**CK’s Drum Shop, LLC**

**A History of its origin and it’s owner: Chris “CK” Kent**

First, and foremost, it is important to understand that before details and facts are revealed about CK’s Drum Shop, LLC, the reader must have a basic background of the owner and founder of CK’s Drum Shop, LLC: Christopher Joseph Kent. “Chris”, or “CK” (the name given to him by his close friends and colleagues while attending Western Connecticut State University), was born in New London, Connecticut and raised in the small town of Quaker Hill, Connecticut. When he was old enough to sit up by himself, “Santa” brought him his first toy drum! From that point on, Chris would continue to play not only drums but other percussion instruments as well. Chris’ parents, Walter and Judith, supported Chris’ interest in the drums early on by having him take private lessons. Chris’ first private teacher was his cousin, Bob Hume while he was attending 2nd Grade. Throughout his Elementary, Junior High, and High School years, he was in the Concert, Marching, and Jazz Bands. In addition, to these musical ensembles, he also participated in other musical ensembles outside of school. As the years progressed, Chris continued taking private lessons with Salvatore Lentine and in High School he began studying with Ernest Centoscudi.

A major turning point in Chris’ life came when Mr. Centoscudi asked him if he wanted music to be his profession. Mr. C then began preparing Chris for his music auditions into Colleges. Chris was excepted to the prestigious Berklee College of Music, but declined after visiting the school and learning about the various programs. Upon a recommendation from a close friend, Chris applied to Western Connecticut State University where he majored in Music Performance with an emphasis on classical percussion. At Western, Chris studied percussion with Professor David Smith, who at the time was principal percussionist of The New Haven Symphony Orchestra. While studying with Dave, CK’s progress grew quickly and through Dave’s positive teaching, Chris fulfilled his desire to learn many percussion instruments. At this time, CK began repairing some of the school’s instruments, and his work and attention to detail, did not go unnoticed by his teacher. Dave, then gave a positive recommendation to a friend who was working part time for a music store repairing percussion instruments. CK enthusiastically accepted the job offer and began to perform various repairs “on site” or at the Music Store on Friday afternoons or Saturday mornings while attending school.

Chris graduated “WestConn” in 1996 “Cum Laude”, with a Bachelor of Music degree in percussion performance. After graduation, Chris began his private teaching practice teaching at several local music stores in addition to a music school. Furthermore, he was also hired to teach two High School Marching Band percussion ensembles. In addition to his teaching, Chris began performing with the **Nathan Bayreuther Jazz Combo** and **Avalon Express**, a diversified “dance band” that performed at many weddings and private functions. He also began “freelancing” in Musicals, Parades, Concert Bands, church performances, and even performed with **The Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra.** CK’s diversity as a musician has provided him the opportunities to perform at the following musical venues: In CT: **Foxwoods Resort & Casino, Mohegan Sun Casino, The Garde Theatre;** In Nashville, TN: **The Stage on Broadway, 3rd & Lindsley,** and **The French Quarter**.

**Part 2 (CK’s Drum Shop, LLC is founded)**

After living in Nashville, TN for a year and a half, Chris decided to move back to Connecticut to be closer to his large family and to take advantage of already being established in the music scene. By the late 2000’s, the economy had changed drastically due to the global recession. Chris decided that he needed to make some immediate business changes. CK learned of an available space for rent in Uncasville, CT at a reasonable monthly rate. After consulting with his parents and his close friend Judy Sweeney, Chris made the decision to open up a business that would focus on all aspects of the percussion industry including Retail Sales, Consignment Sales, Private Lessons, Instrument Repair, Instrument Restoration, and Instrument Rentals. Attending an African Djembe clinic, CK’s friend Judy expressed an interest to have a weekly evening Djembe drum circle group class, which Chris immediately supported.

Chris knew that choosing a name for the business would be vital to its existence. Even though the business would include all aspects of percussion, the reality was that the majority of the public really didn’t completely understand the term “percussion”. To keep things simple and “catchy”, Chris decided to name the business after the nickname that was given to him by his close friends in college: “CK”. Chris’ CPA at the time was his Aunt Val, and she assisted him with the various legal forms for the Articles of Organization and to be registered as a Limited Liability Company (LLC). Since CK’s friend Judy was a former “draftsman”, she drew up a floor plan for his new Drum Shop. Together they determined the entire layout of the Drum Shop: Retail Area, Waiting Room Area, Repair Area, Lesson Studio Area, etc. Dan Rockwell, who was one of Chris’ private students at the time, was a wiz at computers. CK wisely ask him to assist in designing and creating the official website for CK’s Drum Shop.

CK’s Drum Shop, LLC officially opened on June 1st of 2012. Chris hired Bobby Kuhl, an acoustic specialist, to provide insight on how to treat the lesson studio space. Bobby recommended flame retardant sound panels to “absorb” the low frequencies of the instruments. New signs were created by Brian Bachand of Brian’s Signs to advertise the new business. CK began to contact various music companies and product distributors to begin to build the product inventory for the Retail Store.

CK’s Drum Shop celebrated it’s 5th year anniversary on June 1st of 2017. What makes CK’s Drum Shop so unique, is that it is the only business in Southeastern Connecticut specifically dedicated to Drums & Percussion instruments. CK’s clients include many Public Schools, **Connecticut College**, **Foxwoods Resort & Casino**, and **The Side Door** jazz club. CK’s Drum Shop, LLC is an Authorized Dealer for the following brands: **Drum Workshop** Hardware & Pedals, **Gauger Percussion** products, **Humes & Berg** cases, **Pacific Drums & Percussion,** **Randall May** products, **Roc-N-Soc** drum thrones, and **Sabian** Cymbals. CK is extremely passionate about music and percussion and his enthusiasm is reflected in all the various aspects of percussion: musical performance, private teaching, instrument repairs & restoration, and retail sales. Even though Chris is extremely knowledgable in his field, he is constantly improving as a musician and constantly learning and evolving in a profession that he is truly fond of.