

Makin Organs

- *Makin Organs has a new showroom in the South of England but such is its confidence*
- *that it has chosen to be in the heart of the country rather than the High Street.*
- *The Editor talks to Jeremy Meager.*

The West Barn at Featherbed Court off the A421 near Buckingham is however an ideal venue to demonstrate a range of instruments. The size of a small Methodist Chapel, the converted barn has stout stone walls, fine supporting beams and a splendid acoustic.

I went there to meet Jeremy Meager, Makin's Southern Sales Manager, to talk about their recent installations and some of the new models they now have available, and was immediately impressed by the relaxed ambiance of the building which enables potential buyers to play and hear a range of organs available. They also have the option of hearing an instrument in their own churches as all are portable enough to enable on site demonstration. Jeremy agrees that he particularly enjoys this side of the work. 'I was a chorister at St. Albans Abbey and played the organ there under Stephen Darlington before moving to Southwark Cathedral where I continued as a student with Harry Bramma. Since continuing my studies at the RNCM in Manchester I have continued to play – but now only really at a Parish Church level rather than as a recitalist. However I feel this puts me in a very good position as I understand what church organists are looking for and what sort of decisions they are trying to make for their own churches. I am particularly concerned about sound sources in church and one the most important features of a Makin installation is the quality and placement of the speaker system. A good organ can be ruined by poor placement of its sound system.'

Westmorland series

Since coming to the Company Jeremy has introduced the new Westmorland series of instruments which have newly sampled voices.

'Though our earlier sampling had served us very well I felt we could improve upon it given more advanced technology and more demanding users. As we have always worked towards an English Cathedral sound we have recently sampled from Hill organs of the turn of the last century. This does not of course restrict us and we have also used samples from a range of English romantic organs to produce a balanced range of voices.

To this we need to add our approach to voicing. As every building differs acoustically it is necessary that every note on every stop can be regulated independently. On a pipe organ every pipe can be individually regulated to produce even regulation of tone for every note and every stop can be scaled to produce the correct relationship of volume throughout the compass. The technology which we have used has always made it possible for us to regulate organs in this way.

We consider this to be one of the most important considerations in the installation of pipeless organs.

In addition to the prime requirements of correct tonal finishing on site it is also important to be able to change the voicing of each individual stop should this be considered necessary. The tone and character of a stop can change completely in different acoustics and hence it is necessary to be able to change the voicing according to requirements of buildings. We now have a vast library of the sampled voices to choose from but in the unlikely event of a voice not being available from the library we are able to sample new voices as and when required from many of the fine pipe organs in the British Isles. This facility is also very useful should a customer want to choose their own preferences of voices to suit their own particular musical requirements and taste.'

Combination Organs

Given the growing interest in combination organs I wondered if Makin were branching out in this field? 'We have done some



Makin Organs- still setting the tone



20 stop tab

Outstanding quality coupled with the latest digital technology are at the heart of the new exciting Westmorland range of Makin organs.



41 stop drawstop

Unsurpassed realism means that many experts just cannot distinguish between a real pipe organ sound or our latest digital models.

The low 32' notes produce an amazing sensation thanks to new speaker developments which further enhance the tonal quality throughout the range.

In response to public demand we are proud to announce the development of a smaller 20 stop organ (see above) which has already created a huge amount of interest. This model has all the

attributes of our larger models in build quality and reproduction but brings the ownership of a Makin organ within the reach of smaller churches and private buyers.

So, whatever model you choose, you can be assured of our renowned service and quality. Don't invest in a digital church organ until you have heard the realism of the very latest Makin Organs.

For details about the new Westmorland range of Makin organs call
01706 888100



www.makinorgans.co.uk

JOHANNUS



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combination building in the Netherlands and there is certainly a great deal of interest in the field. Technically most of our work here has been in terms of additions to existing organs rather than straight combinations. I feel this is particularly useful as it helping many listeners and performers to realise that today there is no difference in sound between pipe and digital organs. Yes, they are separate and distinct creations but the digital organ can no longer be viewed – or heard – as the inferior partner. There is also the reality that far more digital organs are being sold to public buildings in this country than are pipe organs.

The other very practical point today is that

a digital organ can be upgraded at any stage in the future. Where it may have been true that many early electronic organs had a shorter shelf life and could not be repaired adequately, this is simply not the case today and a digital organ can be expanded or altered at the request of the owner. After all the most expensive part of the construction and installation is going to be the console and speaker systems. The technology for the sound system is – after that – indefinitely expandable. In fact one of the things that buyers most appreciate in our organs is the combination of exceptionally comfortable console layouts – either tab or draw stop –

in combination with the quality of sound.'

One of the best showcases for their instruments is their use in Cathedrals throughout the country when the pipe organs are being rebuilt. 'We certainly sell a number of instruments every time we put a Makin organ into a Cathedral. People are impressed by the sound – often those who least wish to be impressed!' And have they sold to any Cathedrals? 'Let us just say for the moment that there is a lot of interest and you will need to watch this space!'

Makin organs are currently on long-term hire in Peterborough Cathedral, Bridlington Priory and Sherborne Abbey, where they are in regular use for services and performan-

ces. The Company produces a very useful Digital Organ Buyers Guide which is available from them at Makin Organs Ltd, Sovereign House, 30 Manchester Road, Shaw, Oldham Lancs OL2 7DE 01706 888 100 www.makinorgans.co.uk

For information on Makin's hire service please contact Nicky at the head office in Shaw on 01706 888110.

The company was founded in 1970 by the late John Pilling, from remnants of the John Compton Organ Company of London and has been dedicated to research and development of sound generation for pipeless organs ever since. Makin provide a full range of organs, from instruments suitable for use in the smallest church or home, through to instruments with four manuals (or more) which would do justice to any cathedral.

Like their pipe organs Compton's designed their original electronic organs to incorporate the same facility of being able to adjust the volume of every note on every stop. Building acoustics produce the phenomena of resonating on individual notes and to counteract this it is necessary to be able to adjust one note independently of all the others.

In the early days Makin's reputation was built on the provision of mainly large custom built organs but over recent years the company has expanded its activities into the provision of an excellent range of standard organs built with the same high quality of craftsmanship and utilising the very latest digital technology techniques. Makin now proudly build a wide range of digital church organs to suit every environment and budget.

More recently Makin has jointed forces with Johannus, the Dutch Digital Organ firm who are based in Ede in the Netherlands inform@johannus.com

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