



Come On Everybody, Let's Do The

NAMM

Shuffle

Five Days In Anaheim That Changed The Face Of The Drumming Industry

In the annual ritual of high decibels, heavy partying, and hardnosed commerce, the winter NAMM show ushered in another year's worth of new drum and percussion gear destined to grace your local drum shops in the upcoming months. For the uninitiated, the "NAMM" acronym stands for the "National Association Of Music Merchants," of which we at Enter Music Publishing are proud members, and as always, your crackerjack DRUM! staff was there, wading through the sea of music store owners and wanna-be rock stars to report on the latest crop of shiny new gear.

This wouldn't be a proper NAMM report if we didn't kick it off by mentioning trends that appeared to emerge. And there's no doubt that this year's finish trends can be summed up in two words: "stripes" and "cartoons." Like

daisies in the Spring, striped kits cropped up at GMS and Pork Pie (with nifty acrylic treatments), as well as Truth, ddrum, and Gretsch (all with beautiful sparkles). Meanwhile, Tama displayed John Dolmayan's custom kit festooned with illustrations by comic book artists, C&C and Orange County Drum & Percussion showed off finishes drawn by tattoo artists, and Chop Shop had a couple drums with disturbing paintings of scary-looking clowns. In the percussion sector, Remo and Pearl jumped on the portable conga craze inspired by the success of LP's popular Compact Conga; Gibraltar, Taye, and Tama all unveiled unusual bass pedal designs; and Zildjian, Meinl, and Paiste introduced cymbals made with jazz drummers in mind.

But there was more. Oh, so much more.

By DRUM! STAFF

14" limited-edition heads that is. A commemorative Coated Ambassador and a Vintage A will sport spiffy 50th anniversary logos. Also, the new Pow-erstroke X snare heads were designed with rock, funk, and R&B in mind, and are supposed to offer a perfect tonal balance between Remo's Coated and Emperor X heads. Remo is particularly pleased with its new Powersonic bass drum heads. It's a standard 2-ply with a 7mm inlay, but the kicker (pun clearly intended) is an external snap-on dampening system with unobtrusive snaps embedded in the lower part of the batter head.

Bashers were excited about **Evans'** new EC1 heads, which it claims are the first 14mm heads to retain tonal nuance without the dreaded deadening effect usually associated with ultra-thick heads. Go on, we dare you to break one. Um, on second thought. **Aquarian** also debuted its new Super-2 heads, with two plies that offer power, projection, and durability while retaining full tonal quality.

ELECTRONICS

Yamaha released a new kit called the DTXPRESS IV. It comes in two versions – the standard set and the special tricked-out model. Both feature a newly designed brain featuring sounds from its maple, birch, beech, and oak kits as well as the company's flagship MOTIF synth.

Alesis has two exciting releases planned for the very near future. The Control Pad is an eight-surface multipad with two trigger inputs (hat and kick), and two footswitch inputs that's USB powered and has plug-and-play connectivity to your computer. It even comes with a version of fxpansion's BFD Lite. Your new electronic kit could be this little unit and a laptop! If you're looking for an easy way to interface your electronic kit to your computer, check out Alesis' Trigger|io. It has ten trigger inputs, twenty presets, hi-hat input, and a USB output.

Hart Dynamics was showing its new electronic cymbal plates. They

feature bronze metal surfaces with a quiet attack, natural movement, great feel, and sensitive response. **Pintech** announced a new sophisticated, expandable drum brain that should be available in the summer of 2007.

Akai has released the MPD24. Essentially, the company pulled the pad section from their MPC2500, added a lot of new features, and created a machine to go up against the Trigger Finger and the PadKontrol.

If it's new sounds that you're looking for, this year's NAMM offered plenty of audio sustenance. **Sonic Reality** released *Ocean Way Drums*. It features 24-bit, 96K kits recorded at Ocean Way studios by Allen Sides and Steven Miller. They also showed the new *Studio ProFiles* collection of multitrack grooves by drummers such as John Blackwell, Jerry Marotta, Steve Gadd, and Bill Bruford to mention just a few.

The folks at **Toontrack** have three new expansion packs for their EZdrummer package: *Drumkit From Hell*, *Latin Percussion*, and *Vintage Rock*. The **fxpansion** library now includes percussion, jazz and funk, the deluxe collection, and the XFL expansion packages. The company announced that *BFD 2* is in the works and should be out this year.

In addition to its outstanding sample library, **Vienna Instruments** has moved into the virtual instrument world. The company will be offering their percussion library in this format for stand alone or plug-in performances. **Loopmasters** offers up a large library of sounds for a wide variety of formats. Its specialties include dance, soul, drum & bass, and urban styles.

M-Audio has released the MidAir wireless MIDI system. It includes a MIDI transmitter and receiver and is rated at 30 feet. How cool is that? **Zoom** has released a new H4 digital recorder to compete with the units from Edirol and M-Audio. You'll be able to read a head-to-head review of these three units in an upcoming issue.

And that – as they say – was the 2007 NAMM show, folks. ■



The Excel stick display



Hornets introduced some new stick colors



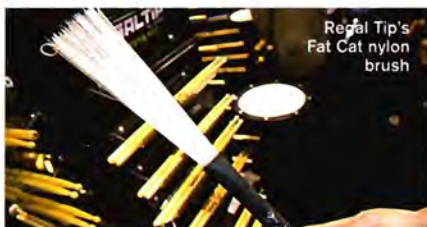
New mallets at Vic Firth



3 Drumsticks makes its first NAMM appearance



Loads of new Vater sticks



Regal Tip's Fat Cat nylon brush



Lots of color at Hot Sticks