

Commissioned by the DePaul University Community Chorus, Martha Swisher, conductor

# Ask the Watchman

Based on Two Sea Island Spirituals

arranged by  
**Paul Caldwell & Sean Ivory**

With a sense of anticipation  $\bullet = 120$

Ankle Bells or Claves  
Djembe  
Baritone Solo  
Soprano  
Alto  
Tenor  
Bass  
Piano

5

AB/Civ  
Djb.  
Bar.  
S  
A  
T  
B  
Pno.

9

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar. *mf*

Ask the watch-man "How long?" — Ask the watch-man "How long?" —

S

A

T

B

Pno. *mp*

13

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar. *mp*

Ask the watch-man "How long?"

S How long we gon-na

A How long we gon-na

T How long we gon-na

B How long we gon-na

Pno. *mp*

17

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

It don' mad-duh how long, \_\_\_\_\_ It don' mad-duh how long, \_\_\_\_\_

S. *sub. decresc.*  
moan?

A. *sub. decresc.*  
moan?

T. *sub. decresc.*  
moan?

B. *sub. decresc.*  
moan?

Pno.

21

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

It don' mad-duh how long... \_\_\_\_\_

S. We'll wait for the

A. We'll wait for the

T. We'll wait for the

B. We'll wait for the

Pno.

25

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

S  
A  
T  
B

Pno.

*p*

*sub. decresc.*

*mp*

How ya gon-na greet the day..

dawn. Pray - in' that's\_ the way.

*sub. decresc.*

*mp*

dawn. Pray - in' that's\_ the way.

*sub. decresc.*

*mp*

dawn. Pray - in' that's\_ the way.

*sub. decresc.*

*mp*

dawn. Pray - in' that's\_ the way.

29

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

S  
A  
T  
B

Pno.

*cresc.*

*mf*

*f*

Sing - in' that's\_ the way. Sway - in' that's\_ the way. I'm gonna

*cresc.*

*mf*

*f*

Sing - in' that's\_ the way. Sway - in' that's\_ the way. I'm go-na

*cresc.*

*mf*

*f*

Sing - in' that's\_ the way. Sway - in' that's\_ the way. I'm gonna

*cresc.*

*mf*

*f*

Sing - in' that's\_ the way. Sway - in' that's\_ the way. I'm gonna

*cresc.*

*mf*

*f*



33

AB/Clv  
Djb.  
Bar.

S  
shout! Shout! 'Speak-in' in tongues, that's the way...

A  
shout! Shout! 'Speak-in' in tongues, that's the way...

T  
shout! Shout! 'Speak-in' in tongues, that's the way...

B  
shout! Shout! 'Speak-in' in tongues, that's the way...

Pno.  
\*alternate text:  
play-in' my drum,

37

AB/Clv  
Djb.  
Bar.

S  
That we'll greet the day. *mp*

A  
*mp* O day, yon - duh come duh day.

T  
*mp* O day, yon - duh come duh day.

B  
*mp* O day, yon - duh come duh day.

Pno.

41

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

S  
O day, yon - duh come day. O day, yon - duh come duh day.

A  
O day, yon - duh come day. O day, yon - duh come duh day.

T  
O day, yon - duh come day. O day, yon - duh come duh day.

B  
O day, yon - duh come day. O day, yon - duh come duh day.

Pno.

45

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

S  
Day break in ma soul. Day-light is ma-kin' me whole... (no breath) yon - duh come duh day.

A  
Day break in ma soul. O yon - duh come duh day.

T  
Day break in ma soul. O yon - duh come duh day.

B  
Day break in ma soul. O yon - duh come duh day.

Pno.

49

AB/Civ

Djb.

Bar.

S  
O day, yon - duh come day. — O day, yon - duh come duh day.

A  
O day, yon - duh come day. O day, yon - duh come duh day.

T  
O day, yon - duh come day. — O day, yon - duh come duh day.

B  
O day, yon - duh come day. O day, yon - duh come duh day.

Pno.

53

AB/Civ

Djb.

Bar.

S  
Day-light break in ma soul! *f* Go get the preach-uh! Get — who -

A  
Day-light break in ma soul! *f* Go get the preach-uh! Get — who -

T  
Day-light break in ma soul! *f* Go get who -

B  
Day-light break in ma soul! *f* Go get who -

Pno.

57

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

S  
ev - uh you can... Go get a drum - muh! Tell 'im

A  
ev - uh you can... Go get a drum - muh! Tell 'im

T  
ev - uh you can... Go get a drum - muh! Tell 'im

B  
ev - uh you can... Go get a drum - muh! Tell 'im

Pno.

61

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

S  
we need a hand... How long, O

A  
we need a hand... How long, O

T  
we need a hand... How long, O

B  
we need a hand... How long, O

Pno.

65

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

S

A

T

B

Pno.

how long, — Lord? How long, how long we gon - na moan? — Now tell us how long, O

How long,

69

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

S

A

T

B

Pno.

how long? — How long, how long? — How long,

how long, — Lord? How long, how long we gon - na moan? — Now tell us how long, O

Day-light is break-in'; I can

Day-light is break-in'; I can



73

AB/Civ

Djb.

Bar.

S  
see the sun ri-sin'. Can some - bo-dy tell us 'bout how much lon-guh? Day-light is break-in'; I can

A  
see the sun ri-sin'. Can some - bo-dy tell us 'bout how much lon-guh? Day-light is break-in'; I can

T  
how long?— How long, how long?— How long,

B  
how long,— Lord? How long, how long we gon - na moan?— Now tell us how long, O

Pno.

77

AB/Civ

Djb.

Bar.

S  
see the sun ri-sin'. Can some - bo-dy tell us 'bout how much lon-guh? Day-light is break-in'; I can

A  
see the sun ri-sin'. Can some - bo-dy tell us 'bout how much lon-guh? Day-light is break-in'; I can

T  
how long?— How long, how long?— How long,

B  
how long,— Lord? How long, how long we gon - na moan?— Now tell us how long, O

Pno.



81

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

S  
see the sun ri-sin'. Tell us oh\_ how long?\_ Day-light is break-in'; I can

A  
see the sun ri-sin'. Can some - bo-dy tell us 'bout how much lon-guh? O Day-light is break-in'; I can

T  
how long?\_ How long, how long?\_ How long,

B  
how long, \_ Lord? How long, how long we gon - na moan?\_ Now tell us how long, O

Pno.

85

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

S  
see the sun ri-sin'. Tell us oh\_ how long?\_ All night we have wai -

A  
see the sun ri-sin'. Can some - bo-dy tell us how long?\_ All night we have wai -

T  
how long?\_ How long, how long?\_ All night we have wai -

B  
how long, \_ Lord? How long, how long we gon - na moan?\_ Now tell us All night we have wai -

Pno.

marked, but not detached

AB/Civ

Djb.

Bar.

S  
- ted in the dark-ness for the break-in' of day. Watch - man, these ole feet -

A  
- ted in the dark-ness for the break-in' of day. Watch - man, these ole feet -

T  
- ted in the dark-ness for the break-in' of day. Watch - man, these ole feet -

B  
- ted in the dark-ness for the break-in' of day. Watch - man, these ole feet -

Pno.

AB/Civ

Djb.

Bar.

S  
- were made for danc - in'. Bed-duh get out uh my way! All night we have wai -

A  
- were made for danc - in'. Bed-duh get out uh my way! All night we have wai -

T  
- were made for danc - in'. Bed-duh get out uh my way! All night we have wai -

B  
- were made for danc - in'. Bed-duh get out uh my way! All night we have wai -

Pno.

97

AB/Clv  
Djb.  
Bar.  
S  
A  
T  
B  
Pno.

- ted in the dark - ness for the break-in' of day. Watch - man, these ole feet

- ted in the dark - ness for the break-in' of day. Watch - man, these ole feet

- ted in the dark - ness for the break-in' of day. Watch - man, these ole feet

- ted in the dark - ness for the break-in' of day. Watch - man, these ole feet

101

AB/Clv  
Djb.  
Bar.  
S  
A  
T  
B  
Pno.

- were made for danc - in'. I said there would be dan - cin' to-day! Let hea - ven and na -

- were made for danc - in'. I said there would be dan - cin' to-day! Let hea - ven and na -

- were made for danc - in'. I said there would be dan - cin' to-day! Let hea - ven and na -

were made for dan - cin' Oh! We gon-na dance!

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

S  
- ture say Oh! Let hea-ven and na - ture say Oh! Let hea-ven and na -

A  
- ture say Oh! Let hea-ven and na - ture say Oh! Let hea-ven and na -

T  
The Lord is come! The Lord is come! Na -

B  
The Lord is come! The Lord is come! Na -

Pno.

*Handwritten notes: S1 Split, S2 A1, A2 T, B*

AB/Clv

Djb.

Bar.

S  
- ture say Oh! Oh... day! Yon - duh come day!

A  
- ture say Oh! Yon - duh come day!

T  
- ture say Oh! Oh day!

B  
- ture say Oh! Yon - duh come day!

Pno.

*Handwritten notes: S1, S2, A1, A2, T, B*

*Ask the Watchman* was commissioned by the  
DePaul University Community Chorus of Chicago, IL  
Martha Swisher, Conductor

It consists of arrangements of two spirituals from the Sea Islands of South Carolina and Georgia. The culture and music of these islands is unique in American history. Because they were relatively isolated from the mainland until well into the 20th century, their language (a Creole dialect known as *Gullah*) and traditions remained intact for several generations longer than those of parallel mainland cultures.

The two spirituals used in this arrangement, *Ask the Watchman How Long* and *Yonduh Come Day* are contextually related. Both songs were sung on the eves of Christmas and the New Year during Watch Night Meetings, which would begin at midnight and end after dawn. The songs were performed in a call and response style, at first slow and somber, then evolve gradually into ecstatic utterances accompanied by complex clapping rhythms. With the heightening of the music's intensity, individual singers (even the elderly and infirmed) would stand spontaneously and begin to dance. This is a practice strongly rooted in African tradition, and is notably similar to the custom of the Santeria, an Yoruban-based religion still practiced in Cuba. This arrangement is a musical snapshot, really, an attempt to capture a memory of an amazing culture which has almost vanished as a result of real estate development on the islands.

We should note that the appearance of West African percussion with this music is not part of the *Gullah* tradition. Slave owners in colonial America forbade drumming and that tradition disappeared, at least on the surface. West African drumming rhythms were preserved nearly intact, however, in the clapping patterns that permeate *Gullah* song. Our arrangement incorporates djembe and ankle bells, instruments that were (and are) part and parcel of the musical traditions on the coast of West Africa, the ancestral home of the *Gullah* culture.

The ankle bell part should be performed on ankle bells from Africa, not factory-manufactured bells found in American music stores. The sound is quite different. Traditional ankle bells are cast by hand and attached to ropes. They are tied around the ankle of the djembe player, and played by lifting the foot and stomping the heel on the floor. Ankle bells are inexpensive (generally less than \$20) and can be obtained from the Different Strummer Music Store at the Old Town School of Folk Music in Chicago (773.751.3398) or from African Rhythm Traders ([www.africanrhythmtraders.com](http://www.africanrhythmtraders.com)).

*Paul Caldwell & Sean Ivory*

**Sean Ivory** and **Paul Caldwell** began arranging music together spontaneously in the early 1990s when they were both working with a community-based youth choir in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Their musical partnership was further cultivated from 1993-1997 during summers spent together at the American Boychoir School in Princeton, New Jersey. In 1998, Paul became the founding Artistic Director of the North American Choral Company and named Sean his Associate Conductor. They shared directorship of the company's touring choirs until Paul moved to Chicago in 2001.

Today, Sean is the Principal Conductor of the North American Choral Company. He is also the choral director at Forest Hills Central High School and has been on the conducting faculty of Calvin College. He lives in Grand Rapids with his wife, Leah, and their children, Emma, Samuel John, and Meredith. Paul is Artistic Director of the Jubilate Children's Choir on Chicago's North Shore. He is an avid student of African drumming, and still spends summers in Princeton where he is Music Director for Albemarle, the acclaimed summer program of the American Boychoir.