

Steve Storz at Bareiss

BY DENA MILLER

I F YOU HAVE DRIVEN PAST BAREISS GALLERY on the road to the ski valley during the past 25 years, then you've probably noticed the outrageously eclectic outdoor sculptures that, familiarly, became the gallery's sign post. This weekend will be your first chance to view them inside Bareiss, however, when the artist Steve Storz has his first solo show at the venue.

"Graphite and Gizmology" opens to the public on Saturday (Aug. 6) with a reception from 3 to 7 p.m. His steel and electronic sculptures, installations and drawings will be on view and accompanied by live electronic music performed by Storz.

And this modern day Renaissance man has a plethora of thought-provoking art to share with his audience against that ambient backdrop. Bewitching synthesized instrumental mixes are "made by my voice that is sampled and repeated to make an extended drone on multiple tracks" emanating from an electronic music machine he built himself.

"I rescue discarded technology and mangled motors, then reconfigure, reactivate and transform them into new objects with quirky movement, sound and light," he said in introducing the exhibit. The sculptures "often click, skritch, blink and glow, revealing their inner workings [and] allowing the viewer to join my appreciation of their hypnotic motion and often ingenious design." Storz was born in Texas City, Texas, "an industrial city with all sorts of rusty things," he said. His mother made lifelike sculptures of chicken wire and paper mache ("She loved making things with her hands") while her son collected boxes of "rusty junk."

That, combined with Storz's love of classic horror movies, set him on a path that was amplified when the family moved to Oregon. "There were a lot of spooky to me things in Oregon, like crazy tree roots and exotic plants," he recalled. "I became entranced with them, and the juxtaposition of the organic along with the mechanical grew inside my head." His move in 1980 to Silicon Valley had him "dumpster diving, collecting grungy scraps and old boom boxes and the like."



COURTESY IMAGE

'Ghost Sutures' by Steve Storz.