



photo: City of Rotterdam/Jan van de Ploeg

BMX, Scooters and rollerbladers are equally represented at Westblaak.



West end of the skatepark narrows down into smaller streetstyle area.



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A pool area was desired to be included to the park.

AIM OF INTERVENTION

Users had very different and often opposing views on the new skate park. Different types of skaters and different styles were vying for the same space: skateboarders, in-liners, BMX'ers and scooters, as well as street, park, pool and vert styles.

An updated park, first of all, should meet the higher technical standards of skaters nowadays: smoother concrete and –if applied at all– smoother asphalt. But the new park should also integrate all the different users, levels and age groups. The diversity of users had increased enormously as had the number of users. This had put pressure on the relatively limited space, it would require a new design in which the lines of movement of all the different users could pass and cross each other without too much conflict.

Also, the new skate park should offer more diverse and adventurous lines of movement and stimulate the invention of new tricks. And finally, the investment should improve the connection of the skate park with the urban context. The park should become visible from the adjacent roads and the sidewalks across the roads. The skate park should become part of the public domain again.

INTERVENTION

The skatepark consists of two parts: a part for street skaters at the west side and a concrete part for park skaters at the east side. The east part consists of typical street skate elements such as flat rails, ledges and curbs. The concrete skatepark includes a (half open) pool and a big flat area with small and big obstacles.

Public pedestrian routes now go through the skate park. The pool is partially lowered into the ground to safeguard an open view. It is surrounded by steps and diagonal or curved slopes. The concrete skatepark is made of sprayed concrete, highlighted with blue pigmented obstacles. It is framed by a surface of black asphalt making a clear distinction between a free skate space and a surrounding 'negotiable' space where pedestrians, spectators and skaters mix.

Experienced skaters will recognize classic skate objects (such as a quarter pipe, a bank or a pyramid). Recognizing classic objects and learning the tricks that go with it is part of skate culture. But too much standardization can become boring. In this skate park standard elements often merge into each other producing a continuous, fluid skate landscape where many unknown tricks can still be discovered.