

# PRESERVATION FORWARD



2024 LANDMARKS ILLINOIS INFLUENCER

## SHERMANN "DILLA" THOMAS

*Chicago Historian & Co-Founder, Chicago Mahogany Foundation*

Chicago historian Dilla, as he is affectionately called, is a fascinating blend of modern historian, cultural worker, and public employee. Dilla has become a Chicago social media sensation by going viral on Tiktok. His 60-second history videos on everything Chicago have been viewed over 8 million times, and he has amassed a following of 150K followers across all platforms. Dilla has been featured on all manner of Chicago media and has also appeared nationally on both The Today Show and The Kelly Clarkson Show. Dilla is a proud lifelong resident of Chicago's South Side, and he lives by the saying that, "Everything dope about America comes Chicago."

### *Changing Perspective*

Realizing that tourism changes spaces, Dilla co-founded Chicago Mahogany Foundation (CMF) in January of 2022. CMF is dedicated to the preservation and dissemination of the rich history and culture of the city of Chicago. We aim to highlight Chicago's people, architecture, and impact on the world. Dilla believes that once a person knows the history of a space, they become compelled to respect that space. And respect changes perspectives.



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