

The relationship between White, Brown and Black people in the United States has reached a critical mass. The ivory tower is collapsing and with it, our white brethren are trying to stay afloat with the rest of us. They sink with us or swim with us. Our deeper cultural barriers and our destinies as people more tethered than ever before in history. The hand of the oppressor and the hand of the oppressed grasping at air. Reaching for help that will never come. Forced to empathize because they now find themselves in the same boat. Exposed, vulnerable, targeted by predators. Weathering the storm is no longer an option.

The work was inspired by the philosophical views of Alain Leroy Locke.



Originally, from Chicago, Michael Coppage (Prosper Jones) has lived and worked in Cincinnati since 2007. Coppage has recently been featured in print and online after participating in the city of Cincinnati's *Black Lives Matter* mural and for receiving hate mail for a controversial and provocative series entitled "American +" where he depicts white Americans as monkeys. His work addresses social norms rooted in bias and aims to bring subconscious bias to the forefront. He had a recent micro-residency at the Cincinnati Contemporary Art Center entitled "*BLACK BOX*": a community impact project aimed at demystifying black men and creating authentic experiences that replaced bias and preconceived notions related to the term "Black."

Coppage earned a B.F.A in Sculpture from Memphis College of Art and an M.F.A in Studio Art from The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

Primarily a mixed media artist, Coppage has spent a number of years painting. He utilizes an impasto technique called optical color mixing that does not require blending paint and instead focuses on "sculpting" color. He has traveled around the world extensively and has work in a number of private collections. In addition to his more personal works, Coppage has co-created a 501(c) 3 called PIECES where he works with adolescent psychiatric patients, high school students and adults who work with children to create large-scale portraits. To date over 400 images have been completed and exhibited around the country.

IG: @prosper_jones_