

# GRAND BOULEVARD

— Sandestin® —

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## **Gallery NU Fine Arts Opens in Grand Boulevard at Sandestin®**

*World-class artwork exclusively premiering in Northwest Florida*

**Walton County, Fla, November 8, 2007** - Having grown up in the art world and subsequently owning successful art businesses, the owners of Gallery NU Fine Arts have created a gallery space as exciting, approachable and evolving as the sophisticated artwork they carry. Gallery NU, located in Grand Boulevard at Sandestin®, opened to the public this week.

After following parallel paths within the New Orleans art scene for years, Jed McSpadden and Danny Saladino forged a professional partnership three years ago that led to a successful art gallery in the French Quarter. Each was able to bring their specific art background and perspective to the venture. Danny owned an art publishing company while Jed was involved in the gallery business and real estate development. Jed also had a successful restaurant which featured a prominent New Orleans artist.

As with many businesses in the New Orleans area, their French Quarter gallery fell victim to Hurricane Katrina in late August 2005. Fortunately Jed and Danny had already begun planning for multiple gallery locations and soon opened a gallery in Covington, Louisiana which is where they lived with their families.

As they continued researching ideal locations for additional galleries, Jed and Danny honed in on the town center model which incorporates aspects of New Urbanism. As a long-time visitor to County Road 30-A, Jed was familiar with successful model communities in the area, such as Seaside and Watercolor. Shortly after Hurricane Katrina, Jed, along with his wife Lesley, aggressively researched the surrounding areas of 30-A for a potential location for their second gallery.

After discovering Grand Boulevard, both Danny and Jed agreed that the town center would be the ideal place for a high-quality gallery catering to both locals and visitors to the area. "It's as close as you can get to an historic downtown. Howard Group really pulled it off better than any other town center we've seen. This type of development breaks the mold," says Danny.

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Jed says Grand Park, located within the town center, is particularly appealing. The gallery has plans to use the park for off-season art exhibits and to feature artists. “The park is a huge draw. It will be a perfect place to enjoy art events and live demonstrations,” he says.

Gallery NU was named, as such, by the owners as homage to the “new beginning” they were committed to after Hurricane Katrina, which also served as the impetus to relocate their families to South Walton County.

As the Emerald Coast area has grown so has the level of art appreciation and sophistication, according to Jed. He expects the increasing number of area young professionals and seasoned art collectors will create a local base for the gallery, which, in turn, will open it up to second homeowners and visitors will follow, he says.

The gallery carries a wide variety of all original art works including traditional and contemporary pieces, landscapes, mixed media, found-object, bronze sculpture, abstract, oil and acrylic on different mediums. Sizes range from small and large wall-hung art to table top to larger-than-life sculpture. The gallery will carry more than 100 pieces at any given time.

By design, the gallery space lends itself to the evolution of the art it carries, with the interior palette and furnishings changing regularly. In addition to rotating featured artwork, the gallery will also rotate moving art walls to give a different look to the space each month.

“My hope is to erase any preconceived notion of what a gallery is,” says Danny. He says that as the vehicle for what is being displayed, the gallery “should be as free-flowing as the art itself.”

A great touch to the gallery is the use of a Roma Italia-framed 36” Plasma television that continuously presents artists, their work and upcoming events. The TV can be viewed through the gallery window and will run even when the gallery is closed.

For all of the fine art represented at Gallery NU, approachability and building relationships is very important to the owners. They say they strive to make the gallery comfortable for everyone and look forward to becoming part of the part of the community.

“We feel at home here and are happy to be part of the growing development at Grand Boulevard. Howard Group has only begun to scratch the surface on how great this town center will be. This is where we want to hang our hat,” say Jed.

St. Louis native Sarah Svoboda has joined Jed and Danny as the director of Gallery NU, bringing with her a wealth of knowledge of the local area as well as an appreciation for fine arts. The gallery is open seven days a week, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., with abbreviated hours of 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sundays. For more information, please call the gallery at 850.424.6518 or visit their web site at [www.gallerynu.com](http://www.gallerynu.com).

**Grand Boulevard** is the new shop, work, play and stay town center located in Beaches of South Walton along the Gulf Coast in Northwest Florida. Based on the prominent mixed-use architectural model, Grand Boulevard offers a dynamic lifestyle experience with convenient access to a multitude of exclusive shopping and dining options, entertainment, professional services, corporate offices and lodging. For more information, please call (850) 654-5929.

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