



National Museum of Korean Democracy

민주화운동기념관

ENGLISH



The National Museum of Korean Democracy was established on the site of the former Namyeong-dong Anti-Communist Interrogation Office, once a symbol of state violence. Preserving the historical significance of the site, the Museum features exhibition, archival, and educational spaces, as well as Democracy Square, where visitors can engage with the values of democracy.

By connecting the original building with newly created spaces, the Museum invites visitors to confront memories of the past and reflect on the meaning of democracy and human rights.

Bringing together exhibitions, education, and public engagement, the Museum serves as a place to reflect on the history of Korea's democratization movements, consider the state of democracy today, and carry forward the values that will shape the future.

Floor Guide

1 M1 Museum

2 M2 Museum (Former Namyeong-dong Anti-Communist Interrogation Office)

3 E Education Building

4 Democracy Square

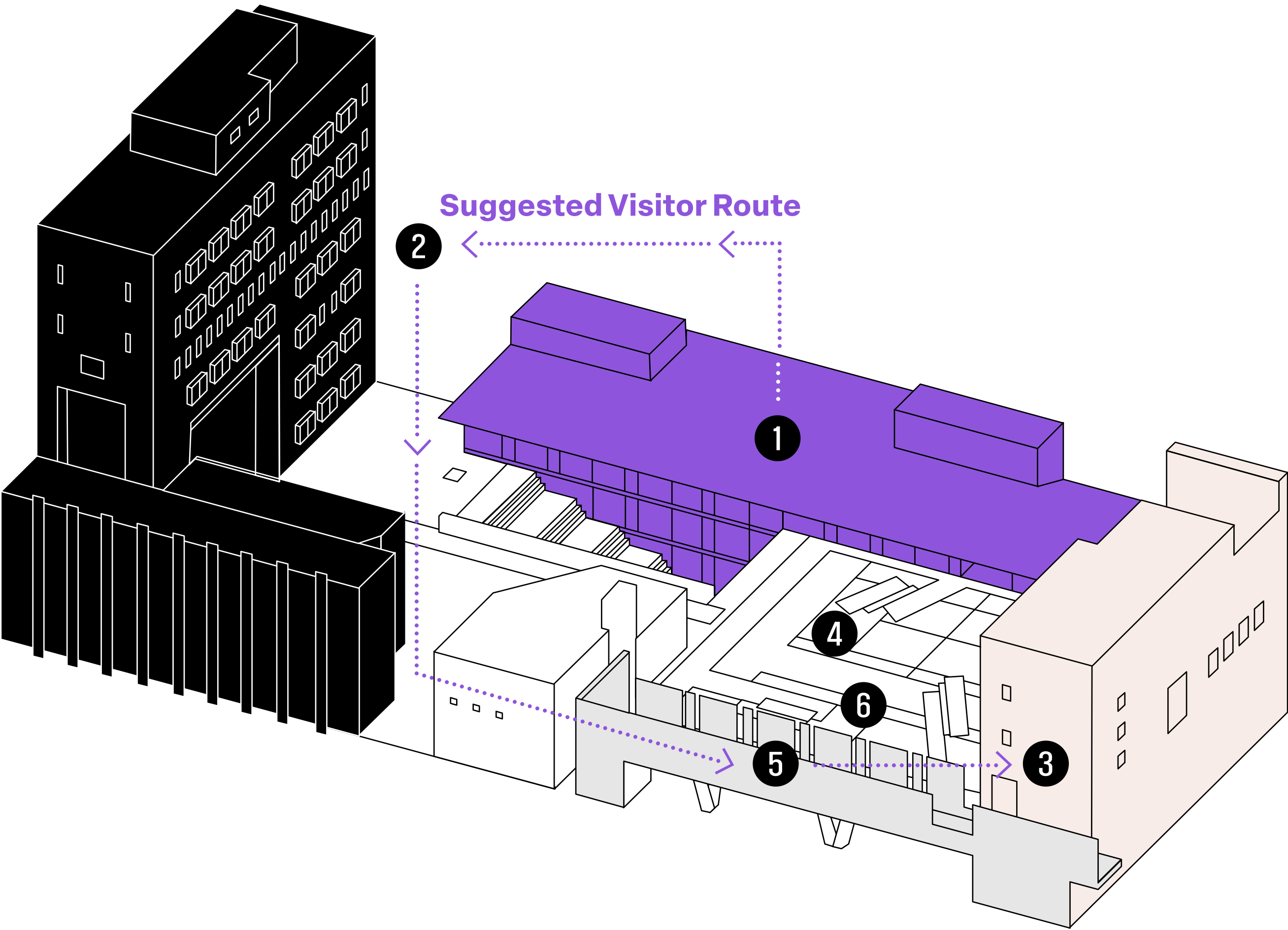
An open space created on the site of the former tennis courts. Skylights bring natural light into the underground exhibition galleries.

5 The Path to Healing

A space that reflects the site’s historical memory through a design inspired by the vertical windows of the former Anti-Communist Interrogation Office.

6 Open Door

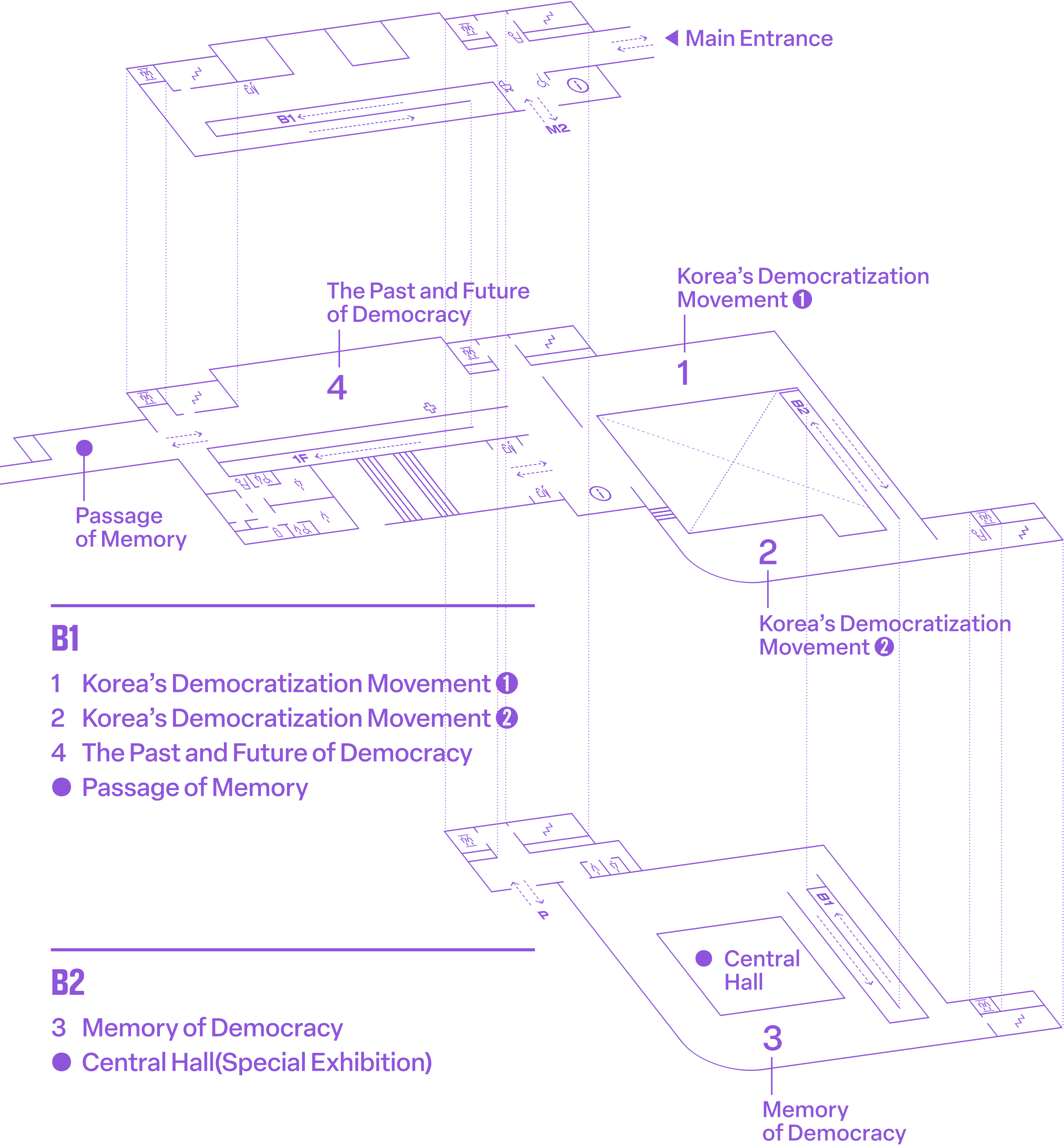
An artwork created using the original iron gate of the former Anti-Communist Interrogation Office, symbolizing a connection between the past and the present.



- Information
- Elevator
- Stairs
- Parking Lot
- Water Fountain
- Women's Restroom
- Accessible Women's Restroom
- Men's Restroom
- Accessible Men's Restroom
- Lockers
- First Aid Room
- Wheelchair Rental
- Stroller Rental

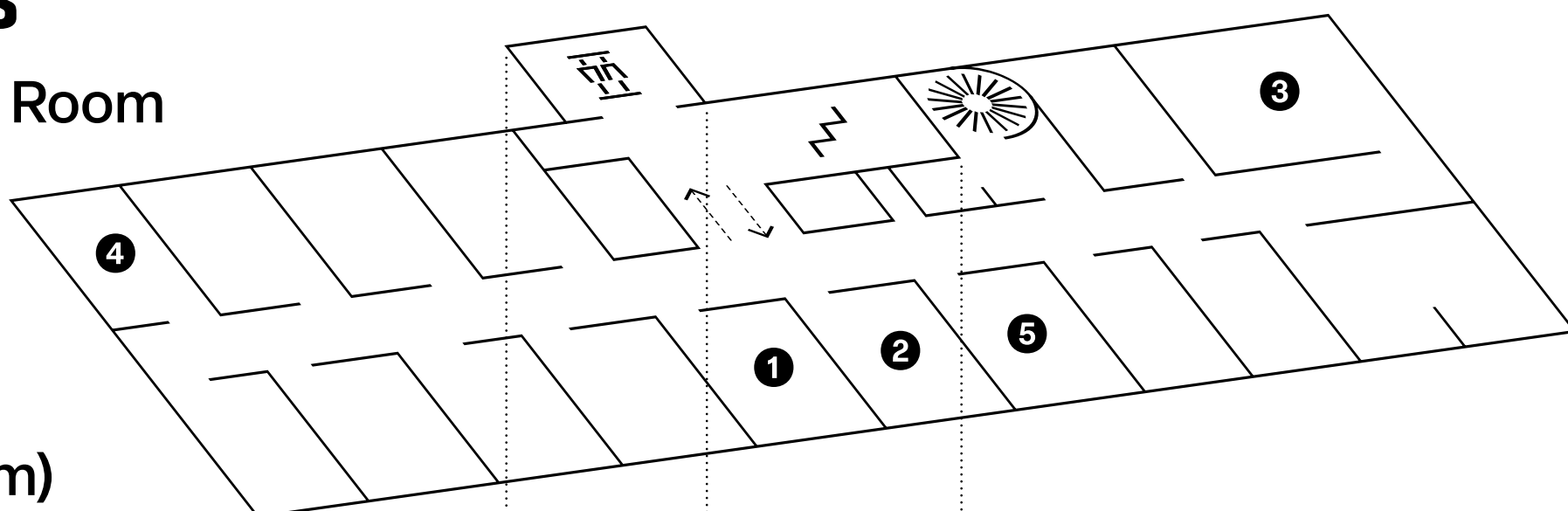
1F

◀ Main Entrance



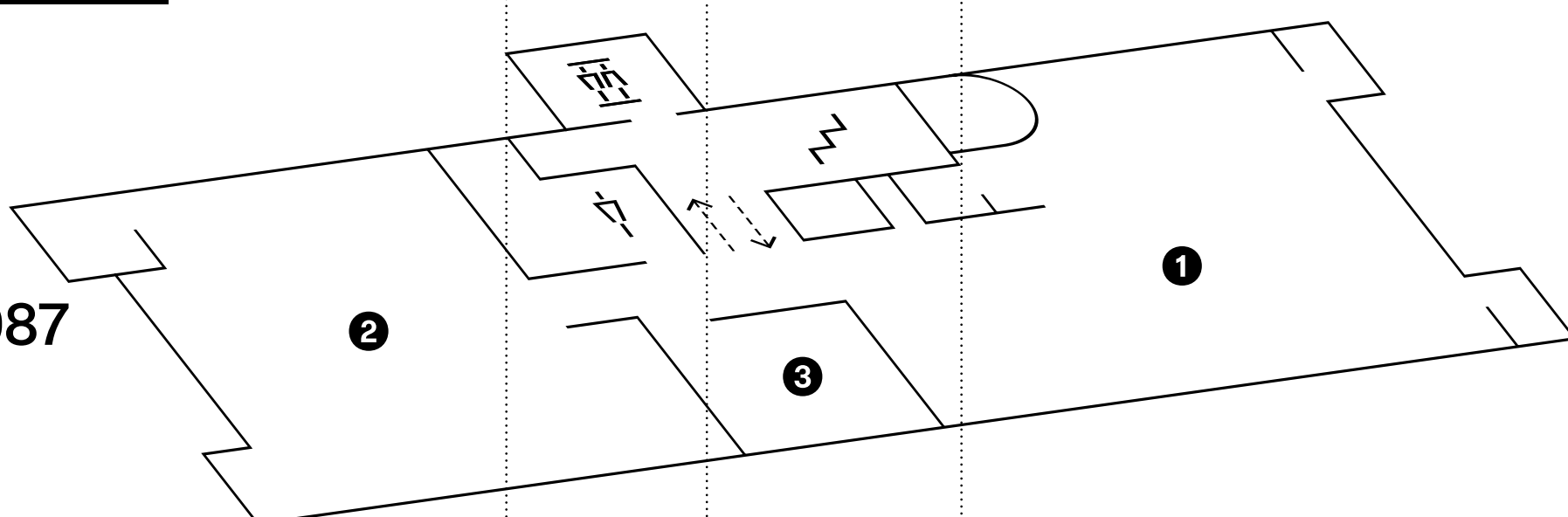
5F Investigation Rooms

- ❶ Room 509 (Investigation Room of Park Jong-cheol)
- ❷ Room 510 (Microphone Room)
- ❸ Room 515
- ❹ Room 504 (The Red Room)
- ❺ Room 511 (The Yellow Room)



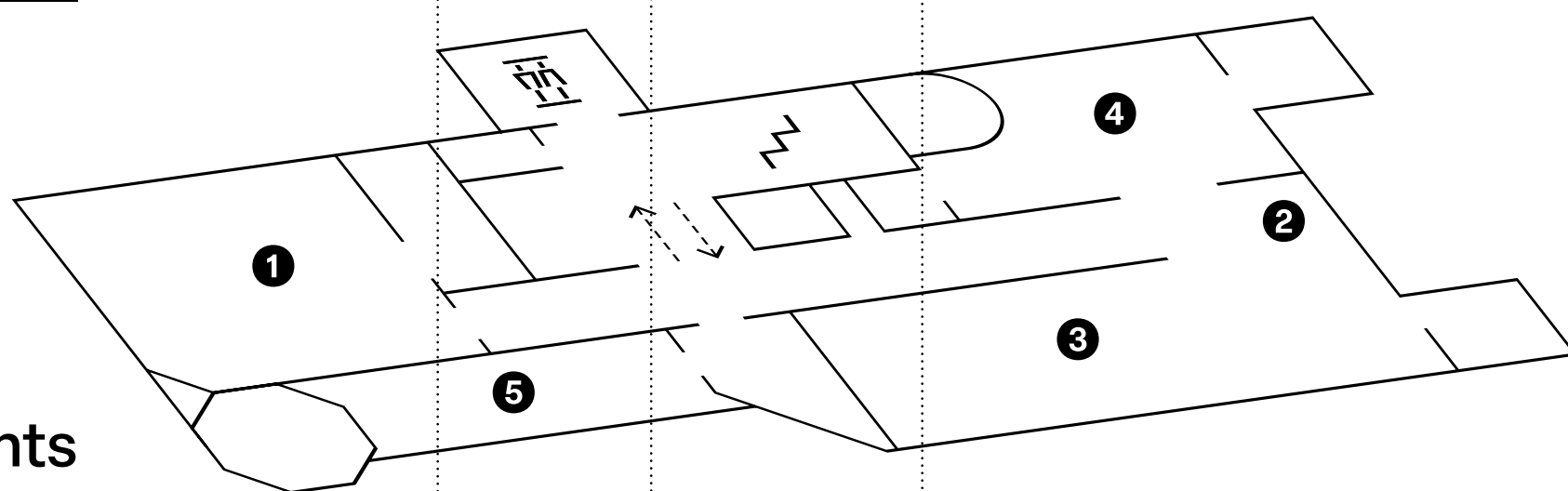
4F Rising Voices

- ❶ Inspiring Stories of Ordinary People
- ❷ Park Jong-cheol, 22 in 1987
- ❸ Testimonies



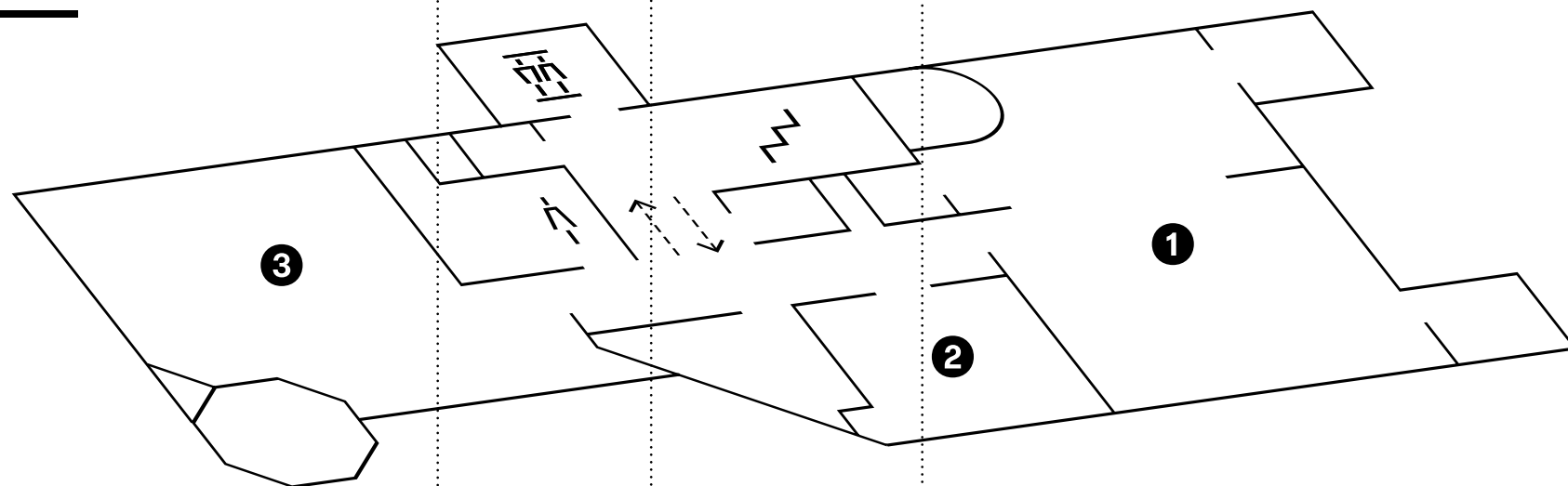
3F The Perpetrators of State Violence

- ❶ Voices Behind the Veil
- ❷ The Panopticon (CCTV)
- ❸ Anti-Communist Departments
- ❹ Memories of the Black Bricks
- ❺ Section Chief's Office



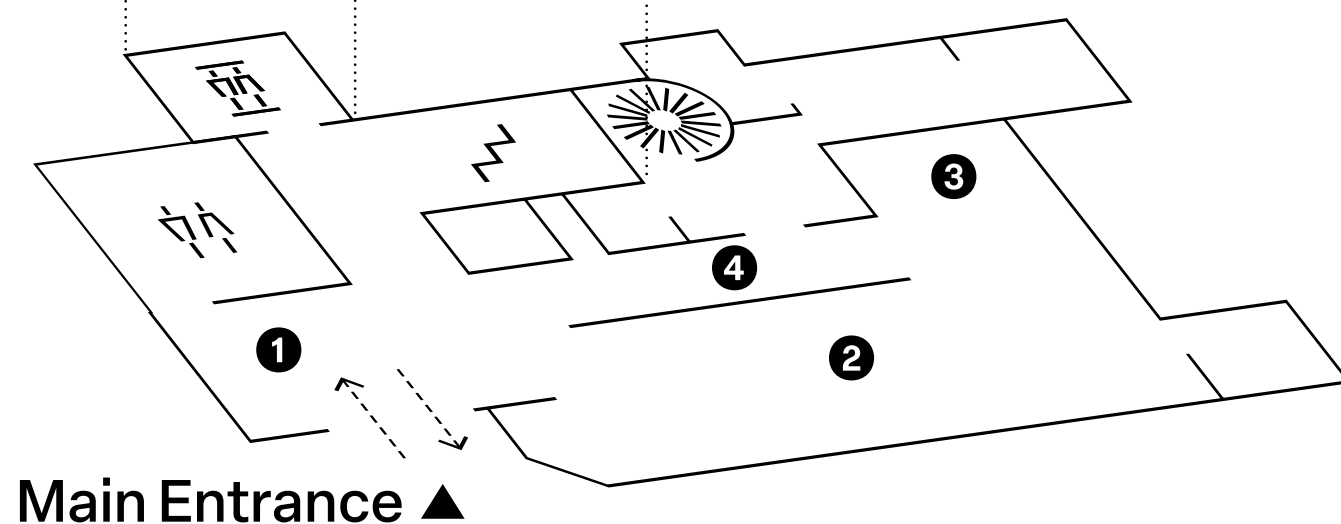
2F Fabricated Scenes

- ❶ Shattered Lives
- ❷ Lost Time
- ❸ Cases



1F Memories of That Day

- ❶ Article 12 of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea
- ❷ 1987: Memories of You and Me
- ❸ Beyond the Scene
- ❹ When That Day Comes
- ▲ Main Entrance



Main Entrance ▲

The Republic of Korea shall be a democratic republic.

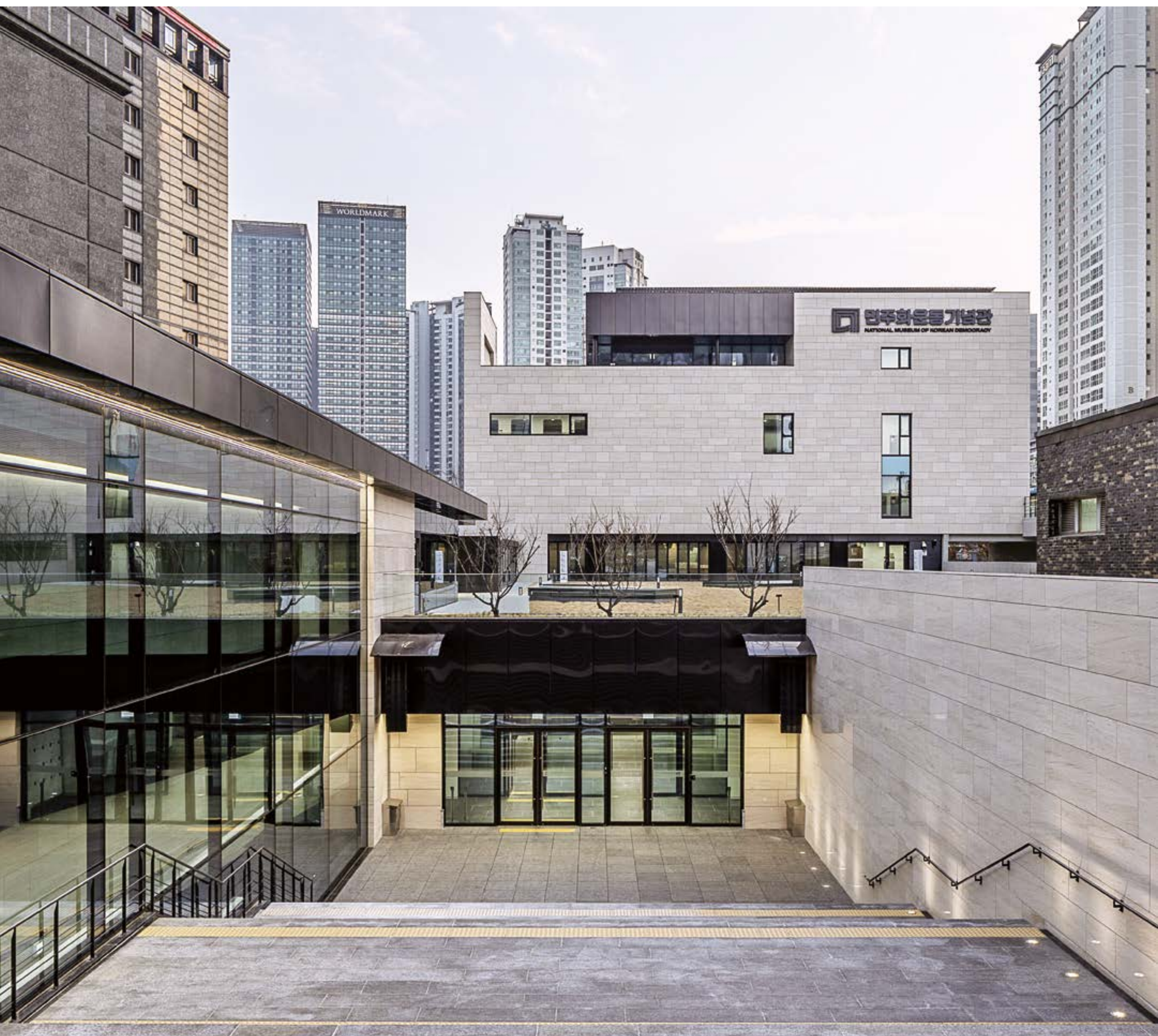
The sovereignty of the Republic of Korea shall reside in the people,

and all state authority shall emanate from the people.

Article 1 of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea

M1 | Museum ❶

Designed under the concept of “a humble gaze that faces history,” M1 presents the history of Korea’s democratization movements and the values of democracy through exhibitions and interactive experiences spanning from basement level 2 to the ground floor. Through permanent exhibitions, special exhibitions, and participatory media installations, visitors are invited to develop a deeper and more multifaceted understanding of the meaning of democracy.



Korea’s Democratization Movement ❶

Korea’s Democratization Movement ❶ explores the eleven major democratization movements designated under the Korea Democracy Foundation Act and its Enforcement Decree, including those commemorated as national observances. Visitors can trace the history of Korea’s democratization movements in chronological order, spanning the administrations of Rhee Syngman, Park Chung-hee’s Yushin regime, and Chun Doo-hwan’s new military regime.

1960

The Great Victory of Democracy, the April 19 Revolution



1960
February 28
Democratic
Movement



1960
March 8 Democratic
Uprising in Daejeon



1960
March 15
Masan Uprising



1960
The April 19
Revolution

1964-1979

Relentless Resistance to the Yushin Regime



1969
Movement Against the
Constitutional Amendment for
the Third Presidential Term



1964
June 3 Resistance
Movement



1979
Busan–Masan
Uprising



1980
The May 18
Democratization
Movement

1983-1987

A Watershed in the History of Korean Democracy, the June 10 Democratic Uprising



1987
June 10 Democratic
Uprising



1974
Movement Against
the Yushin Constitution

1980

Oh! Gwangju, Our Democracy!



1986
May 3 Incheon
Democratic Uprising

Special Docent Tour
The special docent tour offered for Korea’s Democratization Movements ❶ and ❷ brings the history of Korea’s democratization movements to life through dynamic graphics and choreographed movement, providing visitors with an immersive experience.

➡ [Special Docent Preview Click](#)

Korea’s Democratization Movement ②

Korea’s Democratization Movement ② explores the history of Korea’s democratization movements through the stories of the many groups that contributed to the advancement of democracy, including students, religious and civil society activists, international solidarity networks, workers, farmers, the urban poor, journalists, educators, cultural figures, and women.

The Flagbearers of the Democratization Movement: Students



1960
Police blocking female students from joining the Second Masan Demonstration

Toward Socio-Economic Equality: The Labor Movement



1985
A Sunil Textile worker bruised all over from strikebreaker violence

Voices Outside the System: Civil Society Organizations, Religious Communities, and International Networks



1986
Civil society activists staging a sit-in protest in front of Myeong-dong Cathedral, while journalists cover the demonstration

From the Struggle for Survival to the Democratization Movement: Farmers and the Urban Poor



1988
Farmers staging a sit-in protest in front of the Democratic Justice Party headquarters with bags of chili peppers behind them

Toward Gender Equality and Democratic Governance: Women



1987
Lotte Shopping workers staging a sit-in protest in uniform

Toward Freedom of Thought and Expression: Media, Education, and Cultural Movements



1989
Members of the Association of Writers for People’s Literature holding a street protest calling for the release of imprisoned writers and publishers

Memory of Democracy

Through thirty interactive LCD touchscreens, visitors can explore videos featuring places, objects, and songs associated with Korea’s democratization movements by selecting the content themselves. The exhibit encourages visitors to reflect on the meaning and values of the democratization movements embodied in each of these elements.



Memory of Places

1. Myeong-dong Cathedral
2. Family Restaurant Cecil
3. Jongno 5(o)-ga Christian Center
4. High School
5. University
6. Masan Wharf
7. Urban Industrial Mission, Night Schools
8. Dong-Il Textile, YH Trading
9. Jeonil Building
10. Wongaksa Temple
11. Shantytown
12. Seoul Station
13. Catholic Diocese of Wonju
14. Plaza
15. Hideout
16. Coal Mine
17. Wonpoong Textile Union
18. Pyoung Hwa Clothing Market

Memory of Objects

1. Taxi
2. Ballot Paper
3. Victory Shawl
4. Necktie
5. Wall Poster
6. The Tiger Moth
7. Leaflets and Banners
8. Taegeukgi
9. Mimeograph Machine
10. Sneakers
11. Sweet Potatoes and Potatoes
12. Flower
13. Camera and Tape

Memory of Songs

1. Friend
2. Morning Dew
3. Evergreen
4. Somewhere in This World
5. Small Pond
6. A Thousand-mile Road
7. The Tiger Moth
8. March for the Beloved
9. My Friend, Liberation is on the Way
10. Does Spring Come Also to These Stolen Fields
11. Four Seasons
12. When That Day Comes
13. When the Blue Mountain Calls
14. The Dawn of Labor
15. Oh Pine, Oh Pine, Oh Verdant Pine
16. In the Wilderness
17. Don't Make A Wry Face
18. People are More Beautiful than Flowers
19. A Phone Card
20. Song of Hope

The Past and Future of Democracy

Through the words of historical figures who lived through the twentieth century, this exhibit explores the core democratic values of freedom and equality, inviting visitors to reflect on the question, “What is democracy?” and discover their own answers.





The Wall of Remembrance

This wall bears the names of 136 individuals who were officially recognized as having died in relation to the democratization movement pursuant to the Act on the Honor Restoration of and Compensation to Persons Related to Democratization Movements enacted in 2001.

Passage of Memory

Jeon Young-ill, 2024

Installed along the passage leading to the former Namyeong-dong Anti-Communist Interrogation Office, this work symbolizes more than 400 victims identified through the investigation into torture at the Namyeong-dong Anti-Communist Interrogation Office, as well as those whose stories have yet to be uncovered.

Article 12(2) of the Constitution
of the Republic of Korea

or be compelled to testify

against himself or herself in criminal cases.

No citizen shall be tortured

Former Namyeong-dong Anti-Communist Interrogation Office
This building was a site of human rights abuses where innocent citizens who resisted the military dictatorship were detained, tortured, and stripped of their human dignity.

M2 | Museum ②

Housed within the preserved former Namyeong-dong Anti-Communist Interrogation Office, M2 invites visitors to confront the realities of state violence and reflect on the meaning of democracy through its investigation rooms and exhibition spaces spanning from the first to the fifth floors.

Soundscape

Through the layered sounds played from 204 speakers installed throughout the M2 building, visitors can experience the atmosphere and memories of the site in an immersive way.

[→ Read More Click](#)





5F Investigation Rooms

- ① Investigation Room Hallway
- ② Room 509 (Investigation Room of Park Jong-cheol)
- ③ Room 510 (Microphone Room)
- ④ Room 515
- ⑤ Room 504 (The Red Room)
- ⑥ Room 511 (The Yellow Room)



4F Rising Voices

- ① Inspiring Stories of Ordinary People
- ② Park Jong-cheol, 22 in 1987
- ③ Testimonies



3F The Perpetrators of State Violence

- ① Voices Behind the Veil
- ② The Panopticon (CCTV)
- ③ Anti-Communist Departments
- ④ Memories of the Black Bricks
- ⑤ Section Chief's Office



2F Fabricated Scenes

- ① Shattered Lives
- ② Lost Time
- ③ Cases



1F Memories of That Day

- ① Article 12 of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea
- ② 1987: Memories of You and Me
- ③ Beyond the Scene
- ④ When That Day Comes

Memories of That Day

During the 1970s and 1980s, the Korean military dictatorship sought to justify its rule under the guise of national security. At every political crossroads, the authorities announced alleged espionage cases and spy rings, while enacting laws to suppress those who opposed the regime. Surveillance and punishment became part of daily life. Yet, even in the darkness, the people’s fervent cries for democracy never ceased.



❶ Article 12 of the Constitution of the Republic of Korea
In past decades, institutions such as the military and intelligence agencies, including the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (later the Agency for National Security Planning, now the National Intelligence Service), were legally granted powers of detention and other coercive measures to protect the lives and property of citizens. Even the police, once regarded as the “people’s protector,” thoroughly disregarded the Constitution.

❷ 1987: Memories of You and Me
The 1970s and 1980s in South Korea were a time when control and oppression dominated daily life. Yet in 1987, there were people who struggled to break free from that cycle of control and oppression and build a country where the people held sovereign power. Through this film, the people of 1987 meet with us today, becoming one with who we are now.

❸ Beyond the Scene
During the years of military dictatorship, spies did in fact exist. News reports at the time frequently used terms such as “the North Korean communist regime,” “spy rings,” and “anti-state organizations” when reporting on espionage activities. However, subsequent court rulings revealed that many of these cases had been fabricated through torture.

❹ When That Day Comes
June 10, 1987 was a day when people, after years of silence, raised their voices for justice.

Fabricated Scenes

The military dictatorship conducted public espionage investigations under the pretext of ensuring national safety and security. Loyal collaborators of the regime formed specialized anti-communist investigative units, obsessively chasing results without regard for justice. The victims of these actions were innocent citizens who suffered as a result. By the 1970s, there were more fabricated spy cases than actual spies being apprehended.

5F



4F



3F

❶ Shattered Lives

During the military dictatorship, even ordinary citizens living their daily lives could suddenly be labeled “spies.” Through the Samcheok Family Spy Ring Case and the Youth Corps for the Democratization Movement Incident, we delve into the arduous process of uncovering the truth and reflect on the wounds left by South Korea’s democratization movement.

2F

❷ Lost Time

Through clocks whose hour and second hands no longer move, this installation represents the time that came to a standstill for those whose lives were forever changed by these events.

1F

❸ Cases

The dictatorship fabricated numerous espionage cases under the guise of threats from the North. The truth about these fabricated cases, created through torture, forced detentions, illegal imprisonment, and harsh treatment, began to emerge following the democratization movement in 1987. Since the 2000s, victims have been granted retrials, many resulting in acquittals, and state compensation has been underway.

The Perpetrators of State Violence

The perpetrators who operated within the state apparatus, designed to oppress and control citizens in order to sustain the dictatorship, acted with precision and organization. Through intelligence and investigative agencies—including the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, the Agency for National Security Planning, the Defense Security Command, the police, and the prosecution—anti-communist investigations were further strengthened and expanded. Although the truth has come to light through numerous testimonies since democratization, many perpetrators of state violence continue to justify their actions, claiming that they were “necessary for national security.”

5F

4F



3F

2F

1F

① Voices Behind the Veil

The perpetrators of state violence who stood at the forefront of torture and fabrication operated behind a veil of anonymity. Shielded by the dictatorship, they carried out inhumane surveillance and violence without hesitation, yet many have never shown genuine remorse. Although many years have passed, the full truth of what occurred here remains undisclosed.

② The Panopticon (CCTV)

Interrogation subjects were placed under strict surveillance. Inside the investigation rooms, cameras and microphones monitored and recorded their every move. The tactics went beyond physical pain. They were designed to psychologically intimidate individuals and erode their dignity through relentless pressure.



5F

4F

③ **Anti-Communist Departments**

Following Korea’s liberation, the military and police were the first institutions to establish intelligence agencies. After the May 16 military coup, the Korean Central Intelligence Agency was created as the nation’s primary intelligence service. As the dictatorship prolonged, each anti-communist division expanded and strengthened its operations. Hiding behind the shield of the “organization,” they conducted extensive surveillance across society.

3F

2F

④ **Memories of the Black Bricks**

The Namyeong-dong Anti-Communist Interrogation Office was meticulously designed to serve its purpose of conducting anti-communist investigations. The entire layout was optimized for surveillance, interrogation, and physical torture.

⑤ **Section Chief’s Office**

The Section Chief’s Office was located in a position overlooking the entire compound. According to the original floor plan, the room was furnished with four comfortable sofas and a bed. The room belonged to those who maintained their own daily lives while robbing others of theirs, a stark reminder of how people lived vastly different realities in the same era.

1F

Rising Voices

The Namyeong-dong Anti-Communist Interrogation Office remained hidden from public scrutiny for many years. It gained widespread attention after two pivotal events. The torture of Kim Geun-tae in 1985 and the death of Park Jong-cheol in 1987 became catalysts for the June Democratic Uprising. This section explores the records leading up to the 1987 June Democratic Uprising, including Park Jong-cheol’s story, and the extraordinary stories of those who endured immense suffering during those dark times yet held onto hope.

5F

4F

3F



2F

1F

❶ Inspiring Stories of Ordinary People

People falsely accused of being spies by the state were stripped of the lives they had built. Yet even through years of hardship, they continued to nurture their lives and hold on to their dreams. At times, comrades offered support. At other times, even ordinary objects became bridges to recovery.

❷ Park Jong-cheol, 22 in 1987

The torture and death of Park Jong-cheol on January 14, 1987 intensified public demands for constitutional reform to allow direct presidential elections and for an end to the ruling regime. The June 10 Democratic Uprising marked a historic turning point, freeing South Korea from decades of authoritarian military rule and paving the way for political democratization.

❸ Testimonies

The persecution carried out by state violence agencies, including the Namyeong-dong Anti-Communist Interrogation Office, has been revealed through numerous oral interviews and statements from victims. This exhibit invites visitors to bear witness to the suffering endured by the victims, the atrocities they experienced, and the memories of that day that continue to haunt them.

5F Investigation Rooms and the Namyong-dong Anti-Communist Interrogation Office

This is the only preserved site among the investigation rooms operated by state agencies during the military dictatorship. Unlike the investigation rooms of other intelligence agencies, which were typically situated underground, these rooms are located on the fifth floor. Above the doors of the 15 investigation rooms (18 when the building was originally constructed), only room numbers are discreetly displayed, with no indication of the floor. Its sophisticated design, remarkable for a building constructed in the 1970s, was meticulously planned for a single purpose.

5F

4F

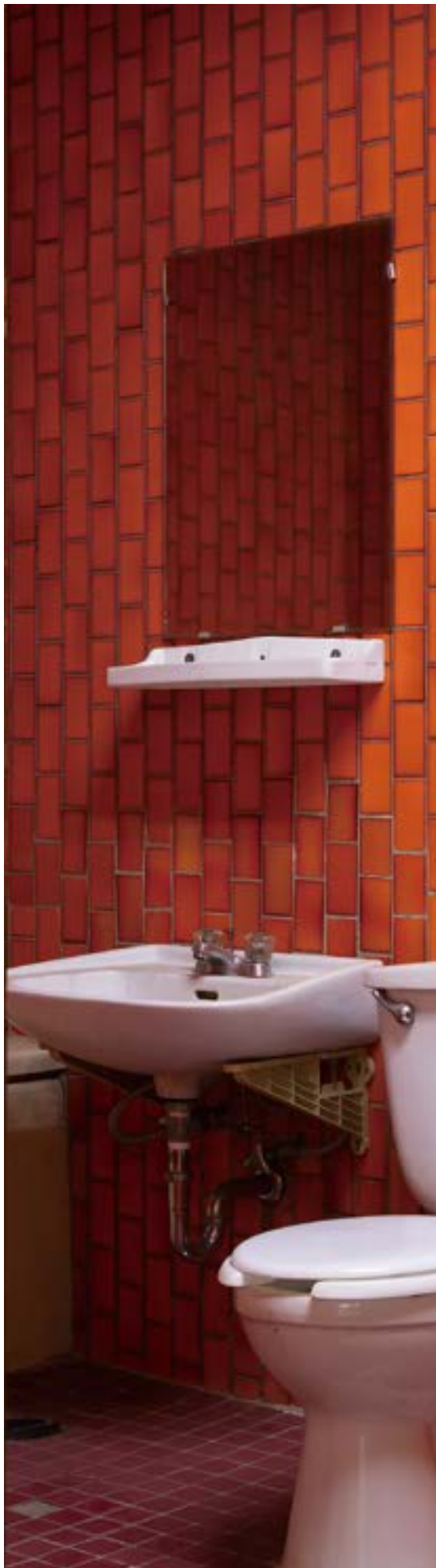
3F

2F

1F



5F Investigation Rooms
The fifth floor contains 15 investigation rooms, and all entrances were designed so that no door is visible from the one directly across from it.



Toilet, Sink, and Bathtub
Inside each investigation room were a bathtub, sink, and toilet. These fixtures were not separated from the interrogation area and remained exposed to surveillance cameras at all times.

1F

2F

3F

4F

5F

Peephole
The small lens installed in each door was used to monitor the room from the outside. It allowed investigators to observe the condition and activities of individuals confined inside the investigation rooms.

Investigation Room Hallway Dimmer
The dimmer switch located in the investigation room hallway controlled not only the power but also the brightness of the lighting. As a result, individuals confined in the investigation rooms were unable to perceive the passage of time.

Narrow Windows
The windows in the fifth-floor investigation rooms are narrow and elongated, unlike those found on the other floors. They were designed to prevent detainees from escaping or attempting self-harm while under interrogation.



1F

2F

3F

4F

5F

**Door for
Detainees at
the Rear of the
Building**

There was no way of knowing what was happening inside the building from the outside, as all the windows on the rear side of the building were narrow. This rear door was used specifically for bringing detainees in and out of the building and led to a small detainee transport elevator and a spiral staircase.

Spiral Staircase

The spiral staircase leads only to the fifth floor, where the investigation rooms are located. Blindfolded detainees had no way of knowing which floor they were being taken to. The sound of footsteps on the metal stairs heightened their fear, while the spiral design disoriented them and deprived them of their sense of space.

Iron Gate

A massive, imposing iron gate stood at the entrance to the Namyong-dong Anti-Communist Interrogation Office, and those brought here passed through it in a state of extreme fear.





Visible Storage: CHANG, the Open Archives

The Korea Democracy Foundation has collected and managed more than 900,000 historical records related to Korea's democratization movements. To preserve these materials, the National Museum of Korean Democracy features archival storage on Level B2 and a Visible Storage area on Level B1. CHANG, the Open Archives showcases key records from Korea's democratization movements through viewing windows that offer visitors a glimpse into the collection.

—→ Website Click
archives.kdemo.or.kr



Donor Wall
The Donor Wall honors the individuals and organizations that have donated historical records related to Korea’s democratization movements since 2001. A total of 758 donors are recognized on the wall. (as of December 31, 2024)

The Education Building offers a wide range of educational programs designed to carry forward the spirit of the democratization movement and contribute to the advancement of democracy. Tailored to different audiences, these programs help participants better understand the history and values of democracy. They also provide opportunities for citizens and experts to learn together, fostering social solidarity and expanding a culture of dialogue.



4F Minjumaru

Minjumaru is an open space where visitors can explore, read about, and discuss the values of democracy through books, photographs, video exhibitions, and other materials related to Korea’s democratization movements and democracy around the world.



Educational Programs

For Adults	For Youth (Middle and High School Students)
• Democracy Lecture Series in Commemoration of the International Day of Democracy • Citizen Lecture Series at the Museum • Teacher Training Programs • Professional Development Programs	• Youth Civic Engagement Presentation Contest • Youth Democracy Programs • Exhibition- and Curriculum-Linked Educational Programs • Career Exploration Programs • Youth Democracy Field Trip Programs
For Families & Children (Elementary School Students)	Accessibility & Content Outreach
• Programs for School Groups and Individual Participants • Family Programs • Self-Guided Programs	• Exhibition Guided Tour Programs • Accessibility Programs for Visitors with Disabilities • Foreign Language Support Programs • School Democracy Programs • Educational Materials and Videos for Commemorative Education on Democracy and the Democratization Movement

→ Apply for Educational Programs Click

Korea Democracy Foundation

The Korea Democracy Foundation was established under the Korea Democracy Foundation Act, which was legislated in 2001 by the National Assembly for the purpose of inheriting and advancing the spirit of democratization movements that served as the key engine of the advancement of democracy in Korea. The Foundation was designated as an affiliated public organization under the Ministry of the Interior and Safety in 2007.



Major Operations

- Operation of the National Museum of Korean Democracy
- Operation of the Korea Democratization Movement Memorial Park
- Memorial and exchange programs related to democratization movements
- Operation of democracy education programs
- Collection and management of historical records
- Academic research
- International cooperation

132 Naesonsunhwan-ro,
Uiwang-si, Gyeonggi-do
T +82-31-361-9500
F +82-31-361-9576

→ Website Click
kdemo.or.kr

Korea Democratization Movement Memorial Park

Since 2023, the Korea Democracy Foundation has been entrusted with the management of the Korea Democratization Movement Memorial Park in Icheon-si, Gyeonggi-do, which opened in June 2016. The Foundation is responsible for maintaining the cemetery, hosting joint memorial ceremonies, and operating exhibitions and educational programs at the park.



Major Operations

- Memorial programs honoring democracy activists
- Planning and operation of exhibitions on democratization movements
- Operation of educational and interactive programs

Hours

Summer (March–October)
: 9:30 AM–5:30 PM
Winter (November–February)
: 10:00 AM–5:00 PM
Closed on Mondays,
January 1, and during
the Seollal and Chuseok
holiday periods
Outdoor areas, including
the cemetery and Democracy
Square, are open year-round
from 9 AM to 6 PM.

30 Gongwon-ro,
Moga-myeon, Icheon-si,
Gyeonggi-do, 17406
T +82-31-8011-9710
F +82-31-8011-9709

→ Website Click
minjupark.or.kr

Hours

Tuesday–Sunday, 10:00 AM–6:00 PM
(Last Admission: 5:00 PM)

Closed

Every Monday, January 1, Seollal, and Chuseok

Admission

Free

Directions

By Subway

Namyeong Station (Line 1), Exit 1

Sookmyung Women’s University Station (Line 4), Exit 7

Samgakji Station (Line 6), Exit 10

*Please use public transportation as parking is unavailable.

National Museum of Korean Democracy

37 Hangang-daero 71-gil, Yongsan-gu, Seoul

T +82-2-6440-8900