**Celebrated Sounds: Originals, covers fold together nicely on 'Lucky Man'**

Indianapolis Star. Mar. 13, 2011  |



Mike Milligan and Steam Shovel mix originals and covers.

Written by

[**David Lindquist**](mailto:david.lindquist@indystar.com)

**Indiana album review**

Mike Milligan and Steam Shovel

"Lucky Man"

Mojo Hut Records

[www.mikemilligan.homestead.com](http://www.mikemilligan.homestead.com)

**In a nutshell:** This impressive blues-rock recording conveys gratitude that the album's title implies. Singer-guitarist Mike Milligan, bass player Shaun Milligan and drummer Robert Cook will perform songs from "Lucky Man" Friday at Daddy Jack's, 9419 N. Meridian St.

**Fan finder:** Ray Charles and Stevie Ray Vaughan are guideposts for Kokomo native Milligan. "Lucky Man" includes a cover of "Busted," popularized by Charles in 1963, while original tune "Sunshine Today" is a soul-stirring piano ballad. Milligan channels Vaughan's guitar prowess on "I'm Not Lost" and "Meat & Three."

**That's a keeper:** The trio delivers a confident, comfortable rendition of "Will It Go Round in Circles," with harmonica (played by guest Stevie Berek) and Milligan's guitar subbing for organ heard on Billy Preston's 1972 hit.

**Didn't see it coming:** A warts-and-all, one-take stab at Stevie Wonder's "A Place in the Sun" has its charms, but the song is misplaced at the album's beginning. Any of nine other tracks would make a better first impression.

**Selling points:** Milligan's original compositions and covers fold together nicely. He resurrects 1960s cheater's anthem "The Dark End of the Street," yet he invests complementary emotion when praising his wife on the title track.