

AJAX EXPERIENCE

In collaboration with gsmprjct, Jimmy Lee and Sid Lee

SID LEE

ARCHITECTURE



general **INFORMATION**

Contact us

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An overview

LOCATION

Rembrandtplein
Utrechtsestraat 9
1017 DA Amsterdam

CLIENT

AFC AJAX N.V. Netherlands

TYPE

Museum

SURFACE (SCOPE)

1 000 m²

CONSTRUCTION BUDGET


4.2 M EUROS / 5.5 M\$ CDN

PRODUCTION

August 2010 to Novembre 2011

OCCUPATION

November 2011



"Amsterdam is Ajax. Ajax is Amsterdam".

The challenge

The over 100 year-old Ajax Amsterdam is a Dutch football club based in Amsterdam. The city has completely related to this legendary and world-famous club: Amsterdam is Ajax, Ajax is Amsterdam. The Dutch national team has built its reputation over time, and the club has won all the awards in the profession: the Champions' League, the UEFA Cup and the European Cup winners' cup.

In 2010, Sid Lee Architecture, in collaboration with gsmprjct°, Sid Lee, and Jimmy Lee, was mandated by the AFC (Ajax Football Club) to create the brand new Ajax Experience, a museum experience that praises the epic sports franchise, allowing the visitors to discover what has led Ajax to become one of the most respected teams in the history of football.



“Two years ago, we thought: we have such great memorabilia here at the club. Why not put all of that into a great experience. And we’re an Amsterdam club. So why not go back to the heart of Amsterdam.”

Henri van der Aat, Ajax’s commercial director

We build giants...

Located beforehand at the Ajax Stadium in a more classic and smaller space, and then relocated at the Arena stadium at the outskirts of the city, the Ajax football club's museum would already attract a large number of football aficionados. However, the club wanted to give the museum a third life and have it this time in a more central position. So the goal was to turn this museum into an experience and to reconnect it to the heart of its city, Amsterdam.

The Ajax Experience is located on the most popular square in the center of Amsterdam, the Rembrandtplein, not far from the place the club was originally founded in 1900: the Café Oost-Indië in Kalverstraat. The Experience was set in an

iconic building called the bank that used to host the ABN AMRO Bank, hence embodying this legendary place that bounds the team to its city.

The Experience aims at celebrating a unique history of successes through a series of playful and interactive events, and inspiring historical memories. The visitors will be bathed into the discovery of the history of the team, its heroes, and they will find out what it takes to build a young player into an iconic player, in essence how Ajax succeeds in building the Giant players. At the term of the experience, the visitors will have fully understood how Ajax builds Giants.

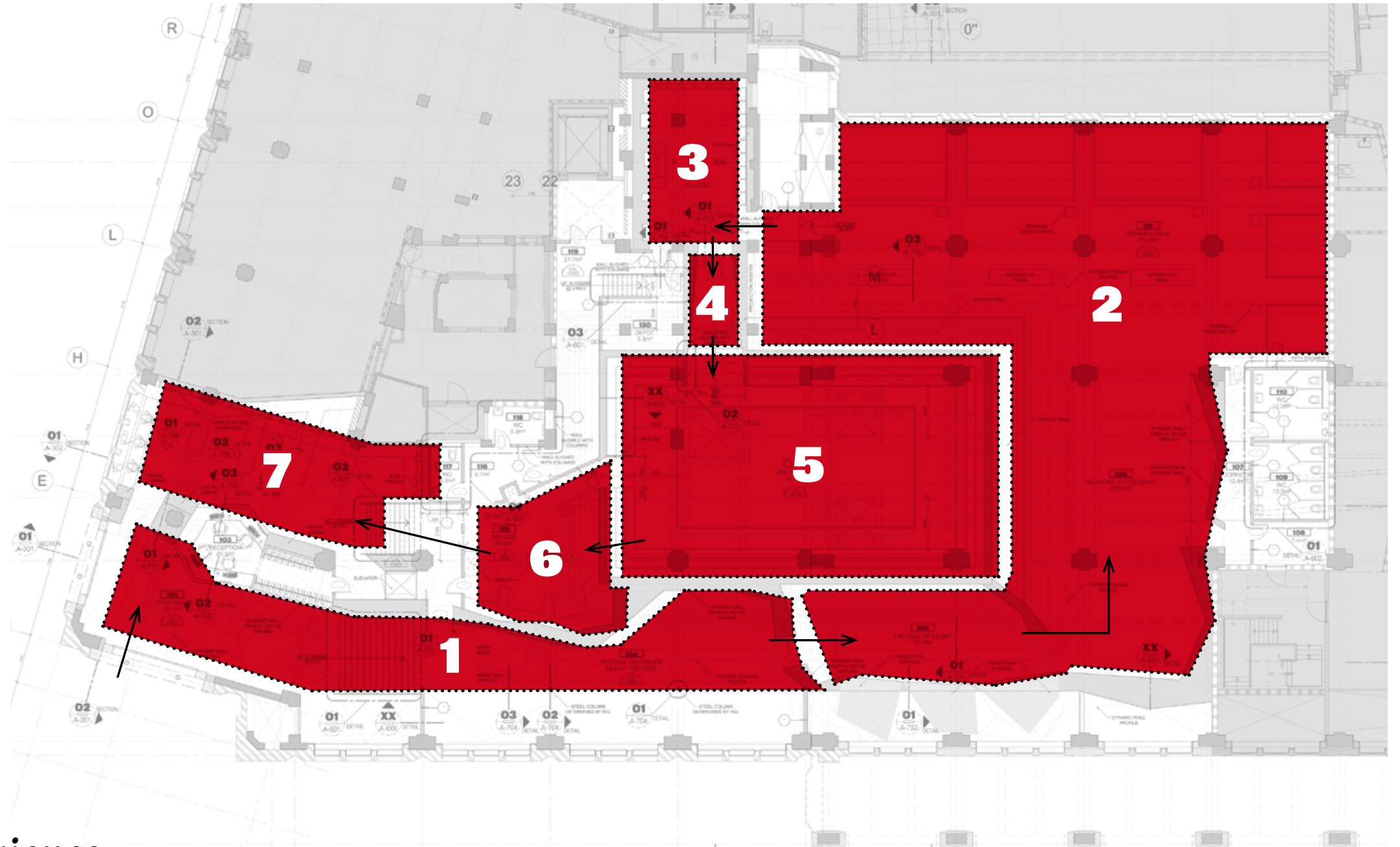


LEGEND: 1. Rembrandt square 2. Statue of Rembrandt



AJAX
GRAND OPENING
WINTER 2017





Walkthrough Experience

The project is built around the peak of the trail : the stadium. It is located at the center of the museum, and its stadium-like architecture leaves a "reverse bleachers" feel to the whole museum.

The trail is conceived as an enfilade so that the visitors can fully live the developing process of an athlete: from the Giants who've engraved his memory to his own glory on the field.

The museum is divided into 7 big steps or different experiences:

1. History Hall
2. The Ajax Academy
3. The Locker room
4. The "Pitch"
5. The Stadium
6. Ajax around the world
7. The Retail

Step 1:

We build **GIANTS**

The history hall

With the ticket stand and a waiting area, the hall is first and foremost branded with an imposing historical print that underlines the excellence and the glory of the greatest players of the team, "the Giants". Free general admission and visible from the street, the museum gives the history of the club back to where it belongs: its own city.

The hall acts like a prelude to the experience and the architecture spreads out in a sculptural wall with a triangulated surface, creating the effect of

a roughly sculpted surface with lines that challenge gravity. Embedded in those sculpted walls are the different Giants and the historical timeline of the club spanning from 1900 to today, underlining the great events of the club as it evolved each time with the birthing of new great players. For the mural, the club officials had the hard task of choosing 17 Giants worth of being part of the club's historical fresco.





JAN DE NATRIS
(1917-1925)
(1928-1929)



1930

PIET VAN REENEN
(1929-1942)

1915

JACK REYNOLDS WORDT
TRAINER VAN AJAX

1911

AJAX PROMOVEERT NAAR
DE EERSTE KLASSE

1900

RICHTING VAN DE
AMSTERDAMSE FOOTBALL
CLUB



We wanted to create a strong, personalized, dynamic, graphic identity that would live throughout the experience.

We worked on 3 different layers to address various aspects of the club's history:

1 WE BUILD GIANTS

We want to represent the Giants in a strong, iconic, and dynamic way. To bring all of the enlarged pictures at the same level and create uniformity, we use high contrast black&white and red&white pictures.



2 111 YEARS OF HISTORY

Quickly show and visualize important periods of Ajax great history with strong iconic typography.

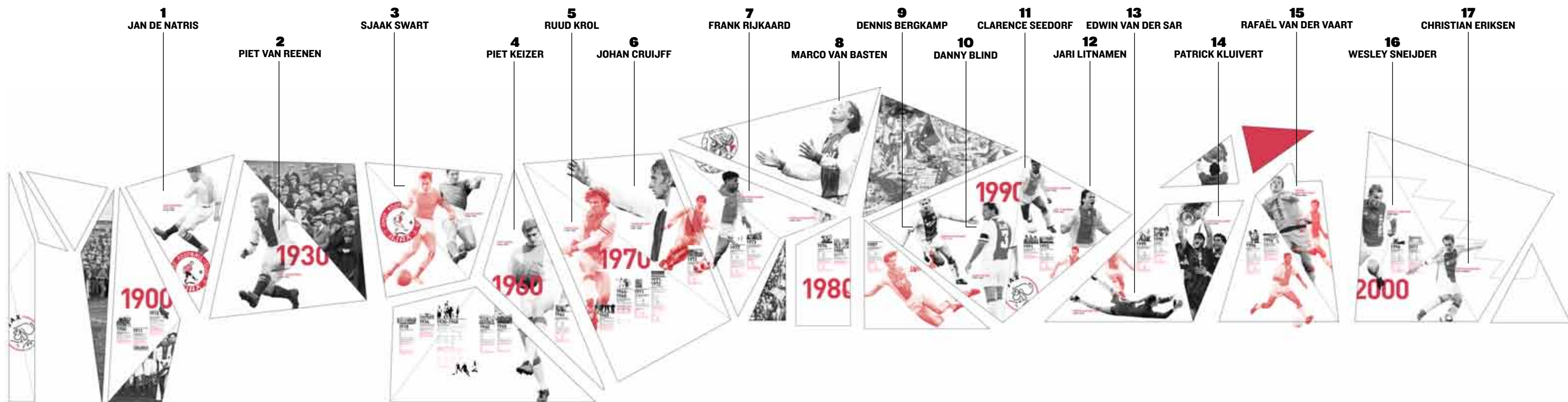


3 GLORIOUS MOMENTS

Using a collage technique for photographic elements, and setting a strong and clear timeline, we display all stories and anecdotes that made Ajax players become GIANTS and honor them with being part of the wall.

Those anecdotes are chosen to satisfy the tourists as well as the hardcore fans who already know a lot about their favorite club.







In the open vista (hall), 2 architectural languages play against one another in a back and forth game: the pure lines of the bleachers versus the sculptural language of the mural.

Step 2:

The Ajax **ACADEMY**

We build Giants

The academy offers a strong contrast with the public space of the hall as it is much darker and multiple audio and visual elements are integrated.

In this section of the museum, visitors will learn

how the AFC turns young players into world-famous athletes, as well as the club's training methods based on the TIPS (technique, insight, personality, and speed) model.

| Groep | Groep | Groep |
|-------|-------|-------|
| 37 | 38 | 39 |
| 14:30 | 14:38 | 14:45 |
| **** | | |
| 0/0 | 7:15 | 14:15 |



A photograph of two men standing in a dark, modern museum space. They are looking at a large projection on the wall that shows a football player in a white jersey with the number 10, likely Johan Cruyff, in action. The man on the left is wearing a striped jacket and dark pants, while the man on the right is wearing an orange and white jacket and dark pants. The ceiling features red and black diagonal stripes.

A. THE "WELL" OF TALENT

AJAX IS POWERED BY YOUTH

Witness how the renowned football club is also the best school of football, empowering young athletes with superior football skills.

The well of talents acts as an introduction to the Ajax philosophy and approach to football. Using the training program as a way of conveying the essential ideas behind the club's philosophy. This section is the only pulsed space of the experience. It shows how the athletes flourish through their training in the club; how they have the potential at their reach to become Giants.

B. THE ACADEMY

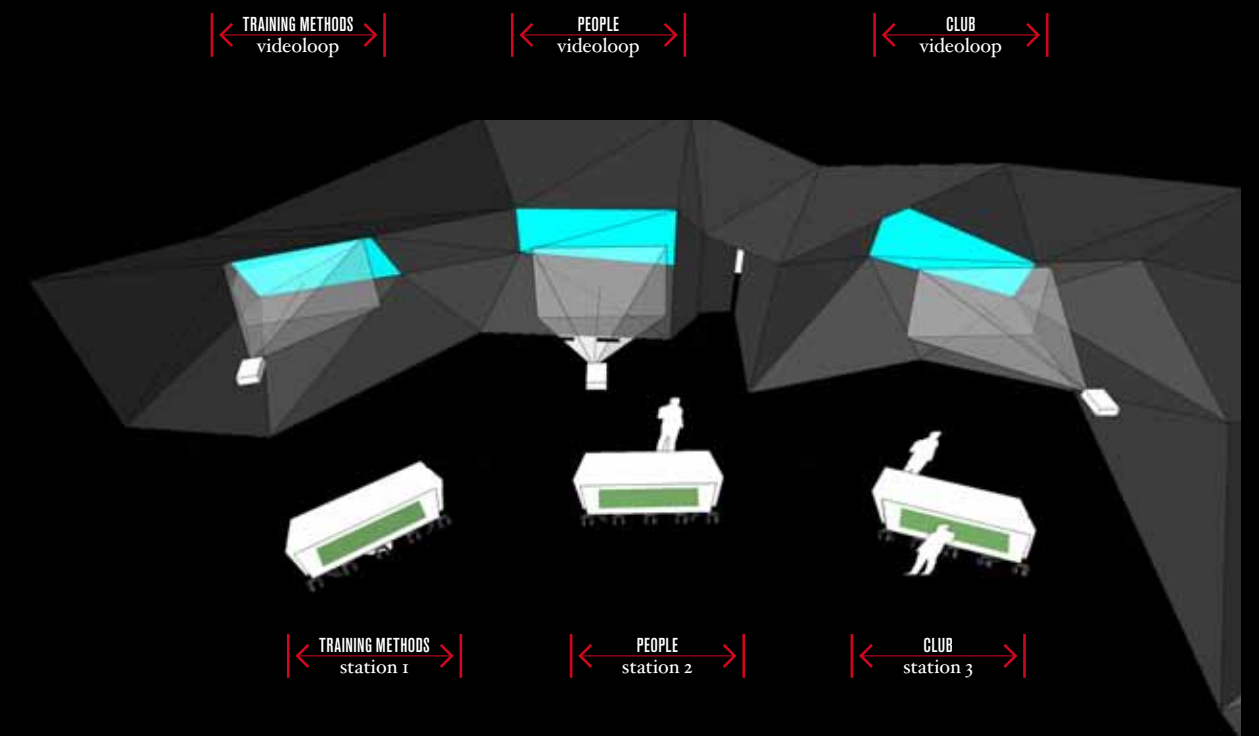
AJAX IS A SCHOOL WHERE FOOTBALL IS TAUGHT AND MASTERED

Ajax, as an academy of Giants, is an equilibrium between the people who run it, the training methods and intelligence, and the club as an institution and place where all of these people, ideas and athletes thrive.

The space is somewhat a “behind the scenes” of Ajax, explaining the context in which it manages to train so many successful players. Between the training methods, the club where success is cultivated, the people are the ones that bring it together and build the culture and the players.

The idea is to understand the scope of various elements that act together to build a Giant.





After going through the Well of Talent, visitors are greeted by three (3) two-minute documentaries, each presenting a strong element of the process:

1. The People
2. The Club Heritage
3. The Training Methods

These videos are structured around interviews with active individuals of each of these spheres (from trainers, to management, to fans).

2 large showcases under the stadium present the club heritage as a society, place and cradle of success with apparel, trophies, and a broad explanation of historical facts tied to the memorabilia.





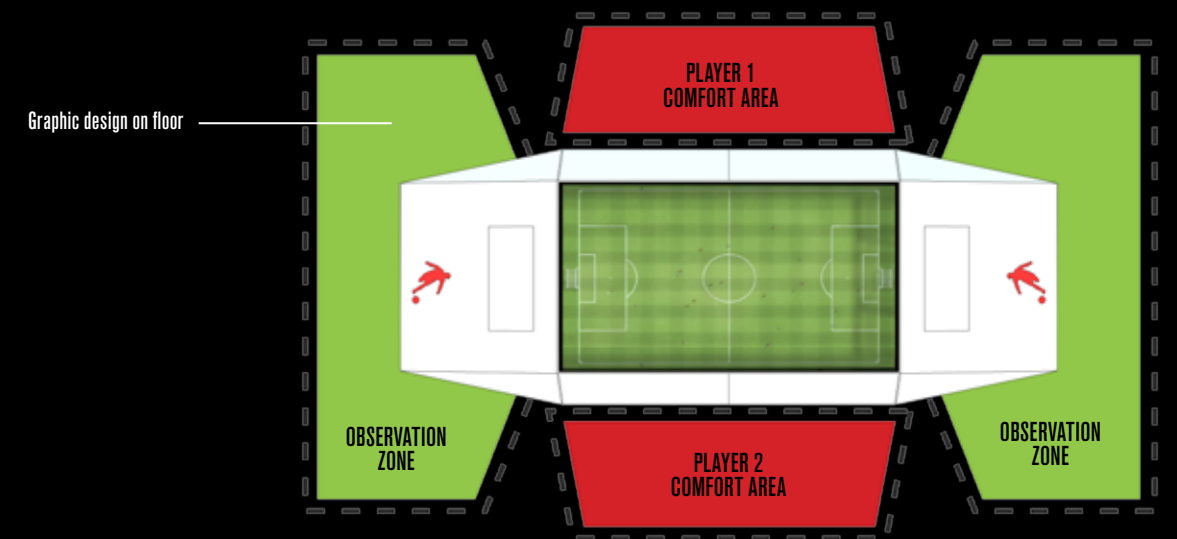
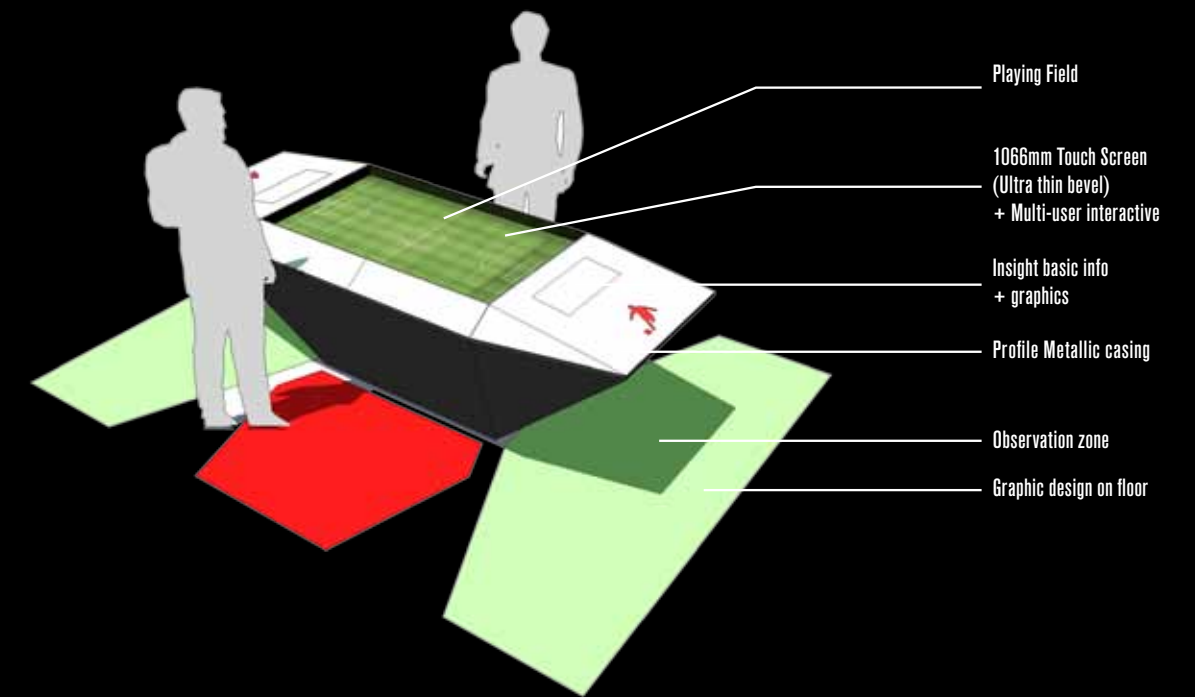
C. THE TRAINING FIELD

After understanding the context and how the elements come about to make the academy, the visitor explores 275 m² of interactive features.

T.I.P.S.: HOW TO TRAIN TO BECOME A GIANT

This unique training program, developed by Ajax, is key to becoming a Giant.

The training field holds a series of play stations, each individually exploring the 4 key topics with use of interactive technology. Similar to drills, the interactivities are designed with a play & learn approach, where content becomes embedded in the physical experience.



Insight

Insight: decyphering, anticipating, and playing the game.

3 interactive tables are used as displays that hold different insightful analysis on some of the greatest Ajax games.

These pods will give insights on different strategies, and can be viewed either solo or in a group of 2.

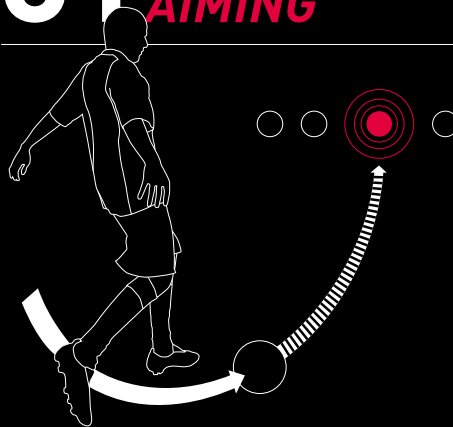


Technique Booths

Technique: mastering the moves is done by breaking them up into smaller exercises (drills), which are repeated until perfection is reached.

Technique is displayed in 3 booths with distinctive strategies. The booths are sealed in tempered glass to minimize the sound of the ball. In front of these booths are a big flat pannel with integrated screens showing videos of the different techniques being represented.

01 RICHTEN AIMING



EXERCISE: HIT THE TARGETS

TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS:

- 1 Use the **inside of your foot** for greater precision.
- 2 Try to connect with the ball in the centre, in the 'heart'. **Your point of contact** with the ball will determine the direction of the ball. If you connect with the bottom of the ball, the ball will go upwards. If you connect with the ball at its centre, the ball will stay low to the ground.
- 3 **Your body position** will also influence the ball's direction. If you lean over the ball, the ball will stay low to the ground. If you lean backwards when you kick, you will force the ball upwards.
- 4 **The position of your standing leg** is important. For an accurate pass, plant the foot of your standing leg just beside the ball with your toes pointing in the direction of the pass.

02 TIMING TIMING



EXERCISE: TIME A CAREFUL PASS TO YOUR TEAMMATE

TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS:

- 1 Use the **inside of your foot** for better aim.
- 2 Where you **make contact with the ball** determines the direction it goes in. If you kick underneath the ball, it will go upward. If you kick the middle of the ball, it will stay on the ground.
- 3 **Your body position** also has an effect on whether ball stays low or goes into the air. If you bend over the ball, the ball will stay down to the ground. If you lean backwards you will force the ball to go up.
- 4 **The position of your standing leg** is important. Keep your balance. Plant your standing leg next to the ball, keep your body above the ball and swing your foot backwards. Point your toes towards the ground, allowing your instep to make good contact with the ball.

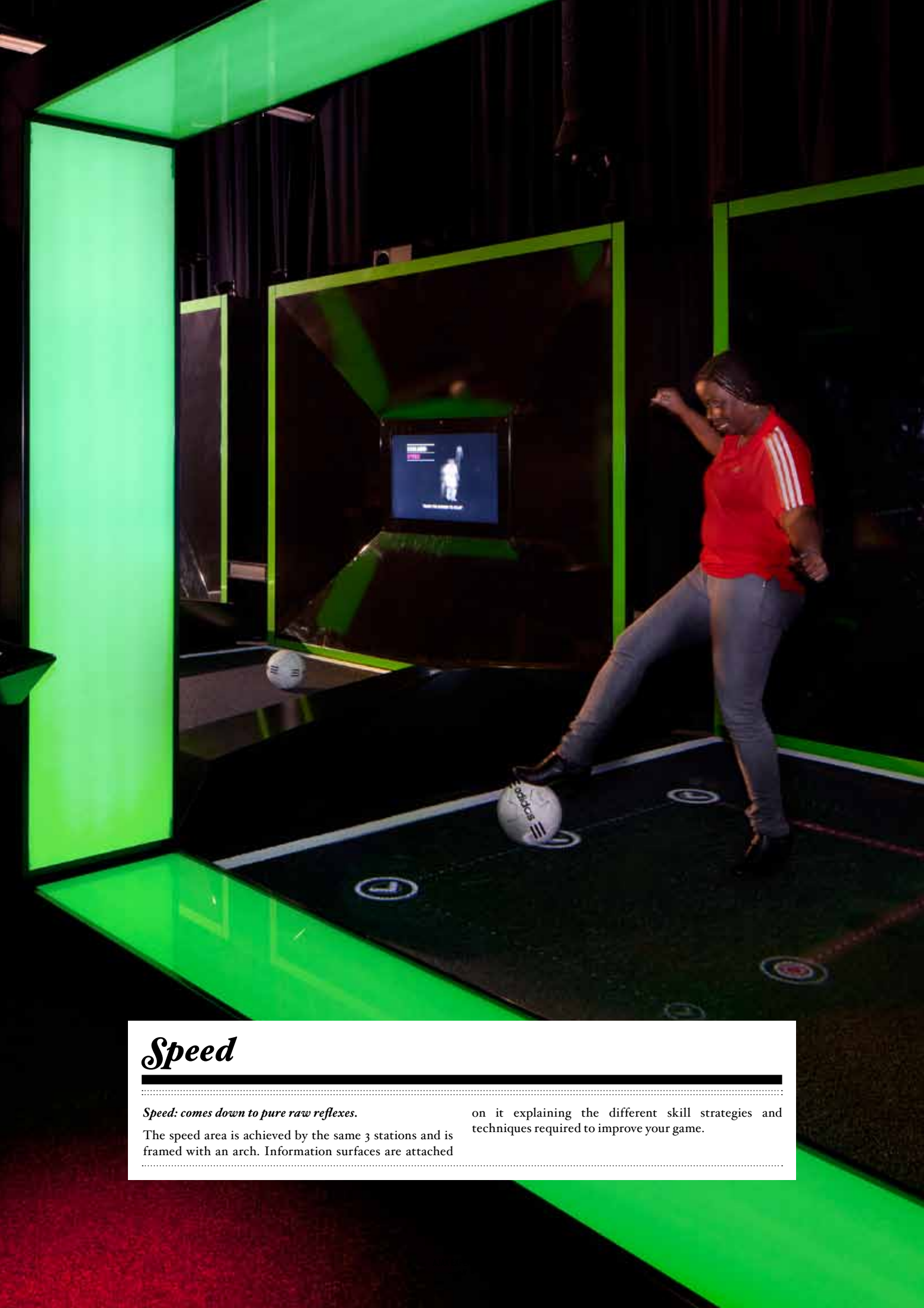
03 KRACHT FORCE



EXERCISE: SHOOTING AT THE GOAL AS HARD AS YOU CAN

TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS:

- 1 Use the **top of your foot** for greater control over the ball.
- 2 Shoot with conviction. Aim **straight at the goal** and with power.
- 3 **Point at each shot** by following the path of the ball with your foot.
- 4 **The position of your standing leg** is important. If you're too far from the ball, you will have to stretch - this has a negative impact on your aim. This is also true if you're too far past the ball. Try to stay right next to the ball constantly. This will allow you to aim the ball where you want, when you want.



Speed

Speed: comes down to pure raw reflexes.

The speed area is achieved by the same 3 stations and is framed with an arch. Information surfaces are attached

on it explaining the different skill strategies and techniques required to improve your game.

01 TARGETS TARGETS



EXERCISE: DRIBBLE WITH THE BALL FROM TARGET TO TARGET AS FAST AS POSSIBLE

TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS:

- 1 For optimal control, you need to **keep contact** with the ball when you're dribbling over a short distance or when you need to make quick turns.
- 2 Use the instep and **both the inside and outside** of your foot when dribbling.
- 3 Winning players keep their weight on the front of their feet. Being **'light footed'** makes players flexible and able to make quick turns.
- 4 When you **bend your knees**, you're closer to the ground and to the ball. This will give you better control of the ball and more maneuverability.

02 TEGENSTAND RESISTANCE



EXERCISE: DRIBBLE FROM TARGET TO TARGET AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE WHILE AVOIDING THE OPPONENT

TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS:

- 1 Keep your **chin up!** Look up from the ball, and see what's happening around you. The more you see, the faster you can anticipate and react.
- 2 Use the instep and **both the inside and outside** of your foot when dribbling.
- 3 Winning players keep their weight on the front of their feet. Being **'light footed'** makes Giants flexible and able to make quick turns.
- 4 When you **bend your knees**, you're closer to the ground and to the ball. This will give you better control of the ball, and more maneuverability.

03 ROUTE PATH



EXERCISE: DRIBBLE THE BALL AS FAST AS POSSIBLE WHILE FOLLOWING THE LINE

TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS:

- 1 Use the **inside of your foot** while dribbling to control the ball better. This also gives you greater sensitivity over the ball, and allows you to react more quickly.
- 2 Dribble with your **best foot**.
- 3 Use **both feet** to control the ball direction.

Step 3:

The locker **ROOM**

The most sacred place in the stadium

Blood, sweat & tears: Character and dedication distinguishes great players from the merely ordinary.

The visitor is in the player's position, the coach addresses them, confronting them on the scope of challenges they are about to face and the importance to believe in themselves. As most of Ajax philosophy is oral-based and thought from coach to athletes over the years by the means of speeches and conversations, the locker room explores this relationship. Architects repeated fragments of the arena locker room and amplified their presence with a mirror effect in a yin/yang type of space.

The darker side of the exhibit is created by a dark one-way mirror.

Looped videos with the coach pronouncing 2 speeches are retroprojected on a mirrored wall.

The built environment (diorama) and the coach's speech (presented behind a one-way glass) propels the visitors in the player's shoes, giving them an insightful appreciation of the relationship, and how this ties into the development of an athlete.





ANITA

5

DE JONG

10

VERMEER

1

BLIND

2

SERERO

JANSSEN

18

BOERRIGTER

21

8

7



Step 4:

The TUNNEL

Action is now

The tunnel is a moment of transition and mounting excitement between the locker room and the stadium.

It is a darkened passage with a wall treatment of shadows of players walking alongside the

visitor, who guides them to the stadium. The audio track amplifies the simulation: a growing hum and the crowd roaring and cheering in the stadium can be heard along with the Ajax club chant, calling out to the visitor.



Step 5:

The **STADIUM**

Witness the Giants

Leaving the tunnel, visitors follow the sound of the crowd and enter the stadium, the largest space yet and the climax of the experience. Witness how Ajax – its club, its people, its culture – has achieved world-class recognition through its players. Through the Giants, the AJAX spirit is well alive in the stadium. The stadium is a grandiose conclusion to the experience. The synthesis is achieved by a videoportrait of the Club under 17 different magnifying glasses: Ajax as a team, the 17 Giants and the supporters. All focusing on how they have reached this status

of greatness. This sequence of moments is projected simultaneously on 4 screens, fully immersing the visitor.

The Stadium area is a reference to a real stadium with the lower portion accessible for people to sit and the higher portion dedicated to the immersive projections. The immersive experience is achieved by a blended large scale projection. The soundtrack is also amplified by the sense of a larger-than-life space.



Step 6:

Ajax around **THE WORLD**

We are Ajax. We, the fans, are Giants.

Leaving the stadium, visitors enter a last exhibition experience, before entering the retail space.

The last exhibition space in the Experience is totally devoted to and for the fans. The space is a dialogue between Ajax and its supporters,

a tribute to their devotion and loyalty.

This section aims to give the opportunity to each fan to participate to the House of Ajax in their own way. Meet the fans behind the building of Giants.

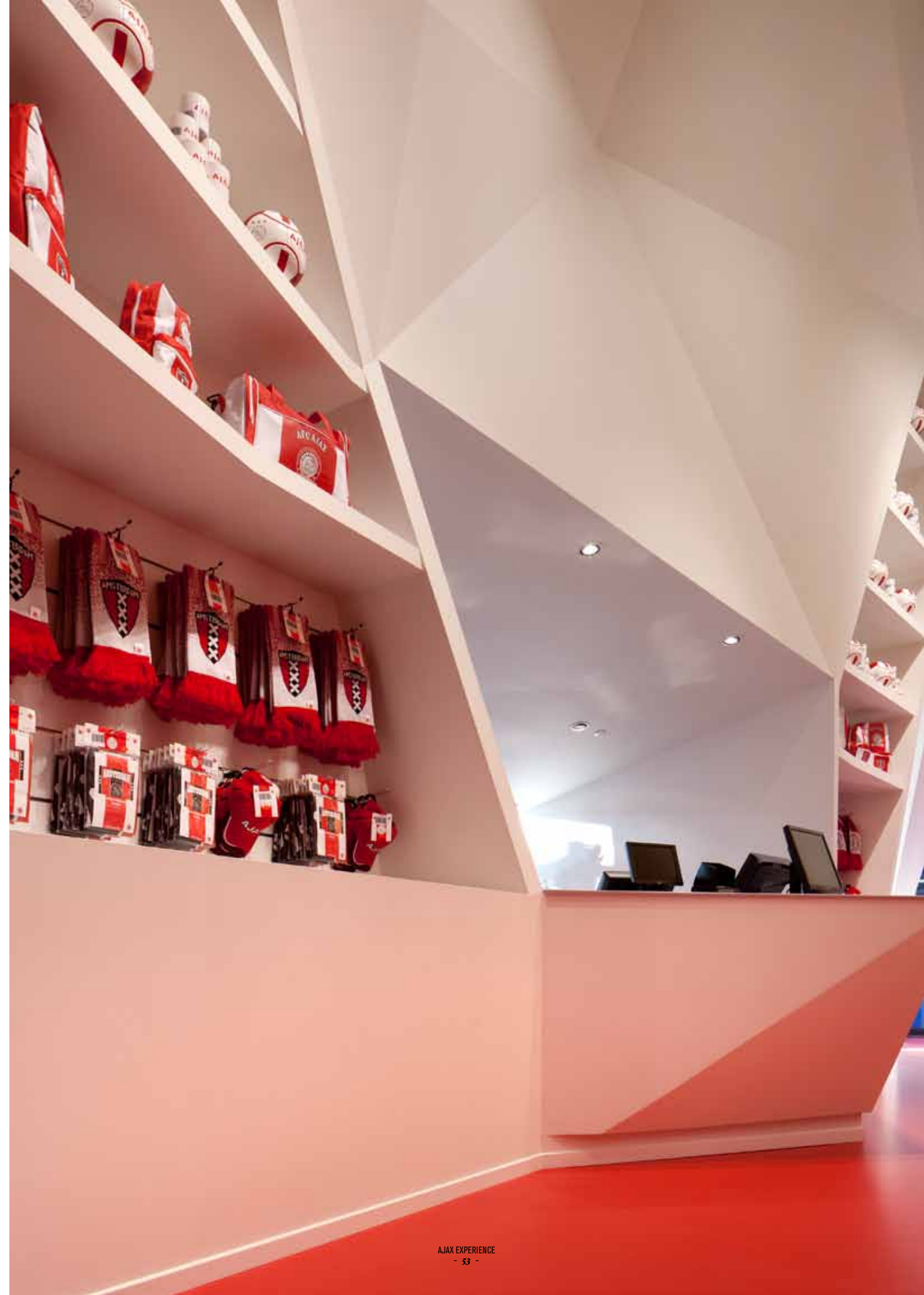
Step 7:

The **RETAIL**

Completing the Experience

The retail space is the final stop before leaving the Experience. The retail displays are designed to follow the same esthetics as the rest of the open hall. It embodies the sculptural effects created in the open vista with, in addition, 3 lines of light conveying the relationship between Ajax and Adidas, one of their main sponsors.

The retail area is also serviced by the main counter that also provides information, ticketing, and a cashier. The high ceilings of the space are also emphasized by large scale high displays that showcase some of the jerseys and balls that are sold on premise.





Plans AND LAYOUT

How we built it

SUMMARY:

Total surface area:

1000 m²

Total experience duration :

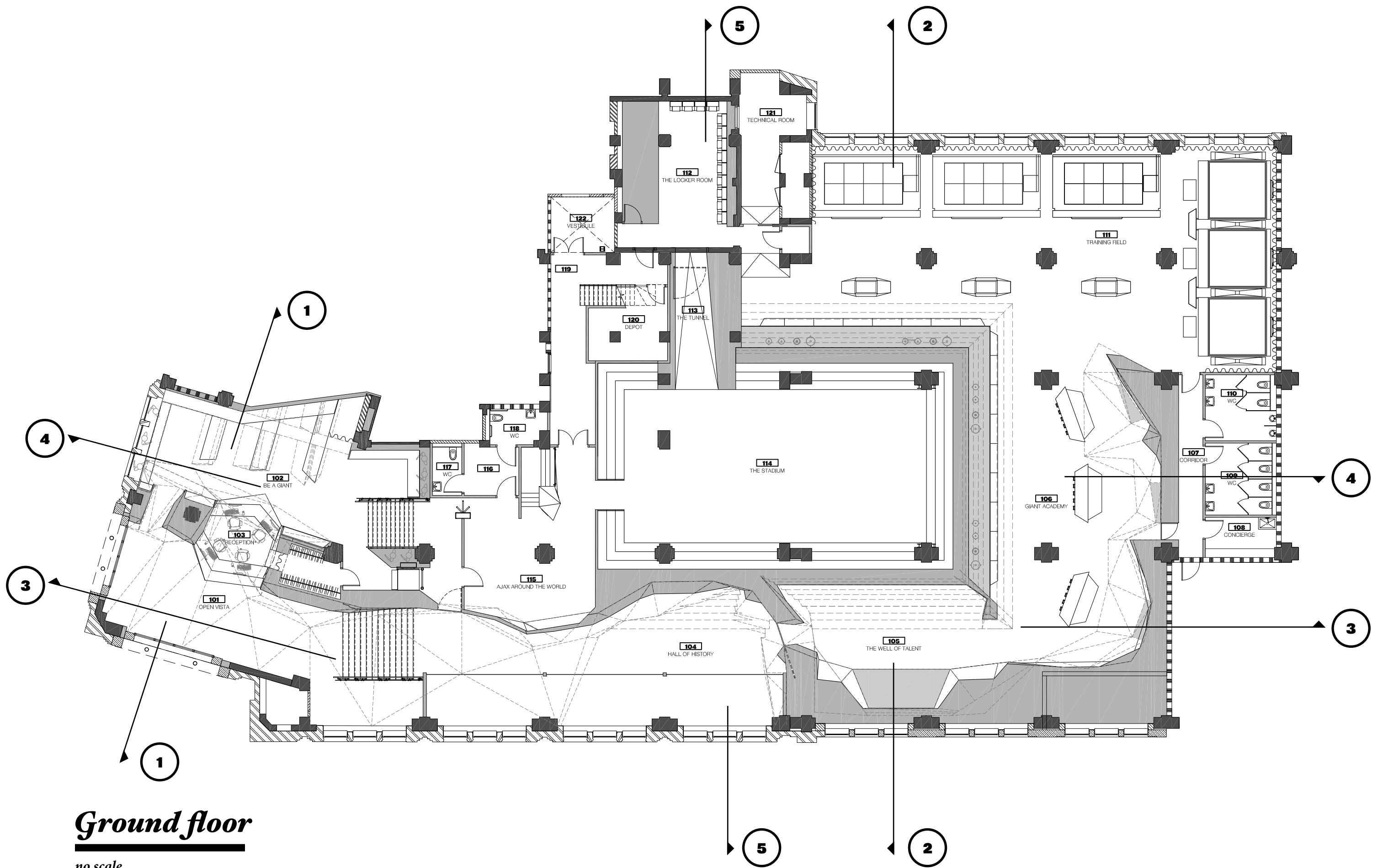
60 minutes

Visitors in space at a time:

137

CAPACITY :

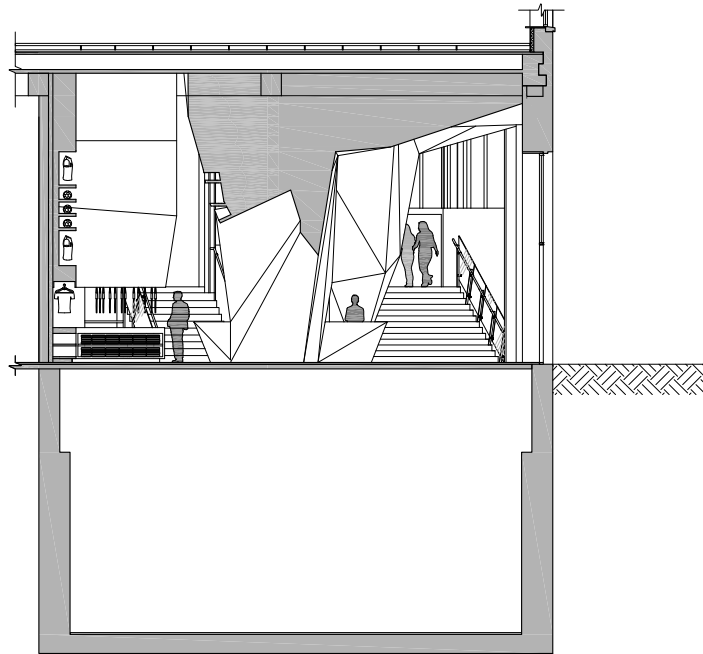
| EXPERIENCE | SURFACE AREA | VISITORS IN SPACE AT A TIME | EXPERIENCE DURATION (MIN) |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| History Hall | 148,3 m ² | 129 | |
| Reception | 20,4 m ² | - | |
| The well of talent | 47,2 m ² | 11 | 5 |
| Giant Academy | 118,1 m ² | 23 | 10 |
| Training field | 275,8 m ² | 46 | 20 |
| The locker room | 41,3 m ² | 11 | 5 |
| The tunnel | 13,3 m ² | - | |
| The stadium | 186 m ² | 34 | 15 |
| Ajax around the world | 50,4 m ² | - | |
| Be a Giant (retail) | 86,3 m ² | - | |



Ground floor

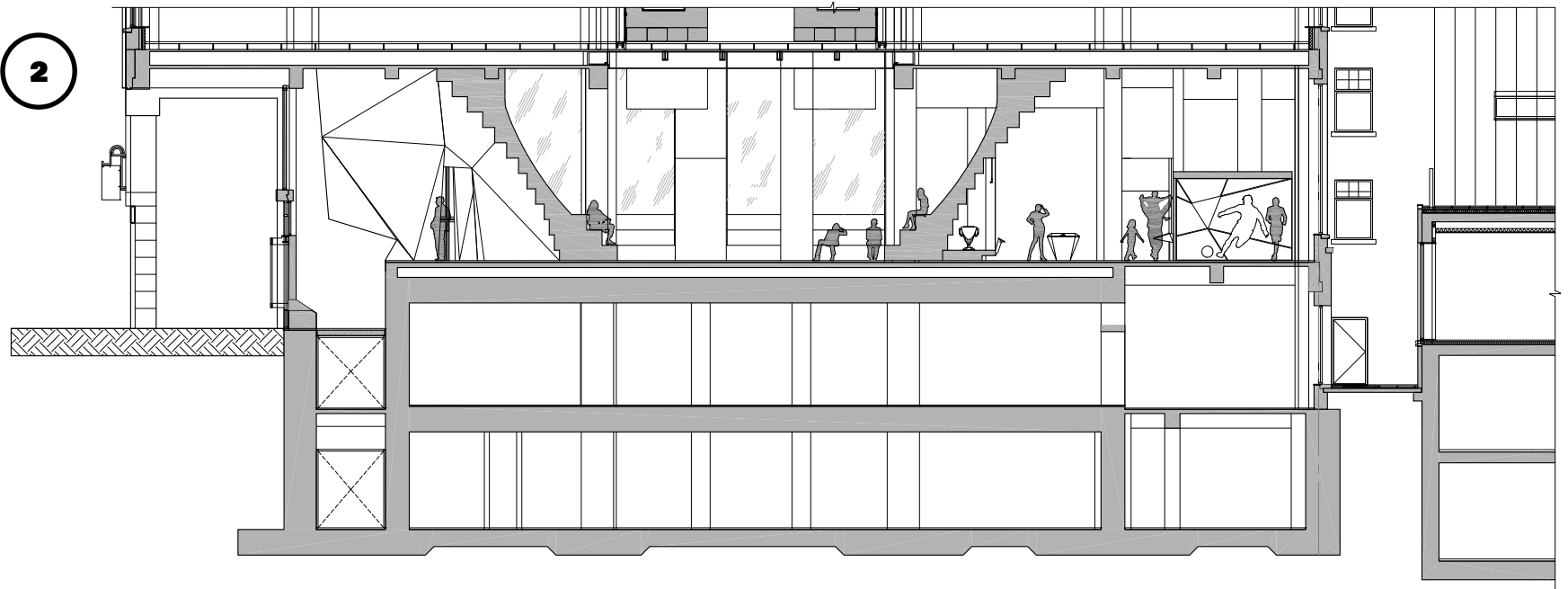
no scale

1



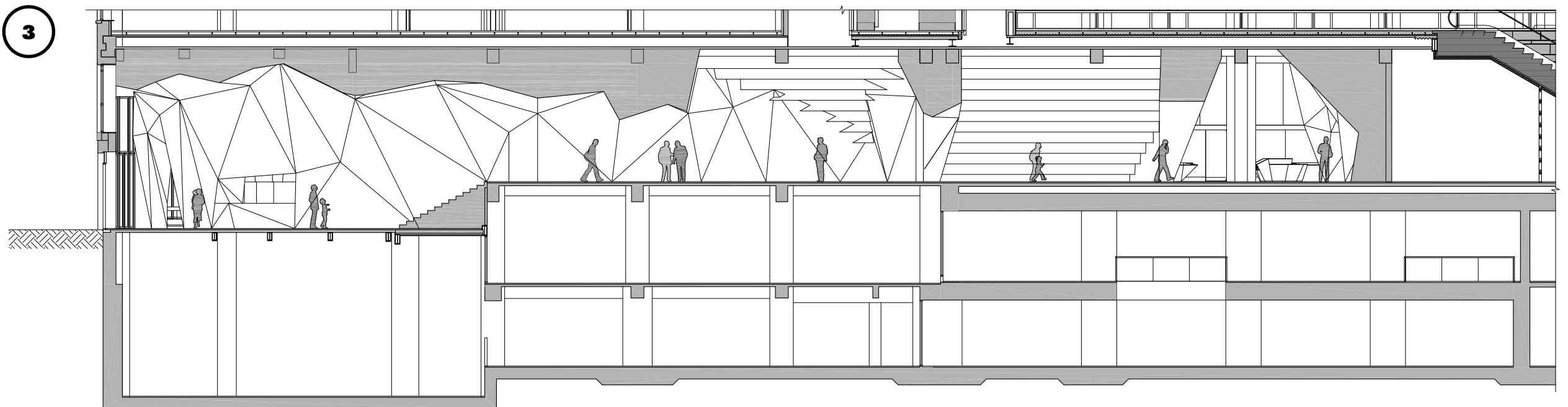
SECTION 02
SCALE: 1:100 A-301

2



SECTION 03
SCALE: 1:100 A-301

3

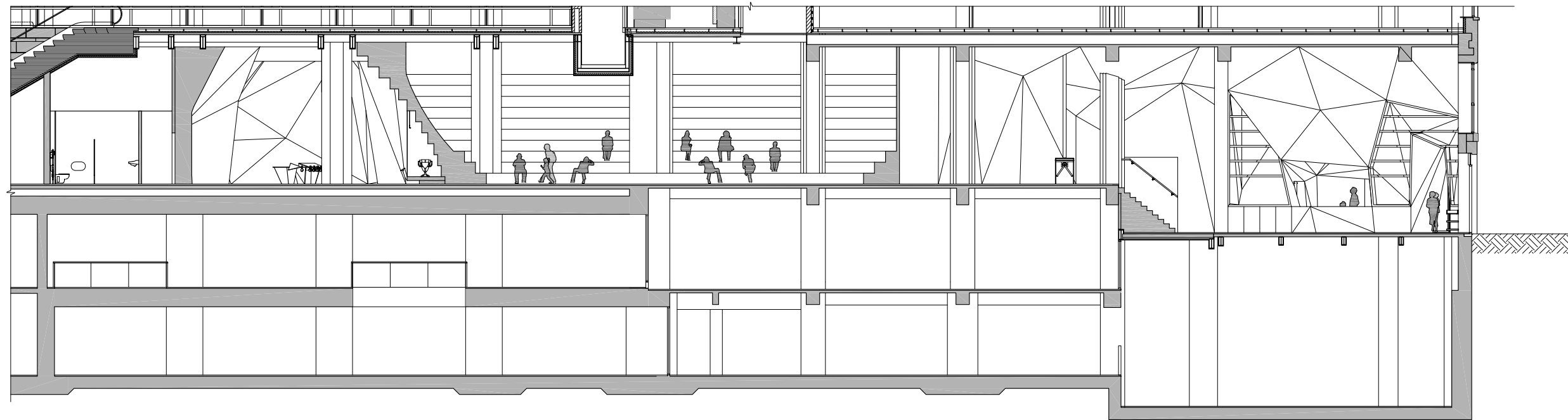


SECTION 01
SCALE: 1:100 A-301

Ground floor

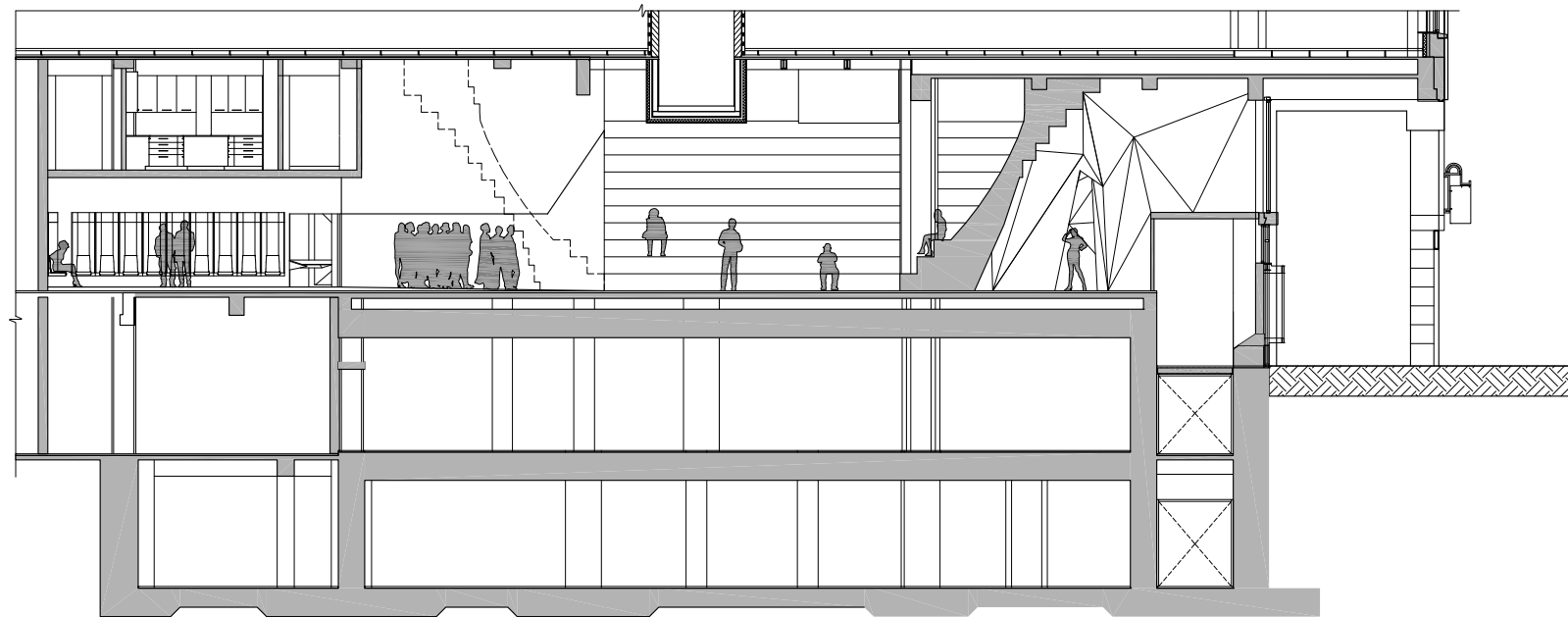
Scale: 1:100

4



SECTION 01
SCALE: 1:100 A-302

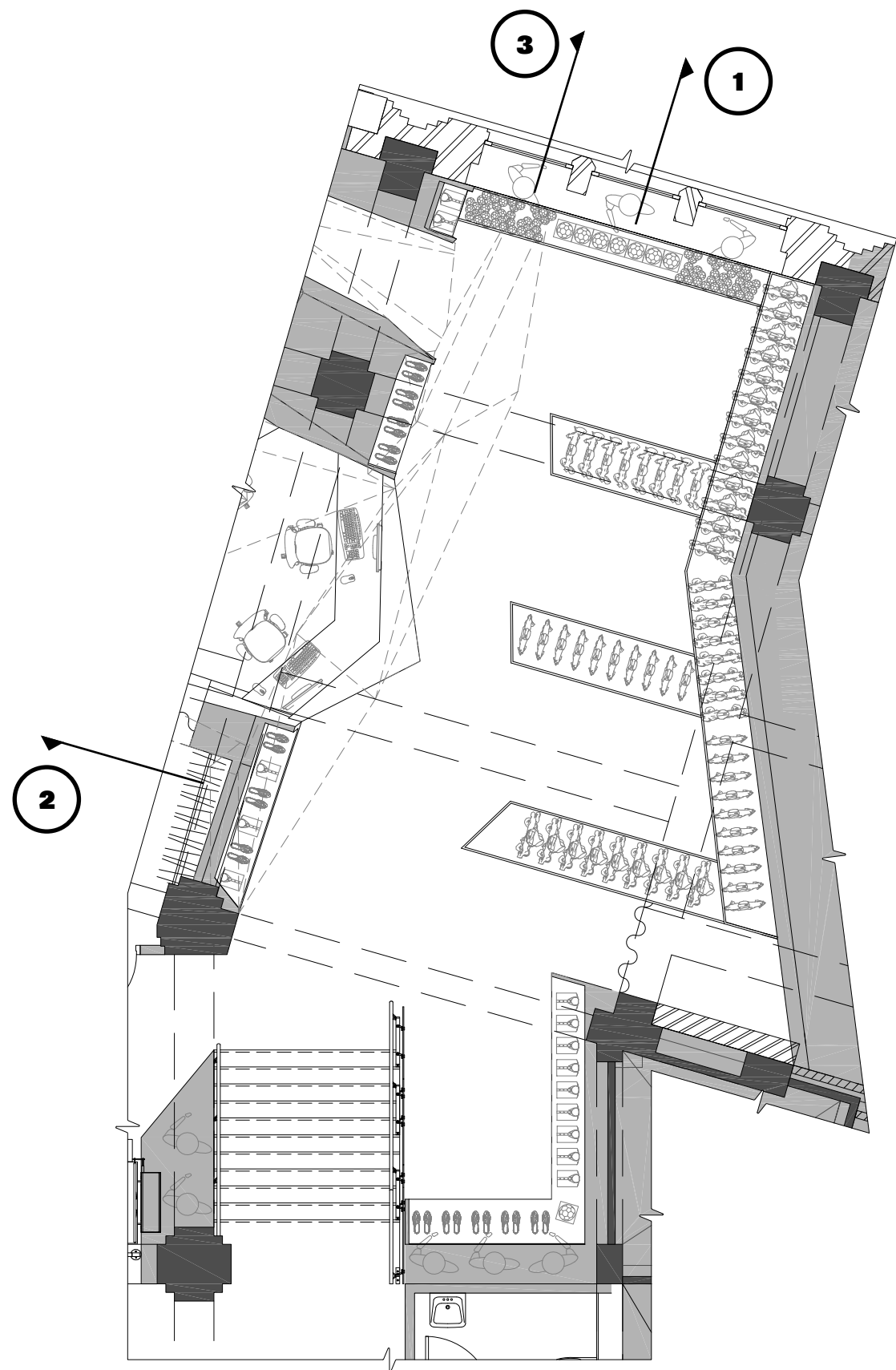
5



SECTION 02
SCALE: 1:100 A-302

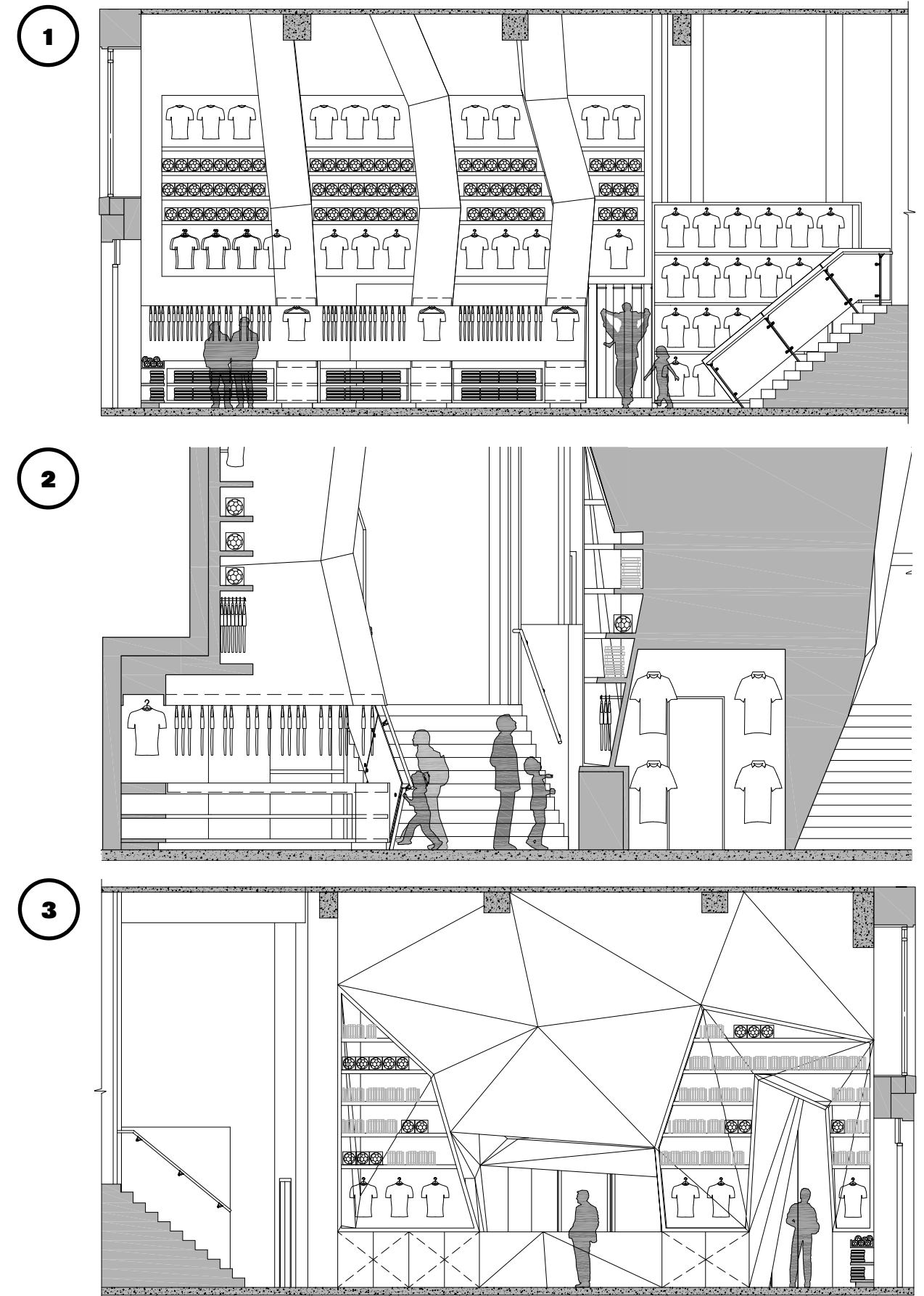
Sections

Scale: 1:100



Retail sections

no scale



Credits

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PIET KEIJZER
(1960-1975)

1900



1930-1940

GOUDEN JAREN DERTIG

THIRTIETHS

De jaren dertig waren voor Ajax een tijd van grote successen. In 1930 werd de club kampioen van Nederland. Dit was de eerste titel na de oprichting in 1900. In 1935 werd de club tweede, en in 1937 werd de club derde. In 1938 werd de club vierde. In 1939 werd de club vijfde. In 1940 werd de club zesde. In 1941 werd de club zevende. In 1942 werd de club achtste. In 1943 werd de club negende. In 1944 werd de club tiende. In 1945 werd de club elfde. In 1946 werd de club twaalfde. In 1947 werd de club dertiende. In 1948 werd de club veertiende. In 1949 werd de club vijftiende. In 1950 werd de club zestiende. In 1951 werd de club zeventiende. In 1952 werd de club achttiende. In 1953 werd de club negentiende. In 1954 werd de club twintigste. In 1955 werd de club eenentwintigste. In 1956 werd de club dertigste. In 1957 werd de club veertigste. In 1958 werd de club vijftigste. In 1959 werd de club zestigste. In 1960 werd de club zeventigste. In 1961 werd de club tachtigste. In 1962 werd de club negentigste. In 1963 werd de club honderdste.



1954

AJAX SPEELT EERSTE WEDSTRIJD IN BETAALD VOETBAL

AJAX PLAYS ITS FIRST PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL MATCH IN THE NETHERLANDS



1960

10e KEER KAMPIOEN VAN NEDERLAND

10th CHAMPIONS OF THE NETHERLANDS