



## Without Paris covers all the bases

### Manchester quartet plays big

By Michael Witthaus  
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It's hard to stand out as a cover band, but Manchester-based Without Paris always walks on stage determined to be bigger than the venue they're playing. The quartet prides itself on special touches, like the woodblocks keyboard player Rich Ashooh taps together for "All Right Now," the four-part harmonies on Queen's "Tie Your Mother Down," or their left field takes of songs by the Four Seasons, Scissor Sisters or Maroon 5.

"Everyone in the band is pretty competitive," said drummer Carlo Carluccio. "I'm probably the most, of course."

That's an understatement. For the 45-year-old Carluccio, music is a hobby, albeit an elaborate and consuming one. How many bar bands have uniformed roadies?

But professionally, Carluccio is the model of a Type A personality, a business success story who in 18 years rose from the stockroom of Manchester panel meter manufacturer Jewell Instruments to become the company's president and CEO.

So when he decided to put a band together with high school pal Ashooh, he went about it methodically as a product launch. Scott King, a singer-songwriter who's released several original CDs, was recruited along with bassist/vocalist Craig



### Without Paris

Info:

[www.withoutparis.com](http://www.withoutparis.com)

Upcoming shows:

- Friday, Feb. 5, at 9 p.m. at Slammers Bar and Grill in Bedford
- Friday, Feb. 12, at 9 p.m. Penuche's Grill in Manchester
- Friday, Feb. 19, at 9 p.m. at the Black Brimmer in Manchester
- Friday, March 26, at 9:30 p.m. at Murphy's Tap Room in Manchester



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LaPointe of the Boston band Watts.

The newly formed combo (which began as a five-piece; a second guitarist left after a few gigs) settled into Carluccio's home studio and practiced — and practiced some more.

"I call it a homework band — here's the four songs we're gonna run through, everybody get your homework done so when you come into the studio we're ready to roll," Carluccio said. "Songs come together very quickly for us, because we take it very professionally."

Without Paris built a catalog rich with nuggets by Lit, Joe Jackson and Wilson Pickett to complement the usual Beatles, Stones and U2 crowd-pleasers.

Though both King and LaPointe have their own material, early on the band decided to stick with the familiar.

"I've done some studio work over the years, original stuff for other people," Carluccio said, "but it's fun to play songs that you grew up with. I think that kind of bonded us together — classic rock songs and then some — not unusual, but stuff that you don't hear every day."

They first played out at Manchester's Yard restaurant in early spring. "We invited everyone we knew; there was like 300 people and that was our coming out party," Carluccio said. From the beginning, they carried themselves like a seasoned band, selling T-shirts and gear at a merchandise table, and arriving with a sound and stage crew.

"We behave more like a 500- to 1,000-seat band as opposed to the venues that we're playing," Carluccio said. "I think people get a kick out of that."

The band brings hardware to match their swaggering attitude. "We have a multifunction, computer-controlled, enormous light show that does not just the staging but also the dance floors," Carluccio said. "I guarantee you we've got the best sound system that any cover band in New Hampshire has. It's all GBL Pro stuff, and everything in the rack is DBX gear." If you ask Carluccio about the

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band's name, he has a different story for every day of the week. It's not a reference to the spoiled heiress/reality television star. A few creative fans have contributed their own versions to the band's Web site. One of the best talks about a dog named Paris who ate all the catered food at a gig where each member was playing with different bands. The canine then had a tent-clearing gas attack; the four met outside and struck up a friendship — i.e. without Paris, there would be no band.

The truth, it turns out, lies in a history lesson. "It's Helen of Troy — our theory is, Paris fell in love with Helen of Troy, and that created the Trojan War. Well, if there was no Paris, there'd be no Paris in Hilton, there'd be no Trojan War, and where would we be today?"

Carluccio says he was fascinated with myths like the Iliad and the Odyssey when he was a student at Proctor Academy, but it took a while for him to warm up to the moniker. "We thought it was a lousy name at first, but it kept popping up," he said. "We had it on a bulletin board in the studio, and we kept looking at it. All of a sudden, we said you know what? I think that's our name!"

