

Well-hidden Glenndyne Design's custom bikes have global appeal



Jim Stafford

INNOVATIONS

I am driving along South Agnew in Oklahoma City looking for a sign that will tell me I have found a business called Glenndyne Design LLC.

I never find it, because there is no sign advertising the location of Glenndyne Design.

All I have is a street address, and when I finally locate it, I see just a bare, dark storefront.

So I dial a phone number.

Aaron Glenn, founder of this well-camouflaged business, answers and says he will meet us at the door. Within seconds, it opens, and there stands the 39-year-old Glenn.

A colleague from the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST) and I step into the business, where we are surrounded by what appear to be a dozen or so custom built motorcycles painted in a variety of distinguish-ing hues.

Glenndyne Design produces custom motorcycles, wheels and various parts along with paint designs that set apart any motorcycle that rolls out of the shop.

Glenn began working in a street rod shop at age 16 as he pursued interest in art by creating hotrod paint designs.

"I have always been artistically driven," Glenn said. "So, I started out with the painting aspect of it, the airbrushing, the graphic work, doing all the custom paint jobs. Then naturally I just started dealing with the fabrication of things, too."

Glenn's manufacturing success didn't happen by coincidence. His mother,



Aaron Glenn, owner of Glenndyne Design, got his start in custom paint jobs. (PHOTO PROVIDED)

Jannetta Clark, is a Manufacturing Extension Agent for the Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance.

However, she has never formally worked with Glenndyne Designs through her Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance position.

"Glenndyne is a highly successful business because of Aaron's talents and tenacity," Clark said. "It is built on reputation and relationships with the customer."

Today, Glenn has a day job as a Midwest City firefighter in addition to the cycle shop. The job provides the flexibility he needs to operate the motorcycle business with two full-time employees out of the unadorned building.

"We bought this building three years ago, and we just renovate each month with whatever I can afford to put into the building," Glenn says as he directs us on a tour of what turns out to be a massive, 22,000-square-foot operation.

"The building itself is morphing into a showcase," Jannetta Clark said. "That is all due to Aaron's willingness to work long hours and never shy away from physical labor."

Go Code CIQY

Go to oklahoman.com and enter the code to see a video about Glenndyne Design LLC.

Glenndyne Design serves a worldwide clientele that is drawn to the custom motorcycle builder largely because of its reputation for innovation. Glenn is known in the cycle world as the man who "reinvented the wheel."

And that's not far from the truth.

Glenn spent six years designing and patenting — he owns three patents — a unique internal braking system for bikes in which the rotor sits inside the spokes much like that of an automobile. It is an expensive innovation, with base price of the internal brake wheels listed at \$3,900 each online at glenndyne.com.

Obviously, only high-end bikes roll out of the Glenndyne Design shop. Most customers bring in what Glenn calls a "donor" bike for him to tear down and rebuild

as a unique, customized motorcycle.

"Depending on what the donor bike is, our average customer will spend anywhere from \$40,000 to \$60,000 to customize a bike over the cost of the bike," he said.

What if someone wanted a bike built from scratch?

"On a one-off bike, you could easily spend \$60,000 to \$100,000," he said.

Glenn said the shop also takes on smaller jobs and produces various custom parts available for sale across the globe.

For now, the building on South Agnew will remain anonymous as Glenn splits his time between his job as a firefighter, father and refurbishing the Glenndyne Design building's interior into the over-the-top fabrication shop he envisions.

"Once this building is renovated, I'll start to open up the business in a way that is more available to the public," Glenn said.

Meanwhile, don't look for a sign.

Jim Stafford writes about Oklahoma innovation and research and development topics on behalf of the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science & Technology (OCAST).

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