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In Farnsworth's wood sculpture "St. Ann's Theater," a woman sits on the bare stage of a ramshackle theater tying loops from a golden drapery cord. She may suggest St. Ann, the grandmother of Jesus, the patron of carpenters, mothers and seamstresses, although the artist says he did not have the real saint in mind. SPECIAL TO THE CITIZEN-TIMES

Farnsworth's wood sculpture "The Succession" shows a woman's head supporting decaying industrial silos. It is among the works on display at Blue Spiral 1 in downtown Asheville through May 24. SPECIAL TO THE CITIZEN-TIMES

STAGING SCULPTURAL SURPRISES

Penland sculptor Dustin Farnsworth's headdresses and miniature theaters are multifaceted and meticulous

By Arnold Wengrow
Citizen-Times Correspondent

Penland sculptor Dustin Farnsworth calls his new works at Blue Spiral 1 simply "headdresses" and "theaters." But don't let these utilitarian terms make you think of hats, hair ornaments or places of amusement.

Even the word "sculpture" is too limited for these complex constructions of wood, metal, fabric, hair and paint. Their meanings are also complex and mysterious.

Farnsworth's pieces are

included in "Narration," a group show that also includes sculpture by Christina Bothwell, photographs by Ralph Burns, paintings by Julian Davis, and mixed media by Joe DeCamillis. The show runs through May 24 at the downtown gallery on Biltmore Ave.

The headdresses are startling chimeras with towering industrial architecture grafted onto life-sized human heads. The theaters are decaying miniature buildings where a lonely figure on a bare stage enacts an enigmatic ritual.

In a headdress called "The Haunt," a weathered six-lobed industrial silo is tethered to a man's head with wires that cut

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IF YOU GO

What: "Narration," a group show that includes Dustin Farnsworth's headdresses and theaters as well as sculpture by Christina Bothwell, photographs by Ralph Burns, paintings by Julian Davis and mixed media by Joe DeCamillis.

Where: Blue Spiral 1, 38 Biltmore Ave., downtown Asheville.

When: Through May 24. The gallery is open 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Saturday; noon-5 p.m. Sunday.

Learn more: Call 251-0202 or visit www.bluespiral1.com.

