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Barbara Bridges makes art from artist fabricated components in a variety of media and rescued power objects.  She organizes the objects to create meaning and provoke discussions and reflection on a wide variety of social topics including sustainability (Ode to Gluten), living a considered life (Talking Chairs and Academia Nuts) and recovery (Reflection Pool).

***Talking Chairs***, created with a variety of rescued objects from different cultures and venues, represents different experiences in my life.  I have spent 30 years researching iconography in Mexico. I am a native Mainer and my family has suffered with addiction.  Surprised by the appearance of the driftwood I have found on the inland seas and waterways, I created a Minnesota waterways power chair.  My inclusion of the *Homeless* point of view is my effort
to include a voice to level the discourse field, and it will.

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| 10-Talking-Stik | The Performance: The interactive  installation, ***Talking Chairs,***  was designed to  provide the viewer with the opportunity, the invitation, a safe environment  under the guise of performance art, to reflect on “Is Minnesota Nice just Passive Aggression” , “What is the Difference Between Genius and Madness?”, “What Do Book Smarts Earn You” and/or other topics.  The artist will start the discussions, and actors, speaking with the authentic voice of their personal experiences, (and then audience-perhaps salted with participants -a la flash mob), will then be provided with the opportunity to speak from their own experience and interpretation of the worldview of the persona of the chair they occupy.The artist herself will occupy “the Mainer chair” and moderate the discussion, drawing on her forty years of teaching experience to keep the discussions dynamic and civil.Only the person in possession of the talking stick may speak.  The viewers may be invited to take a seat and join the discussion.  The artist will invite participants to add objects to the *Talking Stick* to imbue it with the power of their voice(s). |

