

Christopher Brown, born March 22nd, 1977 in Portland, OR, was formally introduced to music at age five with piano lessons. By age eleven, he not only added both the saxophone and drums to his musical pallet, but also came to the conclusion that music was how he had planned to make a living in the future. Therefore, armed with a new focus, his hard work resulted in him having garnered numerous local, state, regional, and national awards before graduating from high school. In fact, the first of his three most noteworthy accomplishments during this period began with the recruitment of a bassist and a saxophonist one fall afternoon for the purposes of creating a quick recording to submit to Down Beat Magazine. The recording was later mentioned in Down Beat the following spring as being the top high school small group for 1995. The second accomplishment came when he was afforded the opportunity to perform with Wynton Marsalis at the Alladin Theater in Portland, Oregon. And lastly, he was cast as an extra in the 1993 movie “Mr. Holland’s Opus,” starring Richard Dreyfuss.

After his completion from high school, Christopher enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps as a drummer for four years, which is also during the time that he began to really strengthen his professional networking base, beginning with his association with Ellis and Jason Marsalis while stationed in New Orleans. But after one short year in New Orleans, the Corps sent him to Parris Island, SC where at the recommendation of Ellis he began working periodically with the bassist Delbert Felix, formerly of the Branford Marsalis Quartet. And from that association he caught the attention of the legendary jazz bassist Ben Tucker, with whom he worked on and off with for three years. And finally, right before his discharge from active duty, he was afforded the opportunity to perform with Jazz legends Buddy DeFranco and Terry Gibbs at the Jazz Corner in Hilton Head, SC.

Upon Christopher’s release from active duty in 1999, he moved up north where he would eventually settle in New Brunswick, NJ for the following 13 years. And it would be during this phase of his life where he would not only re-enlist into the military—this time as the principle saxophonist in the NJ Army National Guard—but also receive both his undergraduate and graduate degrees in Jazz Studies/Performance from Rutgers University in 2004 and 2006 respectively. Also, in addition to being selected in 2002 to represent the U.S. in a Rutgers sponsored trip to perform in Fukui, Japan, he also received the Pee Wee Russell scholarship from the NJ Jazz Society in the same year. And following that, he was selected twice as the drummer for the intercollegiate all-star big band’s performance at the NJ Music Educators Association annual convention (2003/2005). And lastly, his recording with Rutgers’ Scarlet Knight Jazz Bones (led by Conrad Herwig), helped them take home the 2011 International Trombone Association’s “Kai Winding Jazz Trombone Ensemble Competition.”

In addition to his main passion as a drummer, he has also kept up his proficiency on the alto saxophone over the years, which consequently resulted in him having performed live with the great Ralph Peterson Jr. Quintet (2002) on channel six in NJ for one of their segments called

“New Jersey Talking,” as well as having headlined as a saxophonist for both the 2007 PDX Jazz Festival (OR) and the 2010 Cathedral Park Jazz Festival (OR).

Altogether, since Christopher’s enlistment in the Marines, and subsequent move to the North East, he has had the pleasure of performing and or recording with many of the world’s top recording artists, such as: Beyonce, Esperanza Spaulding, Liv Warfield, Branford Marsalis, Wynton Marsalis, Delfeayo Marsalis, Roy Hargrove, Ray Charles, Jimmy Heath, Ralph Bowen, Ralph Peterson Jr., Conrad Herwig, Steve Turre, Paquito D’Rivera, Claudio Roditi, Charles Fambrough, Benny Golson, Bobby Watson, Craig Handy, Orrin Evans, Terry Gibbs, Buddy DeFranco, Vincent Herring, Javon Jackson, Stanley Cowell, Wess Anderson, Antonio Hart, Paul Bollenback, David Sanborn, Geoff Keezer, Onaje Allen Gumbs, James Genus, Don Alias, Don Braden, Victor Goines, John Benitez, Anthony Wonsey, Jim Rotondi, Valerie Ponomarev, Delbert Felix, Ben Tucker, Virgil Jones, Vic Juris, Boris Koslov, John Stubblefield, Darren Barrett, Jon Gordon, Roseanna Vitro, Lonnie Plaxico, John Cowherd, Kenny Davis, Carla Cook, David Leibman, Ronnie Mathews, Sean Jones, Arturo O’Farrill, Randy Brecker, and more.

Aside from Christopher’s first big musical break coming in the form of a month long European tour with Roy Hargrove’s Quintet in the summer of 2006, his most recent accomplishments have come in the form of having been offered both an adjunct Professor of Jazz Theory (Fall 2007) and History (2009-2011) position at Rutgers University, as well as being presented with the 2007 Artist of the Year award (following Esperanza Spaulding) through Portland State University’s Leroy Vinnegar Jazz Institute. Also, during the same year, Christopher was cast in the big budget film American Gangster, starring Denzel Washington and Russell Crowe. And lastly, Christopher has shown some further interest in the area of modeling/acting, with commercials such as Master Card, and TV shows such as the History Channel and the Maury Povich show.

Christopher currently lives back in Portland, OR where he not only continues to perform as well as teach privately, but is also a saxophonist and drummer with the 234th Army Band.