An ocular prosthetician unites the dexterity of a skilled craftsman with an artist's textural caress in his unique creations: custom acrylic eyes so vibrantly alive it seems a cruel twist of fate that they are unable to see.
**Ocularist**

**Film Synopsis**

**Director:** Vance Malone  
**Contact:** (503)274-9644  
**Food Chain Films**

**Brief Synopsis:** Medical illustrator Fredric Harwin unites the dexterity of a skilled craftsman with an artist's textural caress in his unique creations: custom acrylic eyes so vibrantly alive it seems a cruel twist of fate that they are unable to see.

**Extended Synopsis:**

Art and Science intertwine in the adept hands of Ocularist Fredric Harwin, a medical illustrator who unites the dexterity of a skilled craftsman with an artist's textural caress in his unique creations: custom acrylic eyes so vibrantly alive it seems a cruel twist of fate that they are unable to see. Yet, for Harwin's patients, it's the renewed confidence to be seen that fills their catastrophic void.

This eight-minute short illuminates the process of Harwin's intricate craftsmanship. By using the camera to manipulate the viewer's visual experience, director/editor Vance Malone subtly illustrates the theme of altered eyesight. Vocal tracks are innovatively weaved with the original soundtrack, blurring the line between documentary and music video. Fred Harwin's art truly imitates life. Imperfect only in comparison to Mother Nature's, his hauntingly sightless eyes transform faces, outlooks, and lives.
As a filmmaker and director, vision is my most relied-upon sense. When I learned one year ago about the history of macular degeneration in my family, I realized how much I’d taken my ability to see for granted. My concerned research into this disabling eye disease led me to medical illustrator, Fredric Harwin, who custom-crafts lifelike artificial eyes. Although macular degeneration doesn’t involve eye amputation, I was immediately moved by his work, empathizing with his patients’ devastating loss.

What would my world be without depth of field, three-dimensional perception, or spatial relationships? Besides the alteration of my own physical perception, how would other people, in a society that places so much emphasis on eye contact, view me?

Two weeks after my initial meeting with Fred Harwin, filming began. Capturing the week-long process of ocularistry over a three-day extended timeline, we shot one full day and two half days, observing key points of contact between Fred and his patient, Andy Jackman. I must applaud Andy’s bravery in letting us document this very intimate aspect of his life. Although the horrific thought of losing my eyesight is what instigated this endeavor, during the filming I became more aware of the psychological repercussions of ocular disfigurement. Our eyes unconsciously convey our intentions and affect our social interactions. Even the slightest disparity in gaze can trigger discomfort, compounding the victim’s distress from lost eye and sight with a loss of social identity. I began to realize that Fred provides more for his patients than mere cosmetic rehabilitation. The subtle mimicry of his craftsmanship, creating the illusion of focus and pupil dilation, helps the victim maintain a normal social identity and mollify both social- and self-stigmatization.

The intriguing topic and engaging subjects dictated that the final film product be as unique as the elements within. Veering from the typical documentary approach I had intended to take, I wanted the viewer to experience, rather than casually observe, this film. It was important to generate the sensation of altered perception, both visually and aurally. Enlisting the help of local electronic composer Auditory Sculpture, we intertwined and blended the original soundtrack with the story. The vocal tracks were mixed with the music to drive the narrative and enhance the emotional response.

Like the acrylic creations of Fredric Harwin, Ocularist walks the line between real and surreal; a window peek into the soul of a man who possesses the utmost respect and understanding for his art, his medicine, and his patients. It is my hope that Ocularist not only engages, but also provides a perceptive look into this little-known profession and the multi-faceted service it provides.
There are real people and there are those who love them. Vance Malone is the latter, but it is the former who keep him up late working. “I like learning about peoples’ lives, he admits, and crafting film with a look that merges with each unique story.” His earnest approach is effective. Regarded for a diverse but pitch-perfect tone in commercial work for clients like Goodwill and adidas, Malone spent years honing his film craft, first as a location scout, then as a casting director. The transition to envisioning his own eye-catching pieces was as natural as his talent. Insightful, detail-oriented, and adept at meshing discordant ideas into a seamless whole, as a kid growing up in Wyoming Malone says, “I got a still camera and it was like someone gave me a pair of glasses. The world looked different from that point on.” He seems to go at each project like a realistic sculptor – carefully shaping a vision that is beautiful, yet honest. And the fit is always skin-tight.
Emily Bulfin and Jalal Jemison operate Videominds out of a studio warehouse in the southeast industrial district of Portland, Oregon. Videominds began in 1999 as a group of DIY filmmakers and has evolved into a motion graphics and design studio for film, video, and web media.

Recent work includes intro and title design for the short film, Ocularist, produced by Food Chain Films and directed by Vance Malone. Ocularist has been chosen for the 2003 Sundance Film Festival. Videominds also made the titles and credits for Hunter Dawson, a short film produced by New Lab Film Company and directed by Andrew Dickson. Hunter Dawson premiered at this year’s Northwest Film and Video Festival.
OCULARIST

VANCE MALONE  FOOD CHAIN FILMS  TRT 8:20  12/5/02
MEDICAL HISTORY:

NAME: KEITH SCHREINER
DOB: 12/5/02

OCCUPATION: AUDITORY SCULPTURE
ADDRESS: PORTLAND, OR

IRIS SIZE: 16 MM
PUPIL SIZE: T 5.6

NUCLEATION
EVISCERATION
10 : 1 ZOOM

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SINGLE PERF
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PORTLAND, OR

OCULARIST
PATIENT CHART NOTES / BIOS

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MEDICAL HISTORY:

Under the moniker Auditory Sculpture, Keith Schreiner handcrafts vivid aural canvases awash with texture and movement; painting with melodies and rhythms, eschewing brushes and palettes for keyboards, samplers, and a Macintosh G4. A true artisan, Schreiner’s compositions are a testament to the ages, inspired by the majesty and rhetoric of the classical masters, paying respect to ambient forefathers Erik Satie, John Cage, and Brian Eno. An artist whose craft continues to push the boundaries of musical invention, persistently blurring the distinction between visual and aural artistry, juxtaposing past, present, and future into a creation entirely his own.

Since arriving in Portland over 3 years ago, the New York native’s compositional skills, in addition to his unique, real-time improvisatory performances, continue to capture the attention of musical luminaries. In addition to his five solo releases as Auditory Sculpture, the 28-year-old Schreiner supplied drum programming and synth work on Dig Up the Astroturf and C’mon C’mom from Grammy-award winning songwriters Jeff Trott and Sheryl Crow, respectively, and was recently involved in songwriting/recording sessions with Dr. Dre/Eminem producer Mike Elizondo for Trott’s follow-up album. His duo side project, Dahlia, with vocalist Jennifer Folker, is also working with Bauhaus/Love and Rockets bassist David J. on its second album in two years.

For Schreiner, though, scoring for television and film is his ultimate form of expression. “Although I’m an aural artist, I’m also very visual. Getting the opportunity to write to someone else’s visions, to enhance the emotional response of what one sees on a screen... that, to me, is the real art of music.”
OCULARIST
PATIENT CHART NOTES / BIOS

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MEDICAL HISTORY:
Although Food Chain Films is an established commercial production company, its philosophy encompasses more than just the 30-second spot. Executive Producer David Cress explains: “What distinguishes all three directors at Food Chain is that they are all filmmakers first. They can communicate stories in a variety of mediums and forms.” In addition to directing some of the best spots around, Food Chain directors exercise their creative freedom through award-winning short films, documentaries and music videos.

Since its inception in 1995, Food Chain’s work has garnered a lot of praise. Recent awards include Best in Show at the 2001 Summit Awards, Jury Prize for Best Music Video at SXSW Film Festival, three nominations at the Cannes Lions, first place AAF G.D. Crain Jr. Public Service Advertising Award, as well as numerous Telly, Emerald City and Rosey Awards.

With three directors on the roster, Food Chain recently entered into an alliance with GO Film. Owners Jonathan Weinstein, Robert Wherry and David Cress are heading up the newly re-defined Food Chain Films to make its presence known in the national marketplace.
EXTENDED SYNOPSIS:
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FOOD CHAIN FILMS PRESENTS
Director Vance Malone filming on the set of OCULARIST.

OCULARIST

Assistant Camera Operator Denver Wood adjusts focus on the set of OCULARIST.

OCULARIST
Director Vance Malone discusses the next scene with Fred Harwin on the set of OCULARIST.

OCULARIST

Director Vance Malone talks with Ocularist Fred Harwin on the set of OCULARIST.

OCULARIST
Director Vance Malone adjusts art direction on the set of OCULARIST.

OCULARIST

Camera assistant Matt Barbee adjusting the camera on the set of OCULARIST.

OCULARIST