

## “Sputterances”

at Metro Pictures,  
through Apr. 22  
519 West 24th Street

Often, a group show organized by an artist simply offers insight into the tastes and influences of its curator. “Sputterances,” with works selected by Sanya Kantarovsky, feels like something more. Certainly, the caricaturist’s line, fanciful subject matter, and layered, colliding pools of color found in Kantarovsky’s painting have several analogues in “Sputterances.” The show opens with an untitled Charlene von Heyl canvas from 1992 in which she played with various painterly modes: blushing green apples with Cézanne-like black outlines tumble in a pile above furry bulbs, as a brown lumpy figure stretches toward them. Jacob Lawrence’s angular *Christmas in Harlem* (1937), with lanky black crosses leaning in a murky sky, and Milton Avery’s *Mother’s Boy* (1944), which joins two faceless figures in uncanny intimacy, feel united in their solid planes of color and dreamlike domestic scenes. René Daniëls is the muse of “Sputterances”; a brain aneurysm effectively ended the Dutch painter’s career in 1987, but Kantarovsky has included a slight, black-and-white painting of two planets from 2006. The sum of these works is not just an exegesis on a painter’s personal world, but the beginnings of an alternative history of twentieth-century art—one where questions of abstraction and figuration, or substrate and image, are subsumed into ones of polystylism, color, and imagination. —*Brian Droitcour*