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PLUGGED IN: PAPA TAKING L.A. BY STORM

Written by [Mike Duffy](#) on March 27, 2012

PAPA has a well-received EP out titled *A Good Woman is Hard to Find*, and a new full-length is being culled together.

But let's rewind: When Los Angeles-based **PAPA** first began, it was drummer/singer Darren Weiss with a drum kit alone in a New York City boiler room writing songs during the hours he wasn't going to school or working as a bus boy in a random restaurant.

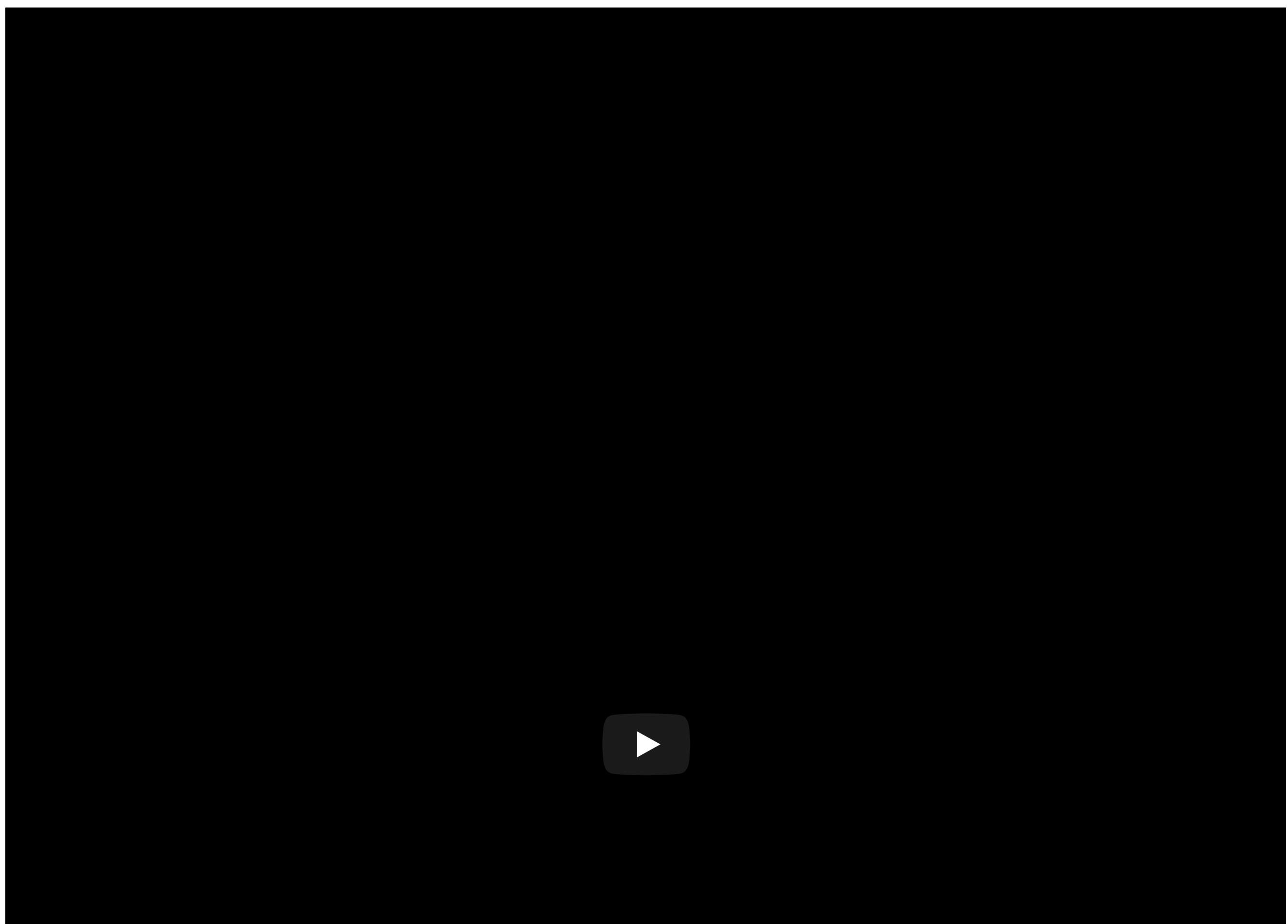
But once childhood friend **Danny Presant** moved to town from a school in Boston – and the duo subsequently moved back to their native California – PAPA steeled itself for the long haul.

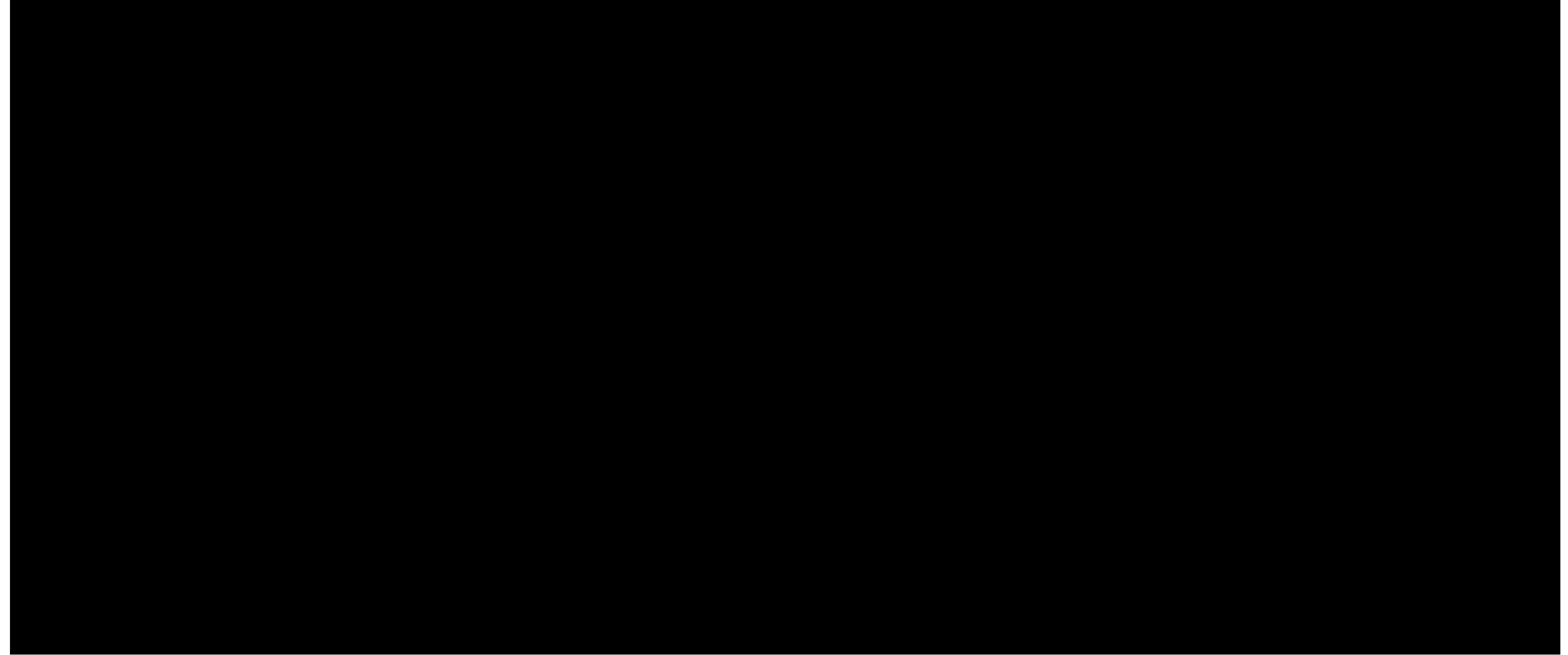
Although Weiss spent some time in the Bay Area manning the drums for San Francisco indie-heroes Girls, he continued to work on songs for PAPA. And with Presant adding a pop-oriented approach to Weiss' acoustic songwriting process, there are bright things on the horizon.

PAPA has a well-received EP out titled *A Good Woman is Hard to Find* and a new full-length is being culled together, creating quite a bit of buzz for



this act.





The group was tabbed as an L.A. must-see act by the *Los Angeles Times* heading into the 2012 South by Southwest music festival earlier this month.

"I wasn't expecting a single notice of the EP"

Their tune "Ain't It So" showed up on *Spinner* as the "Song of the Day" earlier this month.

The recognition has been a pleasant surprise for Weiss.

"I wasn't expecting a single notice of the EP," Weiss told *Proxart Magazine*. "I really wasn't. So I've been really, really pleasantly surprised. And all I hope is that those people who liked it will pay attention when we come out with the next thing."

"Like I said, that warm reception only matters if it gets people to our shows and we can keep connecting with those people and keep doing something together that matters."

The catalyst might have been their music video that went viral for *Good Woman* hit "I Am the Lion King."

In the black-and-white clip, the band members dance around a blank background willy-nilly while a soulful groove supplements Weiss' sultry growl. Presant and Weiss are the stars, lending a head-nodding beat that befits a band with its two lead members owning the rhythm section.

"I usually hate music videos, so we got lucky that this one came out the way it did"

Presant told Fender.com with a laugh

The enthusiasm for that track has carried over to PAPA's live shows, too.

At a recent gig at the El Rey Theatre in Los Angeles, a fan shouted out, "Lion King!" two songs in.

"As long as there's a stage for us to play on, we'll be there."

When they played The Echo in December, a fan jumped on stage to mimic Weiss' dance moves.

During the breakdown of "Lion King," Weiss always makes it a point to jump out from behind his drums to slap fives with those in the front row, and if the crowd is lucky, there's a handstand or somersault in the offing.

Weiss, who typically plays drums barefoot, thinks the burgeoning fan base is due to PAPA's staunch work ethic.

"The crowds have been growing," Weiss said. "You're seeing more people know our songs. I think they're responding because they can see what it means to us."

Now, a typical PAPA show features the audience shouting the words of songs back to the band.

PAPA has also been relentless with their tour schedule, most recently playing over 10 shows at SXSW, including five in one day.

As soon as they got back to L.A., there were two appearances supporting the Temper Trap.

At this point, they've merited headliner status of their own, with a top-billed show at The Echo on May 3.

SO WHAT'S NEXT FOR PAPA?

The hope is that the band will begin recording their full-length during the latter part of April.

Until that happens, expect to see PAPA bringing their soulful groove to the L.A. area and beyond.

"We're going to keep working hard as long as work is put in front of us," said Weiss. "We were working really hard creating stuff for us to do previously, but now things have developed a little bit. As Bruce Springsteen would say, we were 'dancing in the dark.' As long as there's a stage for us to play on, we'll be there."



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