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responsible for the many European associations because of all the details they contained. For example, in the USA in 2004, 76.5 million pairs of sunglasses were sold for less than \$ 15 and only 4.5 million pairs for more than \$ 100. With the 76.5 million pairs mainly WalMart made a turnover of \$ 675.3 million. Practically the same turnover, however, was achieved with the sunglasses over \$ 100. Astonishingly, both extreme ends of the market accounted for about 35 % each of the total market in the USA. In the next issue of MANUFACTURERS FORUM we will present the most important findings from the American market.

#### Crackpot and eccentric or genius?

Everyone in the frames industry has his own opinion about Alain Mikli. The spectrum is very wide. Which ever way his public appearances and his collections may be judged, this man certainly has firm opinions, which is why he can state: "Fashion and design are not the same!" In Mikli's view design is a statement and fashion a proposition. And who is surprised by his declaration, "Rimless is no frame!"

"Just because you are as nearsighted as a mole, it doesn't mean you have to be as unsexy as a mole", he exclaimed to the audience in Bennoit Devarieux's words and declared - referring to his own collection - that his basic understanding of frame design is as simple as it is revolutionary: "Transform a constraint into style, a handicap into an expression of personality." Thus in his view spectacle frames are the gateway to a person's soul.