

KATE WERBLE GALLERY

83 VANDAM STREET NEW YORK, NY 10013

LUI SHTINI
JINN SKIN
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PRESS RELEASE

Lui Shtini's new exhibition, "Jinn Skin", stems from his search to give a visible, painted form to the intangible. The 12 paintings that comprise this new body of work evolved out of Shtini's close examination of varying compositional elements within a recognizable portrait format and specific set of constraints.

Shtini's works began to shift with his first exhibition of "Face Paintings", exhibited at this gallery in 2013. His paintings began to focus on a group of core elements that departed from recognizable characters. They became pared down elemental shapes, stripped to the most essential elements, a bare nucleus.

This new body of work, "Jinn Skin", revisits revealing certain distinguishing characteristics, while at the same time depicting the essential elements of an imagined entity. Based on Arabic mythology, *Jinn* are supernatural creatures that exist within a parallel universe, unable to be seen, but with the power to inflict good or bad emotions in the physical world. In order to make themselves visible, they take many different forms. Shtini sees an analogy with the paintings in this exhibition, as they become physical manifestations of his *Jinns*. The paintings act as the Jinn's skin, evoking the inner workings, emotions, thoughts, and perceptions of an unseen world. They override the boundaries of one *thing* into another, an investigation of dissecting elements that make up something that continues to be defined as "the other".

This is Shtini's second solo exhibition at Kate Werble Gallery, and his fourth solo exhibition in New York City.

Lui Shtini (b. 1978 Kavaje, Albania) attended the Academy of Arts in Tirana, Albania from 1997 to 2000 and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2007. Shtini has held solo exhibitions at Kate Werble Gallery, NY (2016, 2013), Cherry and Martin, Los Angeles, CA (2015), Corbett vs. Dempsey, Chicago, IL (2014), and Van de Weghe Fine Art, New York, NY (2013, 2009). His work has been exhibited at venues including Silberkuppe, Berlin, DE; Bureau, New York, NY; Jack Hanley Gallery, New York, NY; and Mason Gross Galleries, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. He was granted a NYFA Painting Fellowship in 2010, was a 2014-2015 recipient of the Marie Walsh Sharpe Art Foundation Space Program. He currently lives in Queens, NY and works in Brooklyn, NY.