Nathaniel E. (Dan) West creates birds, fish and other animals from found materials.  Nature—especially saltwater environments—is the world in which he functions: since his childhood years on Martha’s Vineyard, he has studied wildlife in the woods, marshes, backwaters and open ocean from the Vineyard to Nova Scotia.  Beginning in the late eighties, he and his wife Kyra spent twelve summers in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, where he was profoundly influenced by wild coastal habitats, fish and saltwater birds.   While in Canada he also became inspired by minimalist Inuit sculpture.

He sculpts in driftwood, metal, beach stone and other materials that he collects on the islands of Muscongus Bay, Maine, and on the barrier beach at Advocate, N. S.,  creating sculpture with a clean, contemporary aesthetic.

Dan has had several careers prior to devoting full time to his artwork.  After graduating from Allegheny College and then active duty in the Navy, he taught English at South Kent School in Connecticut. Moving to the Vineyard in 1974, he served as business manager at the Vineyard Gazette, after which he owned and operated Machine & Marine, Inc. for fourteen years.  He sold the business in 1988 but continued building the well-known Tashmoo skiffs for a time; after taking a couple of years to restore a 1740s farmhouse he returned to boat building, designing and producing Greenland-style kayaks.   Since 2000 he and Kyra have made their home in Friendship, Maine, where he sculpts in a barn studio.  His work has been represented at the Houston North Gallery in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, at The Granary Gallery on Martha's Vineyard, and in Maine, at the Center for Maine Contemporary Art, and The Maine Art Gallery.