

Rory Taillon's blues evolution

Musician tackles tough subjects through his lyrics

KYLE MULLIN

Some bluesmen sell their souls to the devil. This one was a literal choir boy.

"My mother was, and still is, the organist at my family's church, and she put me in choir and singing lessons when I was six," said gritty blues musician Rory Taillon.

The Toronto-based songwriter says his father introduced him to the blues when he was a teen, compelling him to venture from the altar to the crossroads.

"The transition was easy for me being a trained vocalist, and I feel like it was received well for the same reason. I still sing in the choirs, but the blues and rock opened up my eyes to other genres and how I could be a part of them."

His divine vocal training shines through on *Closure*, his debut EP. But Taillon says his blues evolution won't be complete until his guitar playing matches his singing.

"I'm self-taught. So my knowledge, I will admit, is sort of limited," Taillon said. "I try not to play outside my ability. I'm not much of a flashy solo-er, but I feel like I'm a solid rhythm guitar player. Being self-taught though, I feel like I'm always learning. I'm constantly trying to better myself through practice and learning new techniques from other musicians."

But unlike most other musicians, Taillon is willing to face one lyrical taboo unflinchingly as he works on a follow-up to *Closure*.

"There is a stigma around mental health," he said. "It is an issue that many people struggle with, but no one wants to admit that they have. I feel as though writing about tough subjects can help to bring them into the open and get people to start talking about them, instead of pretending they aren't an issue."

He says his lyrics about that particular subject are more sociological than personal, but says he doesn't shy away from addressing topics that are personally emotional for him – like in the song "Last Iris," which addresses the death of Taillon's grandmother



Rory Taillon has got his blues vocals down, and is still working on developing his abilities on the guitar.

two years ago.

"It was very hard for me," he said. "I feel it (the song) helped me cope, because I had created something that would always remind me of her and how I felt at that time."

SHOW TIMES

Saint John Catch Rory Taillon on Friday, March 29, at **Taco Pica, 96 Germain St.** 8:30 p.m. \$10. 633-8492.

AC/DC tribute band goes all out

Dirty Deeds will have you shaking all night long

JON MACNEILL

The folks behind Halifax's Dirty Deeds are ready to show the world why they deserve their title as the absolute AC/DC tribute.

After honing their show in the pubs and clubs circuit throughout Atlantic Canada for the past 12 years, the members of Dirty Deeds are stepping up to bigger and better stages with their most authentic homage to date.

"Worldwide, there are quite a few AC/DC tribute acts, but hardly any of them have gone to the lengths that we've recently gone to, and spent the time, money, and energy to create the kind of show people in Moncton are going to get to see here shortly," said frontman Wade Salter.

Dirty Deeds formed in the early 2000s and began carving a name

for the band with the help of the late Larry Hazen Horsman, a New Brunswick-based agent who was instrumental in launching the tribute group.

"We started out just like anybody else – in a garage without a clue that we'd be doing what we're up to now, with these larger shows," Salter said.

"I can remember at one time the goal was to play Sam's, one of the bigger, well-known bars around Halifax. And as time went on, the names just changed to different locations throughout Atlantic Can-

ada."

Around two years ago the band decided to give its act a major overhaul in order to target larger arena shows. The group had a replica of "Hell's Bell" created, two life-sized firing cannons, and, of course, Rosie the blow-up doll. Rounding out the new setup is a towering back line of built-to-scale Marshall amps.

"They're all things to make it feel and look and smell as close to AC/DC as we can at this point. Not a lot of tributes out there are fortunate enough or able to get it to that scale."



This band knows how to rock out.



Dirty Deeds works hard to maintain the title of the absolute AC/DC tribute.