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## art

### → Polish Museum of America

**ISZCHAN NAZARIAN.** The paintings of this Iranian-born, Armenian- and Polish-trained artist are perhaps some of the most disturbing I've seen in quite a while. They immediately come across as lyric narratives relying on a structure of mythological and landscape-based archetypes, expressing individual moments of realization and creation. On the surface, this is merely the banality of a painter talking about painting. But Nazarian's work is certainly a step above—in part because of his ability to incorporate a massive range of pictorial types within a common space (from flat cartoons to understated surrealism to German-influenced expressionism); in part due to the directness and immediacy of his brush and belied sophistication of color. Nazarian has an uncanny ability to reference an astonishing array of painterly conventions, all within the same breath and without any one feeling derivative. The narratives themselves, despite their desire to communicate an experience, ultimately become mute within these swirling masses of paint. Instead, Nazarian communicates directly through his brush, through the viscera of the painting, eschewing almost all verbal language. In the attempt to decode each narrative (usually a figure or figures within a loosely formed landscape), our constant tripping over the masses of color and brushstroke is the experience that Nazarian is really communicating, and in a way so powerfully direct that its obtuse lushness has an odd clarity that no narrative could possibly achieve. (Nathan

**Matteson**) 984 N. Milwaukee, (773)384-3352. Through March 30.

## art (cont.)

5 SHOWS  
TO SEE NOW

1

### LEE FRIEDLANDER

*Carol Ehlers Gallery*

*Stunning portraits of all that jazz.*

2

### ISZCHAN NAZARIAN

*Polish Museum of America*

*Whole new, civil definition of the phrase "disturbing images."*

3

### THE EVER SO SECRET ORDER OF THE LAMPREY

*Hyde Park Art Center*

*The arts collective bares the junk in its trunk.*

4

### HELEN BAKER ALDER, KNIGHTON HOSKING AND GORDON SENIOR

*I Space*

*"Strands" of life that pull you outside the gallery.*

5

### DIANA DE SOLARES AND JUAN PAPARELLA

*Schneider Gallery*

*Never mind grunge—existential angst has found a new home in Latin America.*