

expanded its increasingly popular EC2 line. Attack bulked up its line of Terry Bozzio signature heads with 2-ply versions for you heavy hitters. And we also spotted a couple of NAMM newbies. From south of the border came the Mexican company Coreelo and the Brazilian company Luen, both introducing a full range of coated and clear heads. Keep an eye out for product reviews in the future.

## ELECTRONICS

Kits and controllers are making a comeback. Pintech was showing a beautiful Pearl kit fitted with mesh heads and their trigger bridge mounted inside the shells.

We found two new kids on the electronic percussion block. R.E.T. Percussion's NS2 kit featured custom-stained Keller shells with real heads using their "Smartrigger" cymbals. At the complete other end of the hall, Alesis entered the fray with their DM5 kit. Dig this: kick, snare, two toms, hi-hat, two cymbals, hi-hat and bass drum pedals, and all cables running into their rock-solid DM5 drum brain at around \$500!

Roland introduced a modified V-Tour Series using their TD-6V module with all mesh pads. They also debuted the HPD-10 controller — a scaled-down version of their HPD-15 with ten pads, a new set of 400 sounds, and a substantially lower price.

Alternate percussion controllers were everywhere. The M-Audio Trigger Finger has only been around for a couple of months. But now it has new competition from Korg's pad-KONTROL. In addition to 16 trigger pads, the new unit has a KAOS-style XY pad for real-time control. It also comes with a drum-kit soft instrument from the dfh Superior library for immediate plug and play.

Along with kits and controllers, there was a good deal of buzz in new applications. Hart Dynamics had their D-Trig unit up and running. It may change the way you work with electronic drums. It's a drum trigger interface (hardware with software) that allows you to plug your electronic kit directly into your computer. If you already own an ASIO compliant audio interface, the software is all you need.

While the WFD contest was generating excitement, the folks at Onboard Research were having their own "World's Most Accurate Drummer" contest in conjunction with their Beatnik rhythmic analyzer. No matter what your skill level, it's fun, it's challenging, and it's battery operated!

Microphone companies seemed to have declared 2006 the year of the ribbon, but they haven't totally abandoned us drummers. Beyerdynamic's Opus 67, 87, and 88 models feature a redesigned integrated clip for use on toms and snares. You can buy them one at a time or in four different drum set packs. Earthworks had their "kickpad," a mike pad with a built-in EQ processor to give an "instant kick drum sound" from any microphone. Audio-Technica's new Midnight Blues series now comes in four- and six-mike sizes with mounts and carrying cases.

All in all, it was a great show for anyone involved in drums and technology. It's gonna be a great year! ■

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