CASE STUDY:

THE ROLE OF SACRED SPACE IN MODERN MEDICINE
WHAT IF WE TREATED SURGICAL TEAMS LIKE ELITE ATHLETES, WORLD-CLASS ARTISTS, OR FIGHTER PILOTS?

ELITE ATHLETES HAVE LOCKER ROOMS.
CREATIVE ARTISTS HAVE GREEN ROOMS.
FIGHTER PILOTS HAVE READY ROOMS.

IN COLLABORATION WITH INSTINCT LABORATORY, ARENA LABS IS HELPING HOSPITALS CREATE “SACRED SPACES” SIMILAR TO THOSE USED BY WORLD-CLASS PERFORMERS TO PREPARE FOR AND DECOMPRESS FROM THE HIGH-PRESSURE DEMANDS OF SURGICAL OPERATIONS.
Based in England, Instinct Laboratory is a unique business that studies human beings and the way in which they interact with the world around them. They explore the actions, decisions, and choices of people to understand their motivations, and then generate new concepts and ideas to alter their path at both the conscious and subconscious levels. They have a full in-house creative studio working in both 2D and 3D to use intelligent design as a means of altering human actions, perceptions, and behaviors.
OUR PHYSICAL SPACE MATTERS.

The space in which humans stand has a huge impact upon how they feel, perform, and recover. In this collaboration, we explore how the environment of a modern hospital could be altered to enhance human performance and ultimately, patient outcomes.

Our deeper belief is that when the individual human within a surgical team is performing at his or her best, the team is able to truly reach high performance and quality outcomes.

Arena Labs & Instinct Laboratory have begun a collaboration to work with high performing medical cultures to reimagine physical staff spaces that can be catalysts to world-class surgical care while also serving as "Sacred Spaces" to decompress and re-energize during long days.

These spaces are not about the patient, patient families, or operational demands. They are solely about the most important system in the hospital: the staff.
A NEW PARADIGM | LOW COST PERFORMANCE INVESTMENTS.

We have found most health care institutions look at physical space as a long-term capital investment. Hospitals will spend millions of dollars on patient waiting areas, staff lounges, and building entrances with the intention of these spaces lasting 10-15 years.

The wear-and-tear of patient volume, family traffic, and staff turnover lends itself to many of these spaces not lasting as long as intended. More importantly, these long-term investments begin to feel stale after several years.

Humans today live in an aesthetically changing environment. Our homes, technology, and digital interfaces are constantly being refreshed, reimagined, and updated.

Our aim is to shift thinking from long-term, massive investments to short-term, economical investments that allow for updated aesthetic and change to keep staff spaces feeling new and fresh.
RECOGNIZING AN OPPORTUNITY: HOSPITAL BREAK ROOMS AS A PERFORMANCE ENHANCER
HOSPITAL BREAK ROOMS ARE AN AFTERTHOUGHT.

In Arena Labs’ work in hospitals all over the United States, it has become clear that break rooms are often an afterthought in design and resource investment.

Understandably, hospitals focus on investments in operating rooms, patient rooms, and facilities that support patient care.

Yet, our belief remains that world-class health care is rooted in building high performing teams. Thus, if surgical teams are treated as the most important resource in a hospital, the natural second-order value is quality patient outcomes.

Given that many surgical staff spend more time at work than at home, a break room is often the ONLY place where staff are able to relax, recharge, and energize. Our work in High Performance Medicine™ has increasingly focused on building “sacred spaces” that provide a place to cultivate higher levels of preparation and recovery.
COMMON IMAGES.

These images, taken from one of the break rooms in a US-based Level 1 Trauma Center are a common depiction of how staff space devolves.
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WHAT IF A SMALL SPACE WAS MULTI-USE?

This schematic shows how a surgical staff break room could be compartmented to account for staff who want to decompress quietly and those who want to be energized by interacting with others.
BRINGING MULTI-USE SPACE TO LIFE:
A LOW-COST DESIGN BLUEPRINT FROM INSTINCT LABORATORY
The blueprints and 3D renderings seen here were created by Instinct Laboratory in collaboration with the leadership team of a large metropolitan US hospital. The willingness to change space and to look at break rooms as an opportunity to energize staff and build an “anchor of culture” was critical to this work enduring.

This project was done under the following critical outcomes:

1. No need for construction or major engineering
2. Use all existing infrastructure
3. Keep costs and overhaul under $100K USD

Each design took into account lighting, flooring, furniture design, and layout that would be most conducive to optimal staff interactions and recovery.
WE ARE RESILIENT.
WE ARE PERIOP.
HOW WOULD A SACRED SPACE IMPACT YOUR SURGICAL STAFF?