

Dear Jim,

I just want to let you know how delighted I am with the Allen L4. The more I play it, the more I am enjoying the experience. I know that Allen pride themselves on the pipe organ sound their organs deliver, and they are absolutely justified in doing so. It is a truly authentic experience to play even on simple stops such as the 8ft Principal or Harmonic Flute and to let the soul of the music express itself. The build up of choruses of stops using the pistons delivers a series of majestic sounds that has surprised my family and friends: “sounds just like a pipe organ!”

I have not had regular access to a pipe organ for most of my life, so I have learnt quite a few classical pieces on the analogue organ I had for thirty years. Playing them now on the L4 has brought them to life in a way I never expected; and this has motivated me all over again to learn them well.

Allen obviously know that organists spend a fair bit of time at the console and want good quality components at their fingertips (and toes). Allen’s years of experience and commitment to high standards are reflected in everything the organist sees and touches in this instrument: the silky surface of the keys, the decisiveness of the touch of manual and pedals keys; the quality materials for stop tabs and pistons; real wood (!) for key cheeks and music stand frame, the list goes on.

I am surprised by the “presence” of every sound that comes from the organ. Even when “Virtual Acoustics” is turned off, the notes from every rank have a liveliness and roundness which are entirely musical; something I had not expected from an electronic instrument. This authentic presence is also a feature of the sounds heard when using headphones. I have to say I did not have high expectations of the headphones, but had ordered a headphone socket so I could still play the instrument at times when family members or neighbours would otherwise be disturbed. I have not been disappointed – the headphone socket is a great feature when used with a decent set of headphones. I would recommend it to anyone who is purchasing an organ for home use.

The four suites of organ sounds are a feature I still have to fully explore. My experience so far is that the suites each have quite a distinct tonal scheme. Most of my playing has been on the American Classic but when playing Cesar Franck the French Suite is a real winner. This suite is also good when playing Bach chorales requiring a solo voice in right or left hand.

Please extend my thanks to the Allen Company for building such a wonderful musical instrument.

Louis Wiersma