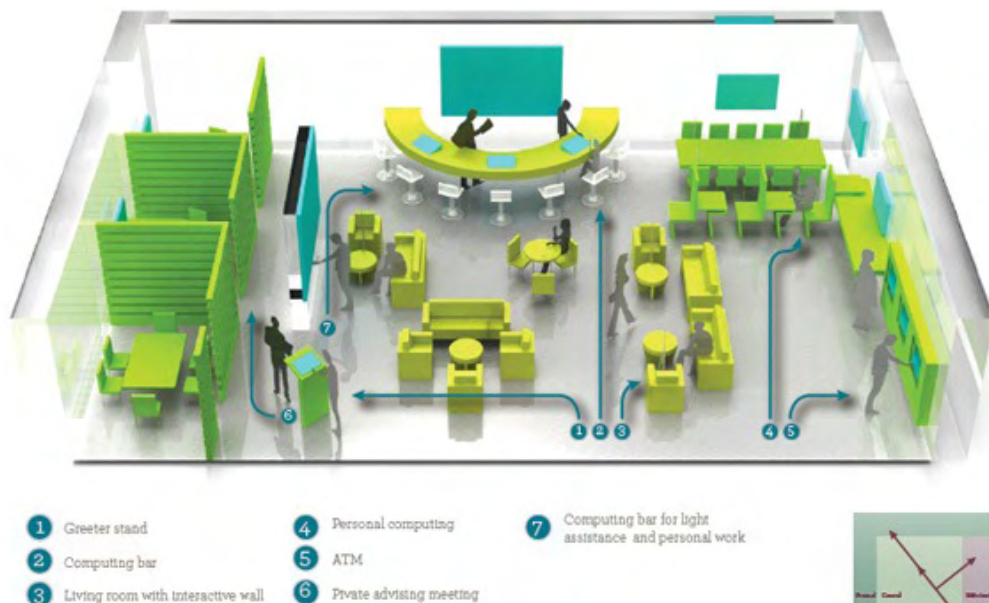


X-RAY BANK

X-RAY

X-ray is used here to stand for all forms of visual analysis that reveal the formal organization and hidden relations of spatial systems, in bodies and in buildings. Beyond simple transparency, X-rays and MRIs and CAT scans and PET scans are used to figure out and make figural the workings of the body, and those aspects that are not working so well, those blockages and pathological parts and diseased areas. Imagine “scanning” the body of the bank to figure out its formal organization and make figural its workings and its not-workings.

As architects we are supposed to have extra-human x-ray vision, like Superman it seems we are able to leap up and look over and into buildings — in plan and in section and in perspective section and in 3-D modeling — in order to see how the interior programmatic, structural, and infrastructure networks and systems all work in relation to each other. Imagine providing that vision to everyone, so they too could see manifest in the building the social and tectonic networks of the institutions we all engage with everyday.

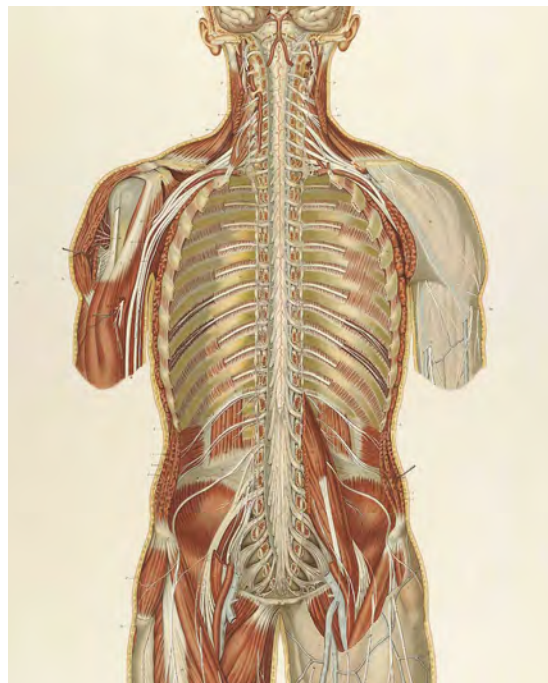
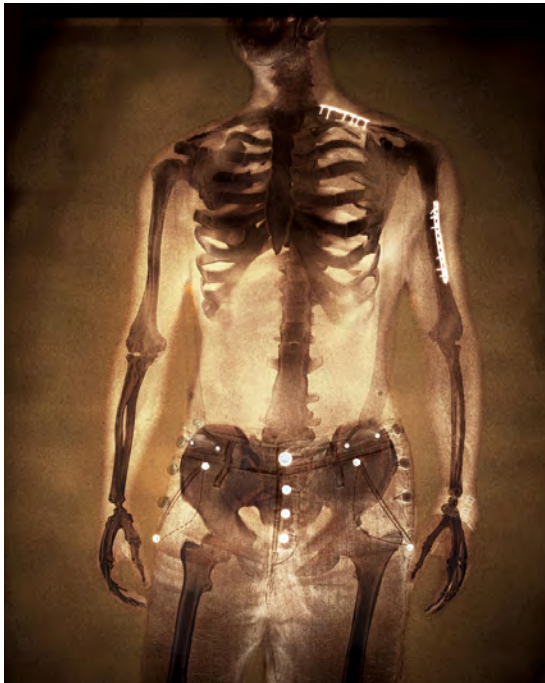




eX-TERIOR

So what's the trouble today with banks? And what's the trouble with bank architecture? More debt than interest? More take than give? More glass in the lobby every day but less transparency in the exchanges by the minute? The crisis of banks today circulates around this problem of insiders and outsiders. In the psychological register, what Jacques Lacan called extimacy is not the opposite of intimacy, but the exterior that 'topologically' is immersed in the intimate interior. Architecture always attempts to hold within itself the social and psychological interior scene of its cultural context. It is its own anthropology, the study of its own local and global rituals, these exchanges of our interiors and exteriors, if only we had the distance to see it, if only we as architects would make it manifest for everyone.

Part of the movie thrill or humor of bank-heist thrillers or comedies is how the bank's spatial organization has been scanned and mapped in order to enact the break-in, breaking pass the public lobby into the inside of the institution. And then the breaking back out. It's time for architecture to both break into and out from this limitation of only being able to provide the outsiders with one public presence of the lobby, by breaking into and out from the insider zones of the bank.

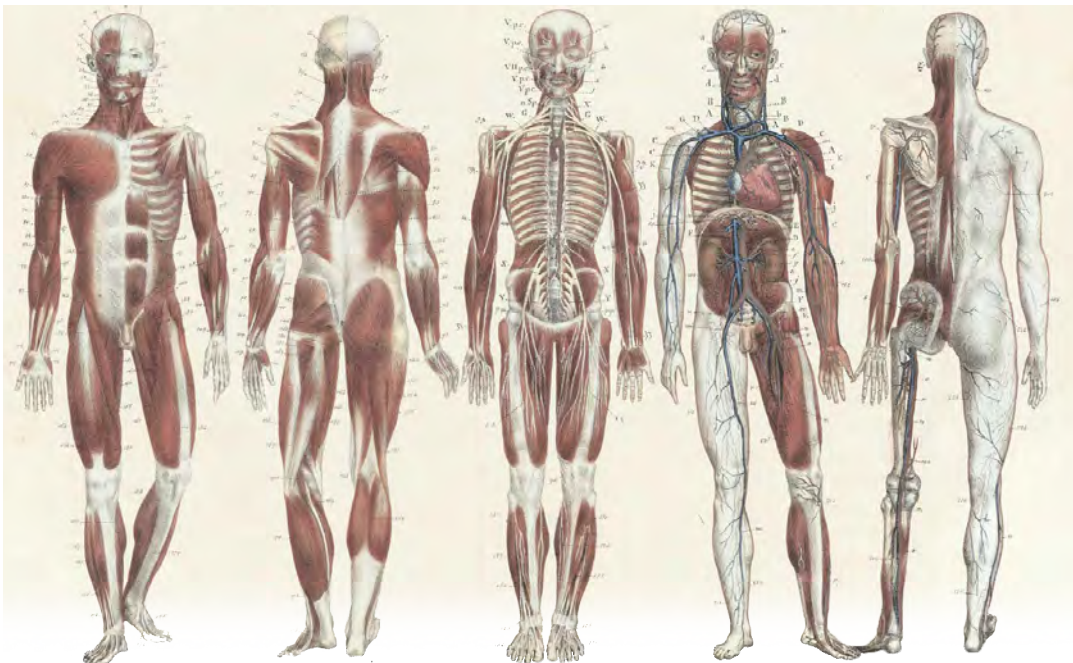




eX-CHANGE

Architecture, by definition, is the spatialization of social networks. Which are always in some sense virtual and imminent until architecture and design makes them manifest in space and time, whether at the scale of a teller window or an LCD screen or the scale of the city. Networks, by definition, are conduits of exchanges, and exchanges are always between certain insides and outsides. Indeed it is only through exchange, direct or indirect, that networks become manifest. And productive or, on the other hand, counter-productive.

Exchanges need to accrue interest rather than debt to be productive. Or if debt is accrued it should be the kind of supportive debt that assists the borrower to produce more of interest in the world. The innovative breakthroughs in banking today seek to enact how the institution and its public are indebted to each another, to support their individual interests through collective exchanges. Architecture can enact these exchanges by both breaking out these individual circumstances in order to draw them back collectively together again.





X-PROGRAM

By scanning and analyzing local and global economies related to the very diverse range of identities and exchanges in our site and program, you will be able to propose forms of public programming — Small Business Incubator Support? Food bank? Micro-loan Center? Local Production Market? Culture Bank? — that you imagine would break open the closed institution of the self-interested bank. Through analyzing scenes you select from your choice of a bank movie in comparison to your own bank scans you will be able to imagine a choreography of exchanges between the public and the institution to be developed from spatial scene to spatial scene throughout your building. The studio will explore the innovative modes of x-ray (and other anatomical) and cinematic visualization in representing your spatial sequences through exchanges between drawing and modeling (and for those interested, animation).

So while most of the stories of banks these days are filled with outrages and ironies and poignancies, in our society there is no other non-governmental institution in which we are so deeply immersed, yet whose social and ideological networks are barely transparent to us. By bringing outside networks of communities and publics, both from down the block and around the world, into and through and back out of the inner and outer envelopes of your bank, new forms of urban and architectural exchange can become manifest. Your building can enact, with wit and in thrilling ways like the films you'll investigate (as in the *Inside Man* whose stills are included here), a breaking into and out from the built social economic network we inhabit — a visualization of its processes and operations and systems made manifest on the exterior and interior of your building.

