



## Biographical Information:

Thomas Frank was born in 1963 on Chicago's North shore. At the age of three his parents moved the family from Chicago's bucktown neighborhood to the outer-ring suburb of Wheeling Illinois. He grew up identifying with both the working class and leadership cultures of Chicago history. His maternal ancestor was Roswell B. Mason, a well-known civil engineer of his time, who was especially known for serving as Mayor of Chicago during the Chicago Fire of 1871.

He graduated from the University of Kansas in 1987 with a BFA in Painting, a minor in Philosophy with a concentration in Languages (French and Russian). While at the University of Kansas he received several scholarships including an undergraduate research grant. Before going on the Graduate School he studied aboard in Paris at the Sorbonne. The most notable impressions he took away from this experience were the national elections (between Mitterrand, Chirac, and LePen), and his experience of the various built environments throughout Europe (including the development of nouvelle villes around Paris, the Eastern Europe regions before the collapse of the East Block nations and the marginal Christian/Muslim regions). He then attended Indiana University on scholarship and Graduated with an MFA in Painting in 1993.

After completing his MFA in the early 1990's the increased capacities of the computer and the opening of the internet provided the conditions for a major shift in the visual culture. This was a shift he wanted to participate in and contribute. He began in publishing Medical textbooks, which led him to pioneering the development of online learning communities in the medical field. He became especially fascinated in orienting one's local visual cues to a much larger and complex structure of knowledge and space. It was during this work that he became interested in geographical frameworks in the production of space.

Recently, he settled in the old industrial city of East Chicago, which shares in Chicago's Calumet industrial heritage on the southern shores of Lake Michigan. In the last several years, he has worked to address the concerns of this older industrial community, and pursuing a Masters Degree in Urban Planning at University of Illinois Chicago. He served as President of the East Chicago Redevelopment Commission. Participated in regional planning initiatives. Initiated a comprehensive plan for the City of East Chicago, and served as Director of the East Chicago Waterway Management District with the responsibilities to envision a waterway that meets the demographic and economic needs of the coming decades.

Throughout his career Thomas has been committed to producing new ways of seeing that contribute to how we produce identities in space. This commitment has taken him into other disciplines that contribute to his body of work.