

THE NEW YORKER

Ella Kruglyanskaya
Through Feb. 24.
Brown
439 W. 127th St.
Uptown
212-627-5258

The crackerjack Latvian painter, now based in L.A., favors bawdy figuration, and she has some trompe-l'oeil tricks up her sleeve, as when sheets of paper seem to peel off the bright surfaces of her pictures. Folkloric wooden dolls are painted with an eye on realism, while more ostensibly lifelike figures—aggressively voluptuous women—are speedily sketched with expressive lines. At times, Kruglyanskaya combines both approaches with startling results: "Ghost Rider" shows a loosely rendered equestrienne, ponytail flying, extending an arm off the flaming red rectangle that contains her horse—a carved toy. Elsewhere, Kruglyanskaya makes winking reference to both the male-dominated history of painting and the undeniably sensual properties of paint. In "Painter, Discontented," as an artist strikes an exaggerated pinup pose, the spattered mess of her clingy slip echoes the gestural canvas behind her.