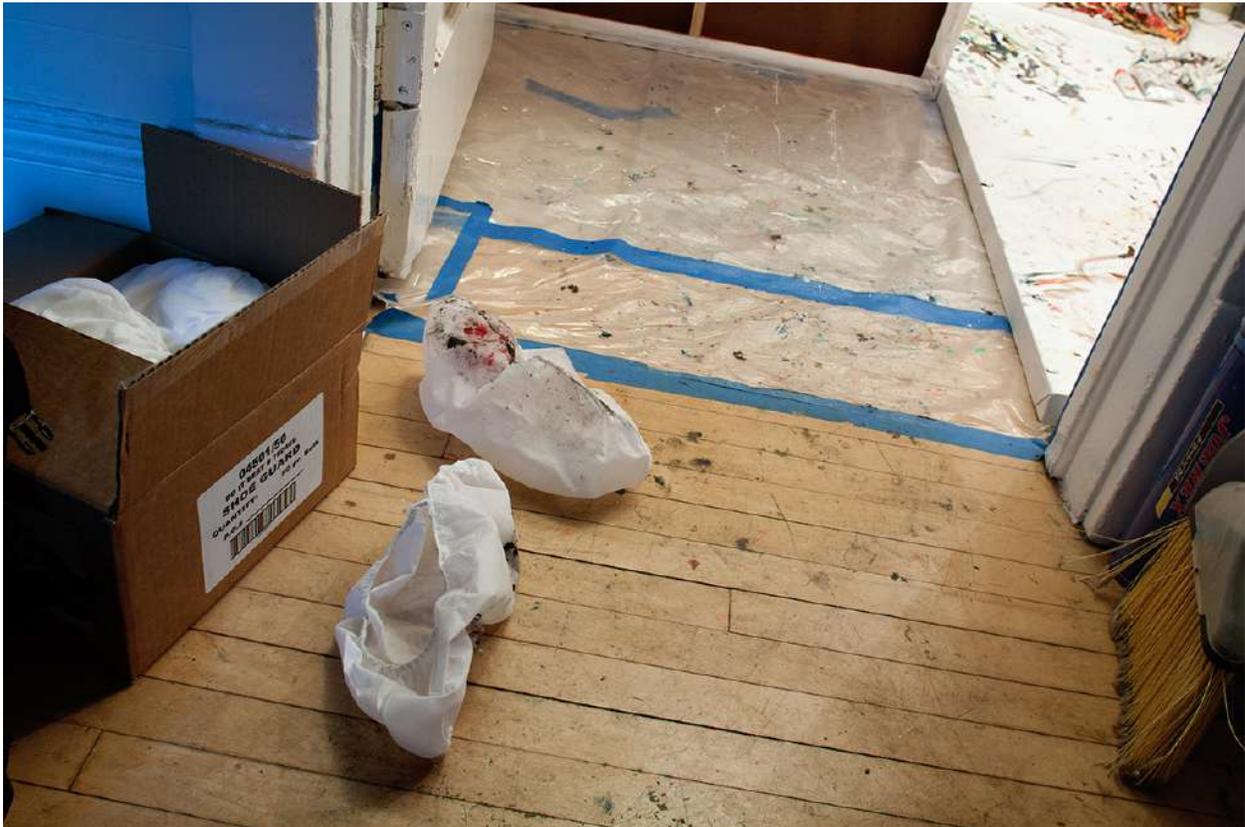


THE GOLDMINER PROJECT

NICHOLAS FRANK



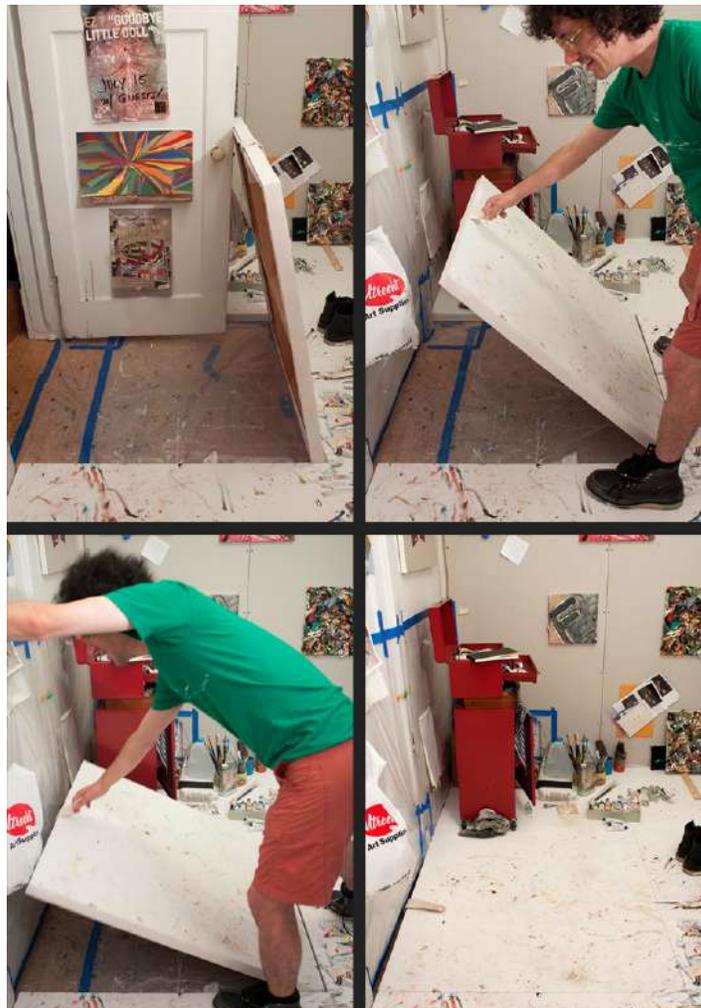
I made a trip north during my artist residency at Threewalls in Chicago to meet with Nicolas Frank at his home in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Near his kitchen was a pantry-sized room dedicated to his painting practice. He handed me a pair of shoe covers, I slipped them on, and we stepped inside the workspace that had been 'floor-tiled' with a grid of white masonite painting panels. Frank latched the studio door behind us and lowered a floor plank by a handle he had stapled to its edge. Like a trap door, the canvas sandwiched snugly into place, securing us inside what felt to be a secret hideaway.

Frank explained to me that the floor we were standing on was a multi-paneled painting he would be exhibiting later that year. Our footsteps were contributing to the composition by

smudging the oil paint that Frank had unintentionally dripped on the floor while making other artworks. The floor was a recording of the studio's activity. (pictured at right)

Frank details his primary activities as: "art making, including visual art, stage-, recording-, radio- and television-based performance and writing; and multi-disciplinary art exhibition coordination, including facilitation of dialogue through symposia, lectures and publications." He also critiques and lectures about art. His past includes co-founding the Milwaukee International—an art fair that was hosted in a bowling alley—and the Dark Fair (dark as in no light) in New York and Cologne. At the time of our visit, Frank was the chief curator at the Institute of Visual Arts (INOVA) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Currently, he runs **The Open**—a multi-program platform which includes his exhibition project **Nicholas Frank Public Library** in Milwaukee.

Frank's art often focuses on the mythology of artists' lives. Shortly after our visit, he exhibited the painting we were standing on, Bio 1 (2007-09/2011-12) alongside yellowed pages from a biography of the (fictional) artist, Nicholas Frank, written by an unknown author. With aggrandizing language borrowed from historical texts on artists, a caption for two



black-and-white photos blurred beyond comprehension reads: "The only known images to exist of the second Demono performance (Second Milwaukee International, 2008) are video recordings from the cellphone of Ernesto Oroza, a participating artist."

Toward the end of the visit, Frank showed me a stack of terrycloth rags loaded with paint (pictured below)—a precursor to what would eventually become his grid-of-squares work Bio (Rags) (2007-12)

[View Frank's work](#)

