

Aga Khan Award for Architecture

2016

WINNING PROJECTS

Superkilen

Copenhagen, Denmark

Architect: BIG-Bjarke Ingels Group, Superflex, Topotek 1

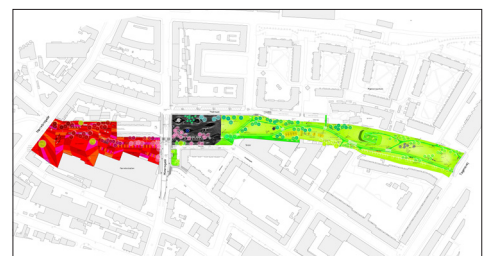
Client: Copenhagen Municipality

Project description

Superkilen is a kilometre-long urban park located in Nørrebro, a diverse and socially challenged neighbourhood of Copenhagen. Designed by architects BIG-Bjarke Ingels Group, artists Superflex and landscape architects TOPOTEK 1 in collaboration with the local – predominantly Muslim – community, the park takes the historical themes of the universal garden and the amusement park and translates them into a contemporary urban setting. With a healthy dose of irreverence, it sheds light on the positive dimensions of cultural diversity and invites people – young and old – to play.

Superkilen is part of a larger urban renewal plan developed as a partnership between the Municipality of Copenhagen and the private philanthropic association RealDania. Its name refers to the physical constraints of the site, a narrow ‘wedge’ (*kilen*) extending between two important traffic arteries. The park’s pedestrian paths and cycle routes provide better connections between these two roads, while its public lighting creates a greater sense of security – an important consideration in an area historically blighted by crime. Opening up previously hard-to-reach neighbourhoods to the west and east, Superkilen plugs the area back into the infrastructure of the city as a whole.

Colour plays a significant role in the park, which is formally divided into three distinct zones organised around different programmes – Red Square (market/culture/sport), Black Market



(urban living room), Green Park (sport/play). Of these, the most visually striking is the Black Market, inspired, according to the architects, by the Lars von Trier film *Dogville* (2003), which uses a minimal stage-like set with white lines on black ground. In the same way, the Black Market could be seen as a stage on which the local residents enact their identities in public space.

These multiple identities are evident in the trees and objects that furnish the park, chosen through an intensive participatory planning process. A swing bench from Baghdad, a star-shaped fountain from Morocco, chess tables from Sofia, basketball hoops from Mogadishu – these are among the park's 108 objects from the 62 home countries of the local inhabitants. Together they form an exhibition of best-practice street furniture from all over the world, and symbolise the residents' ownership of the park.

Jury citation

“Living with people who differ – racially, ethnically, religiously or economically – is the most urgent challenge facing contemporary civil society. At a time of growing global uncertainty and insecurity, it has become fashionable to talk in terms of ‘worlds’ – the third world, the Islamic world, the Arab world – as though these occupy a parallel universe, disconnected from the rest and subject to different rules. Superkilen, a new urban park in one of Copenhagen's most diverse and socially challenged neighbourhoods, emphatically rejects this view with a powerful mixture of humour, history and hubris.

“It is at once a highly personal yet deeply collective experience, marrying the experiences of migration with an eclectic assembly of displaced objects and innovative landscaping. Here architecture, landscape and art are fused in a truly interdisciplinary manner, providing new opportunities for shared public engagement. A number of different activities – cycling, walking, basketball, hockey – are offered in three separate but connected parks which together form a continuous surface with a marketplace, cafés, retail spaces and open-air gathering spots. In this way, the urban park becomes a public ‘stage’ where neighbours, strangers and visitors meet. Diversity, as the architects have noted, was not seen as a ‘problem’ that required a solution, but rather as a tool in a fluid, creative process that allowed the park to become both a powerful marker of identity and a subtle cultural mediator for the residents of this historically challenged neighbourhood.”



Project data

Clients

Realdania, Copenhagen, Denmark:

- Hans Peter Svendler, director
- Astrid Bruus Thomsen, programme manager

Copenhagen Municipality, Denmark:

- Laura Koch Rotne, project leader & landscape architect
- Marion Louw, construction manager
- Sanne Gaarde Nielsen, project manager
- Thomas Maare, lighting manager
- Tina Saaby, city architect

Architect

BIG - Bjarke Ingels Group, Copenhagen, Denmark:

- Bjarke Ingels, partner-in-charge
- Nanna Gyldholm Møller, Mikkel Marcker Stubgaard, project leaders
- Ondrej Tichy, Jonas Lehmann, Rune Hansen, Jan Borgstrøm, Lacin Karaoz, Jonas Barre, Nicklas Antoni Rasch, Gabrielle Nadeau, Jennifer Dahm Petersen, Richard Howis, Fan Zhang, Andreas Castberg, Armen Menendian, Jens Majdal Kaarsholm, Jan Magasanik, project team

Landscape architect

Topotek 1, Berlin, Germany:

- Martin Rein-Cano, Lorenz Dexler, partners
- Ole Hartmann, Anna Lundquist, Toni Offenberger, project managers
- Katja Steckemetz, Christian Bohne, Karoline Liedtke, Danielle Choi, Dorothee Holzapfel, Lisa Oregioni, Hannes Zander, Marius Hüther, Filippo Tiozzo, David Zimmermann, project team

Art consultancy

Superflex, Copenhagen, Denmark:

- Jakob Fenger, Rasmus Nielsen, Bjørnstjerne Christiansen
- Toke Gade Kristiansen, Nikolai Heltoft, Johanne Aarup Hansen, Troels Kahl, project team
- Alaa AI-Assadi & Hiba Marwan, Ali Asif & Billal EI-Sheikh, Benjamin Heyn-Johnsen & Nicklas Stanley Most, Inga Kristensen & Bent Johannisson, Tove Lerche & Conni Justesen, participation extreme

Engineer

Lemming & Eriksson, Køge, Denmark:

- Knud Bay, partner-in-charge
- Lars Kofoed, Thomas Kaae-Bodker, project managers
- Pia Christiansen, Anne Aaroe Brolund, project team

General contractor

Aarsleff, Åbyhøj, Denmark:

- Mads Hellmers, head of projects
- Finn Pedersen, president

Kilebestyrelsen, Local Governance Board Involved in Selection of Objects

Andreas Nøhr, Arsalan Alvi, Besarm Rakipi, Brigitte Kabel, Claus Raasted, Klaus Lorentzen, Samar Subhie, Martin Wählin, Mikkel J. Clausen, Mohammed A. Rasmussen, Uzma Ahmed Andersen, Salim El-Chahabi, Troels Glismann, Valdemar Meehrsohn Stauning, Copenhagen, Denmark

Project Data

<i>Total area</i>	33,000 m ²
<i>Total length</i>	750 m
<i>Cost</i>	8,879,000 USD
<i>Commission</i>	June 2008
<i>Design</i>	January 2009 – February 2010
<i>Construction</i>	August 2010 – June 2012
<i>Completion</i>	June 2012

Bjarke Ingels

Bjarke Ingels started BIG Bjarke Ingels Group in 2005 after co-founding PLOT Architects in 2001 and working at the Office of Metropolitan Architecture in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Through a series of award-winning design projects and buildings, Bjarke has developed a reputation for designing buildings that are as programmatically and technically innovative as they are cost- and resource-conscious. He has received numerous awards and honours, including the Danish Crown Prince's Culture Prize in 2011, the Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale in 2004, and the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Award for Excellence in 2009. In 2011, the Wall Street Journal awarded him the Architectural Innovator of the Year Award and, in 2016, Time Magazine named Bjarke one of the 100 most influential people in the world today.

Martin Rein-Cano

Martin Rein-Cano was born in Buenos Aires in 1967. He studied art history at Frankfurt University and Landscape architecture at the Technical Universities of Hannover and Karlsruhe. After working in the office of Peter Walker and Martha Schwartz in San Francisco, in 1996 he founded TOPOTEK 1, a practice which partakes in a wide variety of international projects and has achieved first prize in various competitions. Several professional books and articles have been published exclusively on his work, which has been honoured with many awards and prizes. Martin Rein-Cano has been appointed as a guest professor in different academic institutions in Europe and North America, such as the University of Pennsylvania and Harvard University. Presently he is teaching at the Dessau Institute for Architecture. He frequently lectures at internationally renowned universities and cultural institutions and regularly serves on competition juries.

SUPERFLEX

SUPERFLEX is an artist group that was founded in 1993 by Bjørnstjerne Christiansen, Jakob Fenger and Rasmus Nielsen. Their works, which challenge power structures and relate to economics, copyright law and self-organisation, are described by SUPERFLEX as tools, as proposals that invite people to participate in the development of experimental models to alter given structures and conditions. SUPERFLEX works within, and outside of, traditional art contexts. The group collaborates with architects, designers, engineers, businesses and marketers on tools which have the potential for social or economic change.

Website

<http://www.big.dk/>

<http://www.topotek1.de/>

<http://superflex.net/>

<http://www.akdn.org/architecture>