

# Edinburgh International Festival – Godspeed You! Black Emperor\*\*\*\*\*



Setting a desolate Western scene with their raw introduction, Godspeed You! Black Emperor played to a diverse audience last night. With strings, guitars, drums and double bass, the initial introduction of their music, the unreleased *Hope Drone*, was somewhat deceptive; not their eleven minute feedback that they later moved into.

The ethereal Canadian collective, Godspeed You! Black Emperor with their cult status, notorious ambiguity, radical political convictions and refusal to play to industry rules, are for many an escape from our increasingly bleak world.

The influential, visceral force of the band certainly intensified throughout the course of time, with typical multi-textual layering from both sound and screen. With the screen split and the looped visuals varying unpredictably from barren landscapes to urban concrete, there was a frenetic energy present in the Playhouse.

Anarchistic in nature, the chaos resonating from the stage from the three guitarists, two bass players, two drummers and fiddler Sophie Trudeau is all filtered through a state of the art PA.

Dark, nocturnal elements imposing, along with the more desolate, lonely soundscapes, it is understandable as to why some of the audience left, who were not aware of this band's wall of feedback. However, the audience are still subjected to moments of hope and triumph, amidst the discord, as the collective layer Celtic sounds against visions of mountainous

landscapes.

However, the tempo increases, the discord insists and the textural sounds are perpetually layered, a formula that can turn you into a head-spin.

As the wall of feedback disperses, the lights go on and it's time to embrace the downpour home.