

Created by: Debra C. Argen

## Rory Block - A Woman's Soul - A Tribute to Bessie Smith



Fans of **early Blues music** are in for a rare treat with **Rory Block - A Woman's Soul - A Tribute to Bessie Smith** released on the [Stony Plain Records](#) label. For her latest release, **multi-award-winning Blues singer/songwriter/musician Rory Block** pays tribute to the **legendary Blues singer, Bessie Smith** known as the **Empress of the Blues**, with **songs from the 1920s and 1930s**. For this 10-track release, it's all Rory Block, with no outside distractions and the result is something wonderful.



**Rory Block - A Woman's Soul - A Tribute to Bessie Smith:** *Do Your Duty, Kitchen Man, Jazzbo Brown From Memphis Town, Gimme A Pigfoot And A Bottle Of Beer, Need A Little Sugar In My Bowl, I'm Down in The Dumps, Black Mountain, Weeping Willow Blues, On Revival Day, Empty Bed Blues*

**Personnel:** **Rory Block** - vocals, guitars and bass on her signature Model Martin guitars, all percussion: guitar bongos, hat boxes, plastic storage tubs, oatmeal boxes, wooden spoons

**Rory Block - A Woman's Soul - A Tribute to Bessie Smith** was produced by and released on the [Stony Plain Records](#) label.

For those not familiar with the legendary **Bessie Smith**, I wanted to provide a bit of a backstory to help readers understand and appreciate the music, and Rory Block's celebration of women in the days of early Blues of the 1920s and 1930s. Born in Chattanooga, Tennessee on April 15, 1894, Bessie Smith died in Clarksville, Mississippi on September 26, 1937 from injuries obtained during a car accident. However, in her 43 years of being on the earth she made her impact on the Blues recording 160 songs and rightly earned the title of "Empress of the Blues." In 1989, she was posthumously awarded a **Grammy® Lifetime Achievement Award**.

**Rory Block** is a multi-award-winning Blues singer/songwriter/musician, born in Princeton, New Jersey, who grew up in Greenwich Village, New York City. For her latest release, **Rory Block - A Woman's Soul - A Tribute to Bessie Smith**, she sets forth to celebrate, honor, and introduce Bessie Smith and the music she sang from the 1920s and 1930s.

Rory Block writes of the release. *"It's important to me to mention Bessie's outrageously sexy material, her fearlessness, jaw-dropping delivery, her unapologetic presentation of women as the powerfully, sensual, sexual beings we know we are -but that society just didn't know how to admit in the early 1900s. Bessie's material was never dirty, it was just plain sexy."*

The 10-track release opens with the Wesley Sox Wilson (1893 - 1953) song, *Do Your Duty*, which Rory Block performs beautifully. Next on the playlist is the Andy Razaf and Edna P. Pinkard song, *Kitchen Man*,

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a fabulous romp of a sassy, bawdy, and full of double-entendre song. The first time I heard this song performed was during the musical, *One Mo'Time* back in the 1980s, and the song still brings a smile whenever I hear it. I was delighted that Rory Block had selected it for her tribute to the music of Bessie Smith.

*Jazzbo Brown From Memphis Town* is another great track on the release, written by George Brooks, which was first recorded by Bessie Smith in 1926. Rory has some fun on another Wesley Sox Wilson song, this one from 1933, *Gimme A Pigfoot And A Bottle Of Beer*. The release continues with *Need A Little Sugar In My Bowl* written by Dally Small, Clarence Williams and J. Tim Brymn, and recorded by Bessie Smith in 1931. The song's double-entendre lyrics evoke some of the late great Mae West's (1893-1980) famous lines.

*I'm Down in The Dumps* also written by Wesley Sox Wilson song is another fine song, that segues into the 1930 Henry Cole song, *Black Mountain*, followed by *Weeping Willow Blues* written by Paul Carter, which Bessie Smith recorded in 1924, and *On Revival Day* written by Andy Razaf in 1930.

The release closes with *Empty Bed Blues* written by J.C. Johnson, which will leave you happy to have made the acquaintance of two very important and powerful women of the Blues, Bessie Smith from the 1920s and 1930s, and Rory Block.

Until next time, keep enjoying the music!

**Websites where you can procure *Rory Block - A Woman's Soul - A Tribute to Bessie Smith*: [Barnesand Noble](#) and [BestBuy](#).**

**If you want to catch one of Rory Block's upcoming shows, here's a sampling of some of the places where she will be playing. To see the entire tour calendar, please visit: [www.RoryBlock.com](http://www.RoryBlock.com).**

PS21, Rory Block's Blues & Gospel Weekend, Chatham, NY, USA

July 20-22, 2018

Lizzie Rose Music Room, Tuckerton, NJ, USA

July 27, 2018

Susquehanna Folk Festival, Lewisberry PA, USA

July 28, 2018

Woodstock Luthiers Showcase, Woodstock, NY

October 28, 2018

**For more information on Rory Block please visit the website: [www.RoryBlock.com](http://www.RoryBlock.com)**

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