

Review – Foy Vance at Queen's Hall

Edinburgh has been spoiled for live shows recently with Herbie Hancock, Fleet Foxes and now Foy Vance all appearing in the capital.



All three of these artists have delivered transcendent performances that will linger long in the memory. Vance tonight is celebrating 15 years since his debut album *Hope* and his fourth long player *Signs Of Life*. The hooky *We Can't Be Tamed* from that album soars live with Vance proving once again he is one of the best living songwriters on the planet.

Born in Bangor and now a long-term native of Aberfeldy Vance brings his version of Scots steel, Irish fire and Americana to the Queen's Hall.

At points it feels closer to a Gospel revival meeting with the Irishman singing off mike and the audience rising to their feet, it was a cathartic couple of hours for many. During She Burns there is a sense of buckling as Vance takes us on a supercharged rollercoaster ride. With sweat dripping beneath the brow of his cap, he physically puts everything into the powerhouse vocal that explodes like a bright firework of energy and emotion.

A funky Hair of the Dog is given new life with his excellent backing band The Late Heavy. Part showman and part joker he generates the kind of soul power more often associated with James Brown. Declarations of love, whoops, hollers and clapping break out at various points but the venue fell silent during the encore An Indiscriminate Act of Kindness. The piano led fan-favourite remains a thing of beauty as does his set closer Guiding Light which saw Vance singing as he walked off stage along with the audience.

They managed to coax him on stage one last time or a rousing Closed Hand Full of Friends.



All photos Richard Purden