Dr. James Kibbie invited me to deal with the topic of ‘innovation’ as related to organs and organists. There are any number of ways of approaching this, but I am not going in the direction of technical innovations, such as the multifaceted instrument at the Studio Acousticum in Piteå, Sweden, with its potentially limitless harmonic series, or even get into the possibilities of transposable couplers, adjustable wind supplies, and other gadgets that some adventuresome players and builders are exploring. Traditional organs, even simple ones, can provide plenty of creative stimuli, and a single rank of beautifully voiced pipes can conjure up pure magic.

Instead, I decided to wander through the history of the organ art, and celebrate the reality that, almost integral to the tradition itself, the energy of innovation has been ever with us…as organists have addressed their various roles in worship and entertainment and, perhaps initially just to stimulate themselves (and, inevitably, others, too), explored the fringes of possibility, raised the bar, expanded the envelope of experience.

Sometimes ‘innovation’ might mean nothing more than putting together a purposeful and persuasive all-Bach program (on the right instrument, in the right context, of course), or a multi-generational survey of the ricercar, the sonata, or the prelude-and-fugue. It might mean playing a symphony by Bruckner (transcribed) in conjunction with one by Widor, or adapting orchestral accompaniments to keyboard concerto by Mendelssohn or Poulenc to the organ, or teaming up with the praise band as a no-holds-barred ‘continuo’. Or it might mean just not playing the same-old-same-old…lovely as all the standard repertoire may be…and finding new and interesting things, or which there would seem to be an infinite resource to explore.

After all, the organist’s advantage is having more than 700 years of music ‘at our fingertips’…so get practicing, and be innovative!

**Playlist:**

**PEROTIN:** Organum, *Alleluia* – Catalina Vicens (playing the Pigeon Egg organ by Winold van der Putten)  
Consouling Sounds 370977 [https://www.catalinavicens.com/organiccreatures](https://www.catalinavicens.com/organiccreatures)

**ANONYMOUS:** *Redeuntes in idem* – Catalina Vicens (playing the Van Eyck by Hendrik van der Putten)  
Consouling Sounds 370977 [https://www.catalinavicens.com/organiccreatures](https://www.catalinavicens.com/organiccreatures)

**ANONYMOUS:** *Redeuntes in mi* – Lorenzo Ghielmi (1558 Ebert/okirche, Innsbruck, Austria)  

**PEROTIN:** Kyrie Concipotens, fr Faenza Codez – Kimberly Marshall (1985 Edskes-Blank/Predigerkirche, Basel, Switzerland)  

**GIOVANNI GABRIELI:** Intonation & Motet, *In ecclesiis* – Texas Boy Choir; Gregg Smith Singers/Vittorio Negri, conductor; E. Power Biggs (Rieger positive organ/St. Mark’s Cathedral, Venice, Italy)  

**JOHN GOSS:** Psalm 23 – Choir of King’s College/Stephen Cleobury, conductor; Donal McCann (1968 Harrison/ King’s College Chapel, Cambridge, England)  

**EDWARD ELGAR:** *Light out of darkness*, fr The Light of Life – Worcester Cathedral Chamber Choir/Stephen Shellard, conductor; George Castle (2008 Tickell/Worcester Cathedral, England)  
Regent 369 [https://www.regent-records.co.uk/product_details_226.htm](https://www.regent-records.co.uk/product_details_226.htm)
STUART NICHOLSON (arr.): *Ding, dong merrily on high* –Birmingham Cathedral Choir/Marcus Huxley, director; David Hardie (1993 Nicholson/Birmingham Cathedral, England) Regent 490
https://www.regent-records.co.uk/product_details_332.htm

GIROLAMO CAVAZZONI: *Plus me regres* –Jean-Claude Zehnder (1519 Bizarri/Chieso di Campagna, Ponte, Italy) Motette 13411
http://www.arkivmusic.com/classical/album.jsp?album_id=167086

PIERRE ATTAIGNANT (pub.): *Tordion* –Jean-Patrice Brosse (17th c, Anonymous/Saint-Lizier Cathedral, France) Arion 68229
https://www.amazon.com/premiers-chefs-d%C5%93uvre-lorgue-francais/dp/B004G6JLD6

IGOR STRAVINSKY: *Tanglo* (Aart Bertwerff (1922 Sauer/Orgelpark, Amsterdam, Holland) Organroxx 01

JOHANN STRAUSS Jr.: *Voices of Spring*, Op. 410 –Thomas Weisflog & Scott Kumer (1928 Kimball/St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Chicago, IL) Meridian 84372

JOHANN KUHNNAU: Biblical Sonata No. 1, *The Combat between David and Goliath* –Stefano Molardi (1714 Silbermann/Freiberg Cathedral, Germany) Brilliant Classics 95089
https://www.brilliantclassics.com/articles/k/kuhnau-complete-organ-music

OLIVIER MESSIAEN: *Combat de la mort et de la vie*, fr Les Corps Glorieux –Olivier Latry (Cavaillé-Coll/Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris, France) DG 471 480-2
http://www.arkivmusic.com/classical/album.jsp?album_id=57613

GYÖRGY LIGETI: *Volumina* –Zsigmond Szathmary (1992 Mathis/St. Martin’s Church, Olten, Switzerland) Sony 62307
http://www.arkivmusic.com/classical/album.jsp?album_id=2280102

GYÖRGY LIGETI: Hungarian Rock –Pierre Charial (barrel organ) Sony 62310
http://www.arkivmusic.com/classical/album.jsp?album_id=2280102

PHILIP GLASS: *Contrary Motion & Satyagraha* (Act III conclusion) –Donald Joyce 1986 Brombaugh/Collegedale Church, Collegedale, TN) Catalyst 61825
https://www.amazon.com/Glass-Organ-Works-Donald-Joyce/dp/B0013AWTS2


SCOTT JOPLIN: *Maple Leaf Rag* –Gunter Kennel (1957 Schuke-Berlin/Passionkirche, Berlin-Kreutzberg, Germany) ProCreatio 75951 (out of print)

ANDREAS BÖTTLCHER: *Blue Pipes I* –Andreas Böttcher (1956 Jehmlich/St. Hubertus Church, Dresden-Weisser Hirsch) Querstand 9701
https://www.amazon.com/Organ-Blue-Jazz-Improvisations-Pipe/dp/B00004TH01

BARBARA DENNERLEIN: *I-797* –Barbara Dennerlein (1962 Schuke-Berlin/Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, Berlin, Germany) Bebab 250974
https://www.amazon.com/Spiritual-Movement-No-2-Barbara-Dennerlein/dp/B001KWHQ7XQ


TRADITIONAL: *Kriste, la oss søke sammen* –Sigmund Groven, harmonica;’ Iver Kleive (2009 Kuhn/Uranienburg Church, Norway) 2L077 http://www.2l.no/pages/album/077.html
