

THE O.G. MAG



Nominated Fashion Practice of the Year 2023

EDITORS NOTE



As we bid farewell to 2023, The Optical Gallery extends heartfelt thanks to everyone who has graced the doorways of our diverse Galleries. It's been a year of survival, triumphs, and a shared sense of community. We've weathered trials and tribulations, celebrated re-openings, embarked on new business ventures, and engaged in impactful community work.

Describing ourselves as "not your average optician," we take pride in being an eclectic blend of opticians, designers, and creative souls. This year's achievements have surpassed our expectations, and we owe it all to our dedicated clients and staff who continually challenge us to redefine optics as a fun, effortless, and enjoyable experience.

At the heart of our accomplishments are the vibrant moments created through takeover events and exhibitions. We love witnessing our world of eyewear celebrated by our clients. From the Sunglasses takeover event featuring renowned brands like Cazal, Ray-Ban, Woow, and Kuboraum, to the

introduction of the brand-new Sabine Be Eyewear with over 32 guests in attendance, each event brought its own unique flair. The first-ever contact lens takeover by Alcon successfully introduced new clients to the wonders of contact lenses. Theo Eyewear's captivating collections drew crowds from far and wide, and the year concluded with the inaugural takeover event in Cheam Village, featuring the British brand Kirk & Kirk and extending the joy of eyewear events to a new location.

Our YouTube channel, @TheOpticalGallery, has been a platform for sharing our adventures, taking you to the prestigious Paris Silmo Exhibition, introducing the incredible individuals behind your favourite brands, and exploring the fascinating world of lenses. Partnering with Marma London, one of 25 practices, has allowed us to have endless fun with lenses. There is now no tint, photochromic capability, or lens style that we cannot achieve, and Marma London has been a constant supporter at every exhibition event.

In this edition, we take a moment to summarise the remarkable journey of 2023. As we look back on a year filled with achievements, challenges, and moments of pure eyewear excellence, we express our deepest gratitude to our clients, our dedicated team, and the vibrant community that makes The Optical Gallery a truly extraordinary optical experience.

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OPTICIAN AWARDS 2023

NOMINATED BEST FASHION PRACTICE OF THE YEAR

In reflection of the past year, The Optical Gallery extends heartfelt gratitude to our loyal clients who have been an integral part of our journey. The year 2022 brought about a significant challenge as we faced the closure of one of our branches, Twickenham, due to a devastating fire outbreak. This unforeseen event led to a year-long closure, but with determination and resilience, we are thrilled to announce the triumphant reopening of Twickenham in March 2023.

The rejuvenated Twickenham branch boasts a fresh new look while maintaining the same ownership and commitment to providing a unique and unparalleled service. We were delighted to welcome clients not only from the local community but also from far and wide, including visitors from as far as Australia, a testament to the enduring appeal of The Optical Gallery.

Our innovative approach to optics, which we describe as an 'Art Gallery' experience, garnered attention within the industry.

The '3 brothers' – Nicos, Antonios, and Marios – who are the proud owners, were



Brothers gonna work it out

Zoe Cosby speaks to The Optical Gallery brothers about mixing art, fashion, eyewear and optics

featured in an exclusive interview with the esteemed 'Optician Magazine.' This insightful conversation delved into the rich history of our family business, the dynamics of working as a family, what sets The Optical Gallery apart as a beacon for eyewear enthusiasts, their favorite brands, and the distinctive nature of our social media marketing strategies.

Comment: Positive thinking



I sometimes wonder what independent optical retail will look like in the future. So much is currently in flux, with the emergence of telehealth, practice ownership succession challenges for young professionals, potential regulatory changes in the UK, as well as external economic factors. It may take a while before the picture becomes clear.

That's why I admire the practice owners out there in the here and now that are carving their own niche

while rolling with the punches of modern-day optometry and retail. Brothers Nik, Maz and Ant of The Optical Gallery are doing just that. Their approach to the store experience is fresh and you only have to look at the store's social media to see the faces of the patients they style to see that the whole thing is working. It doesn't feel contrived or prescribed, just three business owners that are having fun trying new ideas. The next time a doom and gloom mood takes over you when thinking about your business, you'd do well to remember their story.

On the subject of stories, Morel's history is as incredible as it is long.

Founded in 1880, the company has seen industry disruption come and go umpteen times over. Now, however, it's a company very much looking to the future. Located within the Jura region of France, which is famed for its eyewear manufacturing, Morel has doubled down on its commitment to the area with new production in effort to stop brain drain from the region. There are a lot of brands out there that manufacture in Jura that would be in trouble if that trend continues, so hats off to Morel for getting out in front of the issue.

Simon Jones, editor

This media exposure led to a prestigious nomination for the Optician Award in the category of 'Best Fashion Practice of the Year 2023.' In a field comprising over 7000 independent opticians across the UK, being selected as one of the final six practices is an achievement in itself. The nomination acknowledges our unique approach and immersive retailing of eyewear.

The nomination stemmed from our dedication to creating an immersive experience in retailing eyewear. Our exhibition events, akin to an art gallery, showcase and unveil unique independent eyewear, attracting eyewear enthusiasts from all walks of life. Collaborations with the profiled modelling agency Sway London and a YouTube channel featuring unbiased insights into the optical industry's key players, designers, and products further contributed to the recognition.

Reflecting on this honor, the '3 brothers' expressed their pride as a company and family.

"We work hard to make the experience of choosing eyewear enjoyable and effortless,"

they shared. The success of our exhibition events and takeover initiatives

has cultivated a cult following, bringing like-minded individuals together to celebrate their unique eyewear experiences.

As the Optician Award ceremony approaches, The Optical Gallery views the nomination itself as a victory.



"Whether the award comes home to us or not, we feel being nominated, which was unexpected, is a win itself and is encouraging that we are doing something right,"

the '3 brothers' remarked. This recognition extends beyond the industry, resonating with our communities and, most importantly, our cherished clients. In conclusion, The Optical Gallery looks forward to continuing our journey with a renewed sense of purpose, innovation, and a commitment to providing an exceptional eyewear experience for years to come.

“ **Good vision aids academic success & overall development** ”



Your child is entitled to a FREE
NHS eye test & more

The Optical Gallery, 340 Hook Road, Chessington, Surrey, KT9 1NU

www.opticalgallery.co.uk

NURTURING BRIGHT FUTURES



THE OPTICAL GALLERY'S DEDICATION TO CHILDREN'S EYE HEALTHY

In the ever-evolving landscape of children's eye health, one term looms large - 'Myopia Control'. As we delve into this groundbreaking concept, it becomes evident that there is a pressing need for awareness, particularly among parents and caregivers. In our previous magazine, we explored the remarkable strides being made in the realm of children's eye care, shining a light on the crucial aspect of Myopia Control.

Surprisingly, many parents, guardians, and caregivers remain uninformed about the importance of children's eye care. Astonishingly, numerous children have never undergone an eye test, despite the fact that those under 16 are entitled to a free examination. At The Optical Gallery, we attribute this knowledge gap to the

lack of promotion by opticians and schools regarding the benefits of eye health. What many fail to realise is that good vision is not just about clarity; it significantly contributes to academic success and overall developmental milestones.

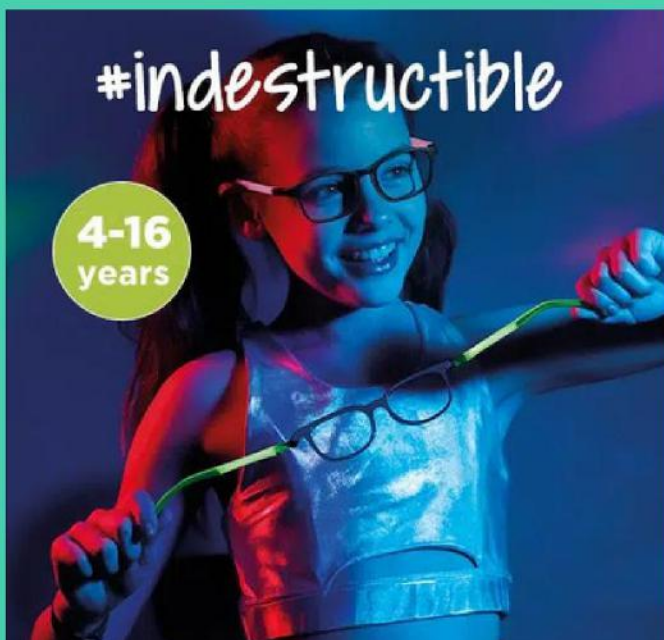
Issues such as squints, lazy eyes, academic performance, and behaviour can often be rectified during the early years of a child's growth. In this digital age, we also have the tools to address short-sightedness in children through Myopia Control, involving the use of contact lenses and/or spectacle lenses. It's crucial to note that this intervention is most effective before the age of 18 when a child's development is near completion. Motivated by our realisation that parents are unaware of children's eye health, we embarked on a mission to create awareness. Our latest campaign centred around

sponsoring a local school near our Chessington branch - 'Our Lady Immaculate' Primary School. This institution holds a special place in our hearts, as it is a school that many of us at The Optical Gallery attended.

The success of our campaign at 'Our Lady Immaculate' has been remarkable. We took a multifaceted approach, distributing informative leaflets in book bags, displaying a prominent banner at the school's forefront, and organising an initiative that involved active participation from parents. As part of our commitment to the community, we joined the school's Christmas Bazaar with a dedicated stall showcasing children's eyewear, featuring our new children's indestructible frames from Nano Vista. Moreover, we added an exciting twist by generously donating a PlayStation 5 and hosting a stall game where a fortunate parent and child won a free pair of Ray-Ban sunglasses. The results speak volumes -



**OUR CAMPAIGN
RAISED OVER £1000
FOR 'OUR LADY
IMMACULATE,'**



contributing not only to the school but also creating awareness about children's eye health within the community. Encouraged by this success, we've garnered interest from other local schools, signalling the potential to continue our efforts in educating parents.

At The Optical Gallery, we believe in giving back and nurturing bright futures. If your child needs an eye test or if you believe your child's school can benefit from our initiatives, please don't hesitate to get in touch. We are committed to supporting the entire family and fostering eye health awareness throughout our community. Together, let's ensure that every child has the vision they need for a brilliant future.



FREE

EYE TESTS

UNTIL DECEMBER 30TH 2023

OUR XMAS GIFT TO YOU



OPTICIAN
AWARDS
FINALIST
2023

BOOK IN STORE TODAY

Enjoy Wearing Them!



THANK YOU!

FRAMES FROM £59



ashton riley

WWW.OPTICALGALLERY.CO.UK

A NEW CHAPTER WITH ASHTON RILEY

In 2023, The Optical Gallery is thrilled to share a significant milestone—our acquisition of Ashton Riley Eyewear and its flagship store Ashton Riley Eyecare.

Back in late 2021, an opportunity presented itself, and we seized it with enthusiasm. Ashton Riley Eyewear, known for its family-oriented, independent approach and affordable yet quality designs, resonated with us. Now, as we rebrand Ashton Riley Eyecare to The Optical Gallery, we're excited to unveil the details of this strategic move and what it means for our valued customers.

Ashton Riley Eyewear, already a success in over 600 independent opticians across the UK, faced challenges as it opened its flagship store in Cheam Village just before the COVID-19 lockdowns.

By keeping the exceptional staff on board and maintaining designer/owner Brett Waugh as a partner, we aimed to continue and elevate the excellent work achieved by Ashton Riley Eyewear.

Brett Waugh utilized the flagship store as a testing ground for new designs, offering a unique opportunity for direct interaction with the public. This hands-on approach, uncommon in the eyewear industry,

allowed us to gather invaluable client feedback for further product development.

Navigating the realms of designing eyewear versus providing eyecare and managing an optician entails traversing two distinct lanes. This is precisely why the merger stands as a brilliant union, seamlessly conquering both sectors of retail, distribution, and eyecare excellence. With none other than one of the

The Optical Gallery saw this not just as a business opportunity but as a chance to make a positive impact.



most unique approaches to UK optics, The Optical Gallery's strategic amalgamation with Ashton Riley Eyewear signifies a harmonious blend of expertise and innovation in the optical landscape. Additionally, the incorporation of opticians' advice, drawn from their diverse experiences with clients from all walks of life, plays a pivotal role in shaping the brand's development going forward.

Post-merge, Brett Waugh introduced Relyks Optical, a second brand under the Ashton Riley distribution. True to its ethos of affordability, Relyks Optical stands out as a luxury brand with intricate details, embodying timeless elegance.

Cheam Village's branch undergoes a transformation into an award-nominated optician, with expert eyewear stylists offering free eyewear styling. From the exquisite Sabine Be Eyewear to the celebrated British brand Kirk & Kirk, alongside our house brands Ashton Riley, Relyks, and 3 Brothers—the Cheam Village branch has become a hub of eyewear excellence.

The Optical Gallery's Takeover events and Exhibitions, like the successful Kirk & Kirk event, provide clients with a unique experience, akin to an art gallery unveiling. To stay updated on these exclusive events and access the best deals on new-season collections, we encourage our clients to subscribe to our mailing list.

As Ashton Riley Eyecare evolves into The Optical Gallery, our commitment to delivering quality eyewear and exceptional service remains steadfast. This rebranding signifies not just a change in name but an affirmation of our unique approach to optics. Join us as we continue to shape the eyecare and fashion landscape, making eyewear accessible and exciting for all.



(Above: Brett Waugh (Ashton Riley Eyewear & Partner The Optical Gallery Cheam Village)

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KIRK&KIRK

AVAILABLE IN CHEAM VILLAGE

#THEOPTICALGALLERY



Valid until March 31st 2023

50% OFF YOUR 2nd FRAMES &/or LENSES



Terms & conditions apply

(On presentation of this voucher)

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Online booking available

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Contact Lens New Fit/Trial	45.00
Contact Lens Examination	39.00
Eyewear Styling (Usually)	59.00
Eyewear MOT	FREE



SCAN ME

THE OPTICAL GALLERY TWICKENHAM BRANCH

16 KING STREET, TWICKENHAM
TW1 3SN

020 8892 2800
INFO@OPTICALGALLERY.CO.UK

THE OPTICAL GALLERY CHESSINGTON BRANCH

340 HOOK ROAD, CHESSINGTON
KT9 1NU

020 8391 0300
INFO@OPTICALGALLERY.CO.UK

THE OPTICAL GALLERY CHEAM VILLAGE BRANCH

31 THE BROADWAY, CHEAM,
SM3 8BL

0207 155 1324
EMAIL@ASHTONRILEYEYECARE.COM

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