

*A Renaissance Bouquet* (1994)

John Biggs

“There is such a wealth of material to draw from in the Renaissance. It was a period of such great diversity in form and musical personality. What I have done in this piece is to take ten pieces from the period, which I’ve personally performed, and weave them into a suite that attempts to show the scope of emotions and techniques prevalent among composers of the time.

To add a touch of history, I began with a composer born in 1400 and ended with one who died in 1625, which roughly represents the full period of the blossoming of the Renaissance in Europe. In order they are:

<i>Gloria</i> (from <i>Missa Ad Modum Tubae</i> )	Guillaume Dufay (1400-1474)
<i>Pavan</i> (Elizabethan dance)	Anonymous (c. 1600)
<i>Chairs to Mend</i> (round)	W. Hayes (dates unknown)
<i>Wounded Am I</i> (madrigal)	William Byrd (1543-1623)
<i>Watkin’s Ale</i> (instrumental solo)	Anonymous (c. 1600)
<i>Welsh Dance</i> (instrumental trio)	Anonymous (c. 1520)
<i>Non Nobis Domine</i> (sacred round)	William Byrd
<i>O Dulce E Triste Memoria</i> (part song)	Luis Milan (c. 1500)
<i>In Sherwood Lived Stout Robin Hood</i> (Elizabethan song)	Robert Jones (c. 1620)
<i>Preludium</i> (harpsichord solo)	Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)”

—John Biggs

The world premiere of *A Renaissance Bouquet* was on February 3, 1995 at the Cook-Dewitt Center, Grand Valley State University, Allendale, Michigan.

John Biggs (born 1932, Los Angeles, California) received his master’s degree in composition from the University of California at Los Angeles, doing further study at the University of Southern California and the Royal Flemish Conservatory in Antwerp, Belgium. His teachers include Roy Harris, Lukas Foss, Ingolf Dahl, Flor Peeters, Halsey Stevens, and Leonard Stein.

Biggs has amassed a catalog of works that includes fifty-two choral works, forty-two chamber works and twelve orchestral scores. He has won numerous awards and honors including a Rockefeller Grant, Fulbright Grant, Atwater-Kent Award, an ASCAP Serious Music Award every year since 1974, and a number of Meet the Composer grants from diverse parts of the United States.

Unlike many American composers, Biggs chooses to work independently from his home in Ventura, California. However, before devoting himself fulltime to composition, he taught at Los Angeles City College, the University of California, Los Angeles, and the University of California, Berkeley. He served as composer-in-residence to six colleges in Kansas under a grant from the Department of Health, Education & Welfare.

As a performer, he founded the John Biggs Consort, which toured internationally under Columbia Artists Management for twenty years, singing and playing music from the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and twentieth century.