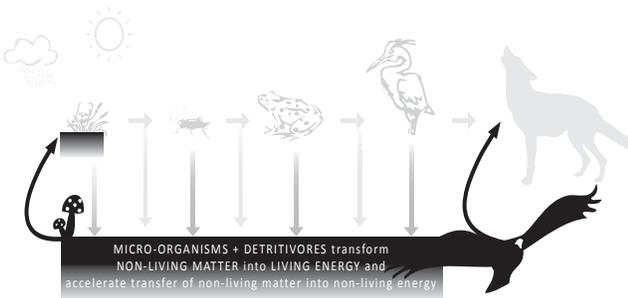
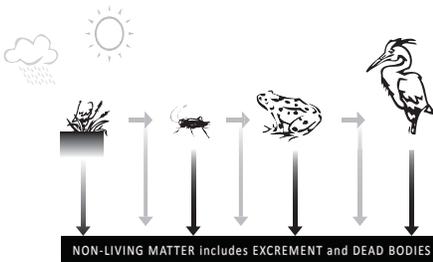
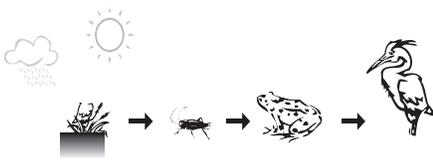


unfolding... Designer UNDis • Urban Nutrient Detritivore Infrastructures

This approach repositions waste as a driver for design. An innovative and necessary strategy for creating resilient systems, products, and communities, this draws from my professional experience in design, construction, performing arts, and project management. Additionally, it is influenced by academic explorations of complex global issues across architecture, urban design, engineering, and environmental justice. I have been fortunate to live in and collaborate with various communities, testing and refining this process and its resultant products.



TOP IMAGE: PRIMARY RELATIONSHIPS
MIDDLE IMAGE: ECOLOGICAL PROCESSES
BOTTOM IMAGE: ECOSYSTEM FUNCTION

Detritivores and decomposers process discarded matter to make its energy more accessible to other organisms. Detritivores, like vultures, feed on waste, and have evolved to be innovative and efficient reprocessors that collaborate with other organisms. It would take hundreds of years of non-living environmental processes to provide the same service. While most societies seek “pure” components and relationships, the secondary material that is discharged from or sublimated in primary production has as much or more embodied energy than sources sought by primary consumers. As our society is called on to react to global issues, these “wastes” from popular systems will gain new relevance.

Anthropogenic factors have shifted the means and extremes of global forces like weather systems. Stationarity, the assumption that natural systems fluctuate within a set range of limits, is a cornerstone of many current forecast and modeling assessments. It is obvious now that our material and cultural relationships need to evolve beyond stationarity. Ensuring resiliency and adaptability in our designed environment will help preparation for future unknowns. The basics of ecosystem function, especially the less popular roles of detritivores and decomposers, provide a compelling model that fits my diverse interests and skills.

Like an ecosystem, my research and design approach addresses both hard and soft infrastructures. An example of the former is a constructed system for water conveyance. Soft infrastructures are less static, such as nutrient paths: both actual food and food for thought. By acknowledging losses of energy in distribution or forgotten material, seen and unseen resources for energy and matter can be reintroduced. This is particularly useful with regard to people and product density and diversity in urban areas, but is applicable to communities of all scales.

This is applied research, that prototypes functional relationships between our theoretical, material, and institutional realms. All these aspects are critical to consider, as we seek responses that ensure the health, safety, and welfare of our communities. Designers can ask questions and explore larger systems, crossing disciplinary lines and furthering ecological and infrastructural projects across both natural and built environments.

UNDis allows disciplinary techniques to be stripped down and augmented with additional structures from collaborative rapid generation processes, such as improvisational theater. I am interested in opportunities that build capacity for my work in repositioning waste as a driver for design and allowing for an organism’s self-interest to catalyze relationships. My current position expands organizational initiatives to optimize investments in tangible and intangible resources. It offers multiple options for immediate collective actions.

