

KATE WERBLE GALLERY

83 VANDAM STREET NEW YORK, NY 10013

LUI SHTINI

FACE PAINTINGS

NOVEMBER 16, 2013 – JANUARY 4, 2014

OPENING NOVEMBER 16TH FROM 6-8 PM

Lui Shtini's first solo exhibition at Kate Werble Gallery, *Face Paintings*, comprises a series of paintings that work together to form an army of indecipherable, hybrid personalities. The portraits read as an index of figures that come from an internal scene.

Shtini's childhood was spent in Albania during the 1980's where he was exposed to the different influences of the upheaval of the political, social landscape in his country and an indirect art-book exposure to conventional Western art. His technique of close observation developed from processing the first-hand experience of a politically unstable country and his more detached introduction to the history of painting.

In previous works, Shtini placed familiar and realistic imagery in uncanny combinations, in both large-scale paintings and a series of detailed graphite drawings. He worked for 3 years on the paintings in this exhibition, developing a loose style of portraiture that is reminiscent of a conventional portrait format in terms of size and composition. While the paintings appear to be freely rendered, in reality they are comprised of layers of under painting and minute brushstrokes, forming a highly finished surface.

Shtini's visages in *Face Paintings* reflect the properties and texture of the paint. Though each painting comes across as a distinct persona, his subjects refuse to completely materialize and, in doing so, the works themselves deny an equation of knowledge with total visibility.

Lui Shtini was born in Kavaje, Albania in 1978 and moved to the United States in 2000. He received his BFA from the Academy of Arts in Tirana, Albania 1996-2000. Shtini attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2007, and was the recipient of a 2010 NYFA Painting Fellowship. Previous to his solo exhibition at Kate Werble Gallery, he held two solo exhibitions at Van de Weghe Fine Art, New York, NY, (2009, 2013).

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