

# KATE WERBLE GALLERY

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## THE HUFFINGTON POST

**Steven Zevitas**

**14 Artists (+2) to Watch in 2014**

**December 19, 2013**

Artists kept making paintings in 2013, and they did so in ever more inventive ways. If any single word can sum up the overriding concern of many younger artists over the past few years it is *process*. As of late, many painters have defined themselves not so much with a specific image or style, but with the way in which they go about “producing” their work. Fire extinguishers, bleach, the sun, printing technologies and even spaghetti have all been employed in the quest for aesthetic advancement. For these artists, the way in which an artwork is made becomes deeply embedded in the meaning of their work. The results of such technical explorations can occasionally come off as gimmicky, but, when successful, they can lead to extraordinary art and new ways of thinking about the medium of paint.

What does painting hold for 2014? If a quick survey of upcoming museum shows, including the 2014 Whitney Biennial is any indication, it will be more widely exhibited and talked about than ever, and mature artists such as Dona Nelson (a 2012 Painters to Watch pick) and Suzanne McClelland will, more and more, have their long overdue day. I will also go out on a limb and say that, after several years where abstraction has been the dominant language of painting, representational work will start to mount a comeback. Among the hundreds of artists I consider each year while publishing *New American Paintings*, I have noticed a considerable uptick in the number of young painters working with recognizable imagery, some in, dare I say it, almost traditional modes. (And yes, I am aware that representational painting never left, but the institutions that make up the so-called art world have been preoccupied with other things in recent years.)

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**Lui Shtini:**

How can you forget a name like Lui Shtini? Somehow the name had slipped my mind after seeing his work several years ago at the tony uptown Van de Weghe gallery. Maybe it was the context, after all, said gallery’s programming is really dedicated to blue chip artists, and I am rarely there. What I remember from that show are quirky and extraordinarily well executed paintings. In late November I walked in to Kate Werble’s downtown New York space and there was that name again. The work on view still demonstrated a high level of technical facility, but technique had yielded primacy to raw immediacy. Shtini’s “portraits” having nothing to do with verisimilitude and everything to do with an artist expanding the potential of his medium, while somehow injecting new life into the well trodden space of portraiture.

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