

## **CHEESE + CRACKERS, GIN + TONIC, AND NOW: ART + VISION**

Spex (formerly *Eyeland of St. Johns*) presents ART+VISION with paintings by Mark Joyal

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 12, 2008 - Hinsdale, IL - Spex (formerly called Eyeland of St. Johns), a destination for luxury eyewear and sunwear, holds ART+VISION, an art event showcasing paintings by Mark Joyal. The reception takes place on Wednesday, September 24 from 5-8 pm, at 18 W. First St., Hinsdale, IL 60521; 630-323-1100; spexchicago.com. The show will run through October 29, 2008. A trunk show by Parisian Eyewear line Lafont will also take place, featuring their entire 2008 collection of eyewear and sunglasses. Drinks and hors d'oeuvres will be served.

This event also marks the complete re-branding of Eyeland of St. Johns to Spex. The summer-long transition - primarily a name change - culminates in this six-week micro-exhibition series with painter Mark Joyal. The event is sponsored by Chicago Magazine and Lafont eyewear.

Through ART+VISION, Spex seeks to provide local talent a diverse and receptive audience within the context of a unique retail environment. Spex has always believed in the importance of encouraging the talent that drives all creative endeavors. These well-attended shows are largely due to local creatives who are given a platform for exposure and community connection. Store manager Sherry Lasken says, "As we launch and announce our name change to Spex, this is the perfect opportunity to reach out to the local community, and let them know we're still here. We also want to start things off right by proving how committed we are to the creative spirit in our community, which inspires everything from the visual arts to eyewear design! Mark's paintings are vibrant, distinct, and will be a beautiful addition to our store – I wish we could keep them on display indefinitely!"



By day, Mark Joyal is a creative director at SPM Advertising. After hours, he creates art and is interested in things that look odd, like him. Things that melt, burn or can be fused together unconventionally. Bits of wire, springs, rusted anything, old cars, cracked peeling paint, texture, characters in real life. He went to art school in Detroit and started sculpting clay portraits and figures. He then discovered how much fun welding and cutting steel was. His paintings are a spontaneous, intense exercise in movement, texture and color. They are inspired by the people he has met in clubs in and around Chicago and the places he has been. Joyal's rich use of materials and fearless brushstrokes come from a painterly mind that is constantly seeking movement and detail. He's an artist with a wild smoky aroma, complemented with a humorous amount of delicious wise cracks, perfect for any occasion, and certainly a hit with all the kids.

Spex offers artfully crafted eyewear and sun wear to a stylish and discerning public with an eye for beauty and function. Their services range from contact lens fittings and eye exams to eyewear styling and repairs. Product lines are frequently updated, while attentive and knowledgeable customer service rounds out the experience for the savvy shopper. Dr. Emily Pott, specializing in primary eye care, is the in-house optometrist and encourages all customers to come in for a comprehensive eye exam. Most major medical and routine vision insurances are accepted.

**Media Contact: Marilyn Frank, Tel: 847-905-1410, x 26; Email: [marilyn.frank@spexchicago.com](mailto:marilyn.frank@spexchicago.com)**

# # #

