



# Why do the roses

A madrigal for four voices

Robert Lucas Pearsall  
(1795-1856)

**Robert Lucas Pearsall** (1795-1856) was born at Clifton Hill, Bristol, into a wealthy Quaker family. His father was an army officer and amateur musician. He was privately educated and practiced as a barrister in Bristol. In 1825, after suffering a stroke, he took his family to live abroad. He sold the family estate in Willsbridge and, in 1842, bought the *Schloss Wartensee*, a ruined medieval keep near Rorschach in Switzerland and spent several years restoring it. He remained there until his death. Pearsall was an amateur composer and many of his compositions were not published until after his death. He is best remembered for his part-songs and madrigals but also wrote orchestral works, anthems, services, musical treatises, and edited a Catholic hymnal. He kept in touch with his home city of Bristol and wrote many pieces for the Bristol Madrigal Society. He also composed poetry, some of which he used for his madrigals, such as 'Why Do the Roses' and 'Why should the cuckoo's tuneful note'. The particle *de* often spelled in his name is a feature added after his death by his daughter Philippa.

Why do the roses whisper to the wind, and toss their heads so high?  
O gentle zephyr, tell me what they said as you passed by.  
Say, do they look with envy at the bloom,  
On Flora's cheek that glows?  
O well they know it mantles there,  
Surpassing any rose.

R. L. Pearsall

# Why do the roses

R. L. Pearsall

Moderato  $\text{♩} = 72$

S

A

T

B

Why do the ro - ses whis - - - - -

why do the

Why do the ro - ses whis - - - - -

S

A

T

B

Why - - - - - do the ro - ses whis - - - - -

ro - ses whis - - - - - per to the

- - - - - per to the wind?

- per to the wind? Why do the ro - ses



# Why do the roses

11

S - - - - per to the wind? Why do the

A wind? Why do the ro - ses whis -

T Why do the ro - ses whis - - - -

B whis - - - - per to the

16

S ro - ses whis - per to the wind, and toss their heads

A - per to the wind, and toss their

T - - - per to the wind? O gen - tle

B wind? O gen - tle ze - phyr, tell me what they

21

S so high? O gen - tle ze - phyr, tell me, *cresc.*

A heads so high? O tell me, gen - tle ze - *cresc.*

T ze - phyr, tell me what they said! Gen - tle ze - phyr, tell me, *cresc.*

B said! O gen - tle ze - phyr, tell me, tell me what they *cresc.*

## Why do the roses

25

S tell me what they said \_\_\_\_\_ as you \_\_\_\_\_ pass'd by.

A - phyr, what, \_\_\_\_\_ what they said as you \_\_\_\_\_ pass'd by.

T tell me what they said \_\_\_\_\_ as you \_\_\_\_\_ pass'd by. Say, \_\_\_\_\_ *dim.*

B said, \_\_\_\_\_ tell me what they said as you pass'd by.

30

S \_\_\_\_\_ Say, do they look with en - vy at \_\_\_\_\_ *dim.*

A *dim.* Say, do they look with en - vy at the bloom, with en - \_\_\_\_\_

T \_\_\_\_\_ do they look \_\_\_\_\_ with en - - - - vy \_\_\_\_\_ at the

B \_\_\_\_\_ Say, do they

35

S \_\_\_\_\_ the bloom, the bloom \_\_\_\_\_ On Flo - ra's

A - - - - - vy at the bloom On Flo - - - - - ra's

T bloom, \_\_\_\_\_ the bloom On \_\_\_\_\_ Flo - ra's

B look with en - - - - - vy at the bloom On Flo - - - - - ra's

# Why do the roses

40

S  
cheek that glows? O well they know it man - tles

A  
cheek that glows? O well they know it man - tles

T  
cheek that glows? O well they know it man - tles

B  
cheek? O well they know it man - tles

45

S  
there, Sur - pass - - - - ing a - ny

A  
there, Sur - pass - - - - ing a - - - - ny

T  
there, Sur - pass - - - - ing a - ny

B  
there, Sur - pass - - - - ing a - ny

49

S  
rose, sur - pass - - - - ing a - ny rose.

A  
rose, sur - pass - ing a - - - - ny rose.

T  
rose, sur - pass - - - - ing a - ny rose.

B  
rose, sur - pass - ing a - ny rose.

#### TERMS OF USE

These editions are available as a service to the choral community, offering inexpensive access to public domain literature. Choir resources can purchase other literature still under copyright, especially to support those creating and publishing new compositions and arrangements. These editions have been created using public domain sources under U. S. copyright law. Out of respect to the research, time and effort invested:

please print and issue an edition in its entirety, retaining notices, attributions, and logos.

please do not consider this edition a source for creating another edition.

If performed, sending a copy of the concert program would be a valuable affirmation. If recorded, notification and attribution would be appropriate professional courtesies and a copy of the recording would be greatly appreciated!

For a full description of these requests and more scores, visit:

[www.shorchor.net](http://www.shorchor.net)

