause I 'm gonna take a chance again . " When asked if he would elaborate on his plans , he replied " No ! [Laughs .] Too many other acts are goin ' out . I 'll just be doing what I always did , which is keeping things interesting . "

In announcing the tour , Bowie embarked on a series of promotional press shows covering 9 countries in 2 weeks , including Canada , the US and seven countries in Europe . The press tour shows were typically delivered in smaller venues seating around 300 people , and local fans were often allowed into the events . He used the opportunity to educate the press on his album and the tour , and the multiple dates allowed him to correct misinformation . At the London Glass Spider Press Conference , he clarified that " I didn 't say ' lights , costumes and sex , ' what I said was ' lights , costumes and theatrical sets ' " in response to a question about what the audience could expect when seeing his new live show . Press tour shows included live performances of some of the songs from the album *Never Let Me Down* .

Bowie was joined by long @-@ time friend Peter Frampton on the tour . Frampton said " I don 't have a book to sell ; I don 't have an album to sell ; I 'm just here as a guitarist . The pressure is off . I 'm enjoying myself . " Frampton and Bowie had known each other since their teen years when they both attended Bromley Technical School , where Frampton 's father was Bowie 's art teacher .

= = Development = =

Bowie had a clear goal for this tour : to return to the theatrics that he had performed during his short

@-@ lived 1974 Diamond Dogs Tour . He wanted this tour to be " ultra @-@ theatrical , a combination of music , theater , and rock " , and he felt that his previous tour , while successful , had veered away from the theatrics that he preferred :

[In 1983 for the Serious Moonlight Tour] the promoters were coming around and saying , " Listen David , we moved you from this 10 @,@ 000 seater up to this 30 @,@ 000 @-@ seater " ... and it grew and grew and there were 60 @,@ 000 @-@ seaters coming up Let 's trim back on the theatrics and really go for giving them songs that they 've heard on the radio for the last 15 years or so ? songs they probably didn 't realize when added up are a great body of work coming from this guy Whereas with [The Glass Spider] tour coming up , I feel I 've established that . What I now want to do is have the songs work for the performance Certainly there will be obscure songs on it , at least for the general public . There will be songs from albums that weren 't huge albums , but now those particular songs actually fit a section of the show . So when you put three songs together , you can create a vignette that works . It has a beginning and a conclusion and deals with one subject .

Bowie indicated that he was " testing the waters " with this tour , and was potentially considering other large , elaborate stage shows if the tour was successful :

The songs have to work within the show ? not the show working for the songs , if you see what I mean . That 's why it 's so different . And that 's why it 's so exciting , because that 's the way I really like working . I mean , I like devising a show . I 've got a show book that is almost like the bible you have when you 're working on a play . It 's written and structured with various thematic devices . Unfortunately , it 's in revue form , because none of the songs were written for the show . That 's the ultimate , of course . If this works the way I hope it does , then the next step for me will be to write a piece specifically for arenas and stadiums , which is almost like taking a musical on the road that has one narrative form all the way through , with a cast of characters , and is written for epic theater .

Bowie decided that the theme for the show would be " the reality and unreality of rock , " or , as one critic called it , " rock stars vs. reality " . Bowie said , " It 's not just about a rock singer , it 's about rock music , so it has a lot to do with the audience and how they perceive rock , and rock figures , and all the cliches , archetypes and stereotypes , and also family relationship . "

During the show itself , Bowie incorporated a wide variety of props : " I 'm really attempting to do a lot of stuff ! It incorporates movement , dialogue , fragments of film , projected images , it 's what used to be called multi @-@ media in the ' 60s . " Bowie described how he assembled the show , saying , " The idea was to concoct surrealist or minimalist stage pieces to accompany rock @-@ and @-@ roll songs . I wanted to bridge together some kind of symbolist theater and modern dance . Not jazz dance , certainly not MTV dance , but something more influenced by people like Pina Bausch and a Montreal group called [La La La Human Steps] . There are some symbolist pieces , some minimalist pieces , and some vulgar pieces , too ? some straightforward vaudeville bits . "

When Bowie was asked what he thought his audience expected of him on this tour , he said :

I guess that they come along to see whether I 'll fall down or something . I really don 't know . I know that they get what they consider is a really good performance . I think that over the years I 've proved that I do my best to provide them with some new vision of musical information on the stage . So I think there 's probably that element in it , but I couldn 't go any further than that . I really don 't know what they want from me . I 've never really been able to write for them . I 've only written and performed that which interests me . So essentially they have an agreement with me and that 's great . I mean , I 've lost audiences many times over the years , and they 've come back again for one reason or another . I 've sort of got that mutual agreement with them . If it 's not going very well then they stay away . Which is fair enough , you know .

Bowie reportedly coordinated aspects of the tour via email , a rarity in the late 1980s .

= = Song selection = =

Bowie elected to play less well @-@ known songs on the tour and avoided some of his bigger hits . He was eager to not repeat the formula that made the Serious Moonlight Tour a success , saying , "

It seemed so easy . It was cheers from the word go . You know how to get a reaction ? play ' Changes , ' ' Golden Years ' and they 'd be up on their feet . You get the reaction , take the money and run away . It seemed too easy . I didn 't want to do that again . "

All but two songs (" Too Dizzy " and " Shining Star (Makin ' My Love) ") from his album Never Let Me Down were played live during the tour . Songs performed during the tour were " chosen because they fit the performance " and fit Bowie 's goal to make a show that was much more theatrical and had strong dramatic content . When he was asked how he was going to make his rock show " dramatic " , he replied , " You 'll be surprised what you can do with a 6 @-@ piece rock band and a stage and a couple of lights . "

Several songs that Bowie had anticipated playing on the tour were ultimately dropped before rehearsals even started , including " Space Oddity " , " Ricochet " , " Joe the Lion " and " Don 't Look Down " . Some songs that the band rehearsed were never played on the tour .

Bowie was looking to avoid playing some of the songs that he was tired of playing after the long Serious Moonlight Tour , saying " I 'm not doing ' Star ' again . That was quite hard . I don 't think I 'm doing much Ziggy material on this tour ! [laughs] Probably use a lot of that mid @-@ 70s material , but not the more ponderous things like ' Warszawa . ' I tried that , and that was a bit yawn @-@ making . There was one I was humming to myself the other day : [sings] ' Baby , baby , I 'll never let you down ' ? oh lord , what 's that one ? Jesus , I can 't remember it ' Sons of the Silent Age ! ' [snaps fingers] Ah ! That 's right ! Thank god I could remember it ! So that for me now is a new song . I 've never done that one onstage . " " Sons of the Silent Age " was performed every night of the tour .

= = Set design = =

The tour 's set , described at the time as " the largest touring set ever , " was designed to look like a giant spider . It was 60 feet (18.3m) high , 64 feet (19.5m) wide and included giant vacuumed tube legs that were lit from the inside with 20 @,@ 000 ' (6,096m) of color @-@ changing lights . A single set took 43 trucks to move and was estimated to weigh 360 tons . 16 ' x 20 ' (4.9m x 6m) video screens displayed video and images from the show to those in the audience who were further away from the stage . The system required to run the show included two separate sound systems , 260 speaker cabinets , 1 @,@ 000 lights (with an output total of 600 @,@ 000 watts) and three computers .

This was Bowie 's first tour where wireless microphone technology was available , allowing Bowie considerable freedom to move around the stage during a concert . This allowed him to interact with the dancers and musicians much more freely , and as such the set included 3 @-@ story high mobile scaffolding , onto which Bowie and his dancers would occasionally climb during the show .

Each set cost US \$ 10 million , about \$ 20 @.@ 8 million in today 's dollars . Bowie himself invested over \$ 10 million of his own money to help fund the tour , and he paid \$ 1 million a week to maintain a staff of 150 people to maintain and build the three sets as the tour moved around the world . In Philadelphia , where the tour opened in the US , the set was described as taking " 300 people 4 days " to build .

About halfway through the first leg of the tour in Europe , Bowie discovered that the full Spider set was so large that it would not fit in most indoor venues . He said , " It would cost me between \$ 500 @,@ 000 and \$ 600 @,@ 000 to alter the sets enough to bring the show indoors I may decide to have a smaller ' indoor ' set made somewhere during the tour . " He did in fact commission a third slightly smaller set (called the " Junior Bug " set) to be used at indoor venues where the full spider would not fit , such as New York 's Madison Square Garden .

Bowie thought of the whole set as a metaphor of life , describing the stage as having " a feeling of a ship , which is the voyage , with the rigging and the climbing and the ropes . And the bottom circular area is like the Circus of Lights , so it really is from birth , and the voyaging through life . "

= = Rehearsals = =

Bowie assembled his band in early 1987 and were joined on stage by five dancers who were choreographed by Bowie's long @-@ time friend Toni Basil . The band and the dancers spent time in 12 @-@ hour @-@ a @-@ day rehearsals in New York before moving on to Europe . Bowie described his rehearsal routine :

I prepare the day's work when I get up in the morning , and then I go in around 10 o'clock (a.m.) for rehearsals . Then it's constant rehearsals , both the visual side and the musical side , through about 8 o'clock (p.m.) . At around 8 p.m. I look at the video tapes of what we've been doing during the day , and make adjustments if necessary . So there really isn't time to do anything else at all except Sundays , and then I sleep for most of the day . It's very intensive rehearsals , and physically it's quite demanding .

Rehearsals with the full Spider set were staged in Rotterdam's Ahoy Stadium starting on 18 May before moving to De Kuip stadium for the dress rehearsals (27 and 28 May) . Due to relatively easy access to the venues during rehearsals , fans knew what the set list for the show would be before the tour even opened .

Bowie stated that he was looking for dancers who did not look like typical MTV dancers and who knew both American street @-@ dancing and European performance art . Originally Bowie had hoped to have Édouard Lock of La La La Human Steps be involved in the show , but the group was booked with other commitments . Bowie later lamented that the Tour may have been viewed differently if La La La Human Steps had been involved : " It would have been a different ballgame . " La La La Human Steps would provide the choreography for Bowie's next tour , the Sound + Vision Tour of 1990 .

= = Concert synopsis = =

The show was divided into two parts and included a planned encore .

Bowie entered the show to the song " Glass Spider " , for which he was lowered from the set's ceiling while seated in a silver chair and singing into a telephone . Bowie was dressed in a single @-@ breasted three @-@ quarters length red suit , a red shirt , and red shoes . The show's first vignette began with " Bang Bang " , during which Bowie pulled an audience member out of the crowd , only to be rejected by the fan , who by the end of the song was revealed to be one of the troupe's dancers . Later in the show , for the song " Fashion " , the dance troupe threatened Bowie with a street fight , which , by the end of the song , he accidentally wins . For the live performance of " Never Let Me Down " , Bowie was influenced by the minimalist choreography of Pina Bausch . Bowie said :

I wanted one straight movement that starts upstage and comes all the way downstage and doesn't vary . I'm on my knees , with my arms in a kind of straitjacket , and a crawl for three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half minutes . A girl is with me , as if she's accompanying her pet in a park , but she has a cylinder on her back , and every now and then she's giving me oxygen . It felt like a very protective , a very sad little image , and it felt right for the song .

For Part 2 , Bowie appeared on the stage's scaffolding to " ' 87 & Cry " , flew through the air in a Flying by Foy abseiling harness , and was subsequently tied up by riot police . On at least one occasion , the flying segment of the song was dropped due to a malfunction with the set . The movie footage shown behind Bowie during " ' Heroes ' " was shot by Bowie during his time in Russia in 1974 . Of the footage , Bowie said :

There's a poignant image of a Mongolian with a hanky in his hand waving goodbye to his family getting on a train to Moscow and I loop that up so there's a never ending sequence of this old fellow dabbing his tears and waving bye @-@ bye . That plays behind the action in black and white and it's alarmingly sad . It's like saying goodbye to heroism ; it's like saying goodbye to a world of a 19th century ideal . It's irretrievable and now maybe we're just looking for seeds of intelligence and not heroes . There's something about it that I really like . It's a piece of theatricality that I really adore . I'm really proud of it .

The encore typically opened with the song " Time " , for which Bowie emerged from the top of the spider's head with angel wings behind him , 60 feet above the crowd . The song was occasionally

cut from outdoor shows when bad weather made the perch atop the spider too precarious to perform . Bowie 's outfit for the encore was a gold lamé leather suit complete with gold winged cowboy boots . One of these suits , autographed by Bowie , sold at a Sotheby 's auction in 1990 for \$ 7 @, @ 000 (worth about \$ 12 @, @ 700 today) , several times its expected selling price . One of the outfits that Bowie wore for Part 2 , also signed by Bowie , was put up for auction on 21 May 2016 .

= = Setlists = =

On tour , the band typically performed a roughly two and a half @-@ hour set that varied only a little from night to night .

= = Opening acts = =

The opening act for the tour varied from country to country ; in North America some dates of the tour were supported by Duran Duran or Siouxsie and the Banshees . The opening acts in Europe varied , and included such acts as Iggy Pop , Big Country , The Cult , Erasure , The Stranglers and Nina Hagen . The tour also played festival dates , on one occasion with The Eurythmics headlining one night and Bowie headlining the next .

= = Tour incidents = =

The tour took a physical toll on Bowie . Not only did he grow noticeably thinner over the course of the tour , he found that he was exhausted before the tour even started :

I think [tours like this] are extravagantly dangerous to do because they 're so fucking tiring . Just the pressures of organising the event , and it 's no longer a show , it 's an event . Even before you go out on tour , you 're knackered . There 's God knows how many people running around , and everybody 's doing something and people are forgetting to delegate jobs to the right people , and it 's a mass of confusion and somehow it 's all supposed to come together .

The tour played at large @-@ capacity venues , and in Europe the tour alternated between indoor and outdoor , open @-@ field venues . Michael Clark , a lighting engineer for the tour , died at the Stadio Comunale in Florence , Italy on 9 June after falling from the scaffolding before the show commenced . The following day on 10 June , another worker fell (without lethal injury) while helping build the set in Milan . Mobs of fans , some who had camped out overnight to get into the venue , rioted and had to be controlled by police . Both shows in Rome (on 15 and 16 June) saw similar rioting as fans who could not get tickets to the shows clashed with police . On the second night , Bowie had to sing through tear gas as 50 people were arrested and 15 policemen were injured in the rioting . As the band 's plane was leaving Rome after their show on 16 June , a bomb scare forced the plane to return the airport , only to discover that the local chief of police had used it as ruse to get Bowie 's autograph . Said Bowie of the incident , " I was not so much annoyed as stunned ? that could only happen in Italy ! " The 27 June concert , originally scheduled to be performed at Ullevi , Gothenburg , Sweden had to be moved to nearby Eriksberg in Hisingen because a previous concert by Bruce Springsteen held at Ullevi Stadium incurred £ 2.7m (or about £ 7m today) in damages . A fan trying to enter the Slane Castle backstage area by swimming the River Boyne drowned just before the show on 11 July .

At one point during the European tour , guitarist Carlos Alomar ripped a ligament in his leg , an injury that caused him to change his on @-@ stage character . Said Alomar , " [I] had to change my character into the mad , limping Mad Max reject with spiky hair . I went to a chiropractor and asked him for a lot of metal stuff -- leg braces , back braces and everything . Now I 'll be adding more metal as the show progresses . "

Bowie was occasionally visited or had his shows attended by European royalty , including Princess Diana at the second show in Wembley Stadium ; Sarah , Duchess of York at Sunderland ; and Danish Prince Joachim and Crown Prince Frederik at Stadt Park .

The Glass Spider Tour was the first Bowie tour to reach Austria , Italy , Spain , Ireland and Wales . Some of the outdoor performances in Britain had to start early due to curfew laws (a problem typically avoided in other European shows) , which reduced the impact of the lighting of the stage and set dressing , and bothered Bowie considerably .

During the North American leg of the tour , a 30 @-@ year @-@ old woman claimed that Bowie sexually assaulted her at the Mansion Hotel after a show at Reunion Arena in Dallas . A grand jury cleared Bowie of all charges a year later .

= = Ticket sales and attendance = =

Demand for tickets to the tour was high : The 3 September show at Sullivan Stadium in Massachusetts set a record for quickest sellout at that venue , a record matched by U2 and unsurpassed until The Who sold 100 @,@ 000 tickets to two shows there in less than 8 hours in 1989 . For one venue , Bowie sold US \$ 3 million worth of tickets to 3 shows in 90 minutes . The concert drew the largest crowd ever to see a concert in Ottawa , Canada at the time . Advance sales for the Australian leg of the tour was \$ 8 @.@ 6 million , surpassing even Michael Jackson 's advance sales for the Australian leg of his " Bad " concert tour (estimated at \$ 4 @.@ 5 million) .

Writers have estimated that by the conclusion of the tour between two and six million people had attended , with another source suggesting that three million fans saw the tour worldwide .

Four of the tour 's shows were among the Top 20 grossing concert shows of the year 1987 in the US , and at the end of 1987 it was estimated that the entire tour grossed more than \$ 50 million . In 1991 , it was estimated that each show of the tour grossed US \$ 1 million , for roughly \$ 86 million over the course of the tour (or approximately \$ 179 million today , adjusted for inflation) .

= = Contemporary critical reviews = =

The European leg of the tour seemed to garner mostly unfavorable reviews from the media , although there were positive reviews as well . Bowie was frustrated how the reviews in Europe changed from initially positive to negative , blaming the early start of the tour in some outdoor venues for the poor reception . He said , " the biggest mistake that was made on that tour , was opening in the daylight . The whole reason for the entire damn show was lost . " He noted that reviews from indoor shows (where the set and lighting were more effective) were quite positive .

The US media seemed kinder , with papers in Orlando , Florida and Boston , Massachusetts writing positive reviews . The Philadelphia Inquirer and Chicago Tribune were both mixed in their reviews of shows in Philadelphia and Chicago , respectively . The review of Bowie 's first show in New York was mostly negative , calling the show " spectacular " , but adding that " overkill reigns " and lamenting " a dizzying overload of visual activity . " A review in the Christian Science Monitor was mostly positive , highlighting the dazzling visuals and complaining that the dancing was only occasionally inspired . A local paper in Portland , Oregon had a positive review that said that the dancers , music , set and band combined into an " overall effect [that] could rightly be called spectacular . It is performance art and rock opera ; it is a stunning assemblage worthy of any stage or arena in the world . "

Despite criticism in the press , Bowie at the time said that performing on this tour was the most fun he had ever had on the road because it was the " most inventive " tour he had ever been involved with .

= = Live recordings = =

Despite stating during the press tour that there would be no live album from the tour , the performances at Sydney Entertainment Centre ? Sydney on 7 and 9 November 1987 were filmed and released on video as Glass Spider in 1988 . An edit of this show was subsequently aired in the US in an ABC TV concert special , ABC 's first concert special since airing Elvis Presley 's Aloha from Hawaii in 1973 . A 2007 DVD re @-@ release of the show included an audio recording of the

performance at the Olympic Stadium , Montreal on 30 August 1987 . The 6 June 1987 Platz der Republik (Reichstag ? City Of Berlin Festival) performance was broadcast live on FM Radio .

A critic found that the 1988 (and 2007 DVD reissue) video release rendered the intended meaning of the show largely nonsensical , as several songs and vignettes that made the show 's message explicit were excised from the release .

= = Commercial sponsorship = =

Bowie agreed to what at the time was considered a controversial commercial sponsorship agreement with PepsiCo , which was later seen as helping to pave the way for other big money tours by other artists . For his part , Bowie recorded a TV commercial with Tina Turner to the tune " Modern Love " in May 1987 while he was preparing for the tour . The commercial had a short run , as Pepsi withdrew the commercial after Bowie was accused of sexual assault during the tour . Of the sponsorship agreement , Bowie said , " We did a commercial sponsorship thing only for North America with the Pepsi @-@ Cola company . As far as I 'm concerned , what it 's allowed me to do , having them underwrite the tour , is to be able to produce a far more extravagant show than if I were just doing it myself . It means that instead of just having 1 or 2 sets I can have 3 or 4 sets made , and they can travel independently and they can be far more complicated . "

Bowie had originally planned to take the Glass Spider Tour to Russia , albeit with the band only (no dancers or elaborate props) , but with the money and extra stage provided by the sponsorship , Bowie felt he could take the full tour to Russia and South America . However , these plans failed to come to fruition , and the tour never reached those regions .

= = Tour legacy = =

Bowie found himself under great stress during the tour , and after the tour ended in New Zealand , he reportedly had the Spider set burned , saying " It was so great ... We just put the thing in a field and set light to it . That was such a relief ! " This was , however , partially refuted in 2016 by road manager Peter Grumley , who claimed to have purchased and stored at least one of the sets in his West Auckland warehouse .

The entire tour was so physically demanding and such a large production that Bowie said at the time that " I don 't think I 'll ever take a tour quite this elaborate out on the road again . It 's a real headache to put it together " .

Bowie became engaged to Melissa Hurley , one of the dancers from the tour , but the two split up without being wed after four years .

Critics have often compared later David Bowie tours to this one , commonly echoing this later review : " [Bowie] mounted a stadium @-@ sized production combining the excitement of rock with the perils of Broadway An incredible spectacle , but the effect was overwhelming . Each additional theatrical device served to distract , ultimately flattening the impact of the music . "

In 1989 while working with Tin Machine , Bowie said " I overstretched There was too much responsibility on the last [Glass Spider] tour . I was under stress every single day . It was a decision a second . It was so big and so unwieldy and everybody had a problem all the time , every day , and I was under so much pressure . It was unbelievable I put too many fine details into something that was going to be seen (indicates tiny figure with his finger and thumb) this big . "

In 1990 , while giving interviews for his Sound + Vision Tour , Bowie said that he was pleased that the tour was regarded as " innovative " , noting reviews that pointed out how the tour had " areas of it that surely would change the way rock was done . "

In 1991 , while preparing for his second tour with Tin Machine , Bowie reflected on the Glass Spider Tour 's theatrics and presentation , suggesting that many tours and acts that followed benefited from this tour :

The Stones ' show , Prince 's show , Madonna 's show ... all of them have benefited from [this] tour I like lots of it [the Glass Spider Tour] , but ... the whole thing should have been a lot smaller . Three @-@ quarters of it was really innovative , and I 've seen a lot of it in other people 's shows

One day , if you get the chance , get a copy of that show on video and take another look at it , because in the light of what 's been done since , there 's some interesting shit going on .

In the late 2000s , the tour began to be re @-@ examined by critics , and the tone of the coverage began to change . In 2009 , an article in the BBC News singled out the Glass Spider Tour 's innovative set and marriage of music and theatre as an inspiration to later acts , including Britney Spears , Madonna , U2 and others . In 2010 , the Glass Spider Tour won an award for being one of the best concert designs of all time (alongside other such notable tours as U2 's 360 ° Tour [2009 ? 2011] and Pink Floyd 's Division Bell Tour [1994]) .

In 2013 , new critical reviews began to take note of some of the tour 's strengths and innovations and proposed that the tour was better than its reputation suggested . Although critics still found some elements of the tour questionable (including the set itself and the prevalence of Bowie 's newer material) , the tour was praised for Bowie 's strong voice , musical arrangements and choice of relatively unheard " jewels " in the set list . Peter Frampton credited his participation in this tour for helping to revive his own career .

The show on 6 June 1987 was played close to the Berlin Wall . The show was heard by thousands of Eastern Germany citizens across the wall and was followed by violent rioting in East Berlin . According to Tobias Ruther , these protests in East Berlin were the first in the sequence of riots that led to those around the time of the fall of the wall in November 1989 . Although other factors were probably more influential in the fall of the wall , on Bowie 's death in 2016 , the German Foreign Office tweeted " Good @-@ bye , David Bowie . You are now among # Heroes . Thank you for helping to bring down the # wall . "

Ultimately , given the negative reaction to the Never Let Me Down album and this tour , Bowie found himself creatively exhausted and in low critical standing . Bowie decided to return to making music for himself , and , having been put in touch with Reeves Gabrels through his publicist for the Glass Spider Tour , Bowie formed his band Tin Machine in 1989 and retired his back catalogue of songs from live performance with his Sound + Vision Tour in 1990 .

= = Tour details = =

= = = Tour design = = =

Allen Branton ? Lighting design

Mark Ravitz ? Set design

Christine Strand ? Video director

= = = Band equipment = = =

Peter Frampton played two natural @-@ finish maple body Pensa @-@ Suhr Strat types , hand @-@ made by New York @-@ based John Suhr . For the song " Zeroes " , he used a Coral electric sitar , given to him in the late 70s and previously owned by Jimi Hendrix . Carlos Alomar played on six Kramer American series guitars and one custom Alembic . Multi @-@ instrumentalist Erdal Kizilcay played Yamaha DX7 , Emax , Korg SGI and Yamaha CS70 keyboards . He also played a Tokai Stratocaster , a Yamaha GS1000 bass and a Pedulla fretless bass . Additional instruments played included a set of Latin Percussion timbales and white congas , a cowbell , 6- and 8 @-@ inch Zildjian cymbals , Promark drum sticks , a Simmons SDS @-@ 9 , a cornet and a 17th @-@ century Italian viola . Richard Cottle played on two Prophet 5s , an Oberheim , a Yamaha DX7 , DX7 @-@ IID and KX5 keyboards as well as a Selmer alto saxophone . Carmine Rojas used two Spector basses , and Alan Childs played on Tama Artstar II drums .

= = = Tour dates = = =

=== The songs ===

=== Books ===

David Buckley , Strange Fascination : The Definitive Biography of David Bowie , Virgin Books , 1999 , ISBN 1 85227 784 X

David Currie , David Bowie : Glass Idol , Omnibus Press , 1987 , ISBN 0 7119 1182 7