



ART DEPARTMENT TEAM

Production Designer: CARLOS BARBOSA

Art Director: ADAM DAVIS

Assistant Art Director: AMY MAIER

Set Designers: CARL STENSEL
JOHN VERTRES
TIM BEACH
MARCO MIEHE

Set Decorator: SCOTT JACOBSON

Construction Coord: JAMES HARRIS

Property Master: PHIL SCHNEIDER

Lead Scenic: LEWIS BOWDEN

Art Dept. Coordinator: JOSUE FLEURIMOND

Art Dept. P. A. TIM ROACH

THE PRODUCTION DESIGN OF MAGIC CITY

Set in 1959, Magic City recounts the glamorous golden era that brought mobsters, politicians and top entertainers to Miami as Cuba fell to Castro. At the center of the story is the Miramar Playa hotel, the most prestigious, modern, and biggest of all the hotels in Miami, surpassing the glory of the Fontainebleau, the Eden Roc, and the Deauville.

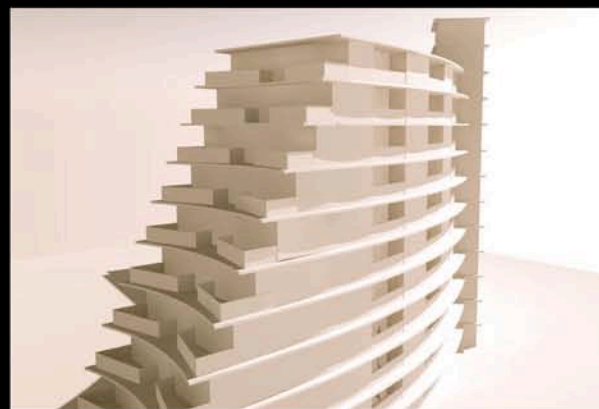
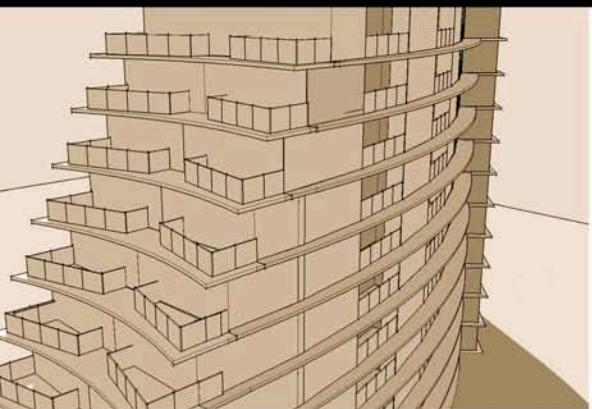
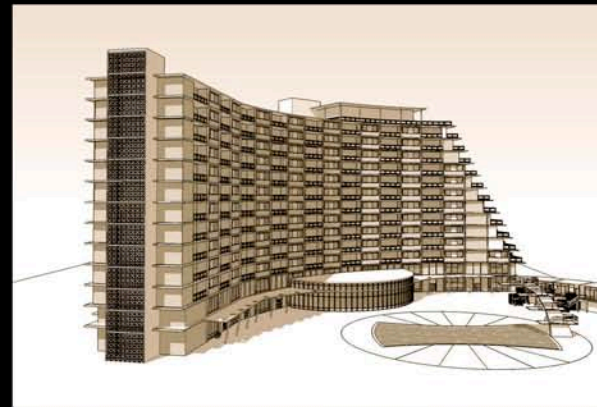
In addition to capturing the essence of Miami in the late 50's, the production design challenge was to create the fictitious Miramar Playa, a grand hotel complete with its surrounding environment, and to locate it between the Atlantic Ocean and Collins Avenue in the mid section of Miami Beach.

Miami Mid Century Modern (MiMo) architecture of Morris Lapidus served as the inspiration for the design of the Miramar. Once I understood the way in which Lapidus structured his geometry to create grand scale and how he shifted and used fine finishes to deconstruct surface continuity, the necessary design rules were set for our team to create an original design that would capture the glamour and glitz and fit flawlessly into the period. The next challenge was to achieve this within the physical constraints of a warehouse that had existing windows, door openings, and set ceiling height and dimensions.

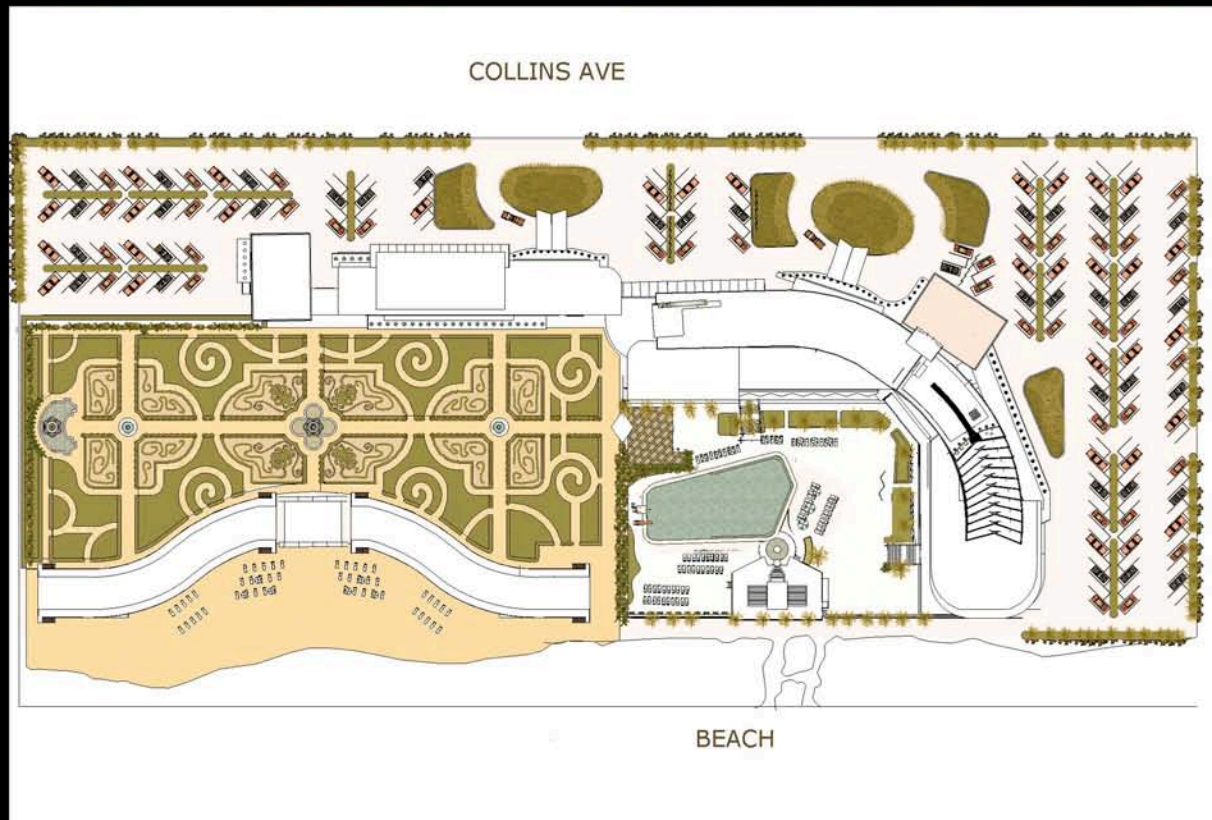
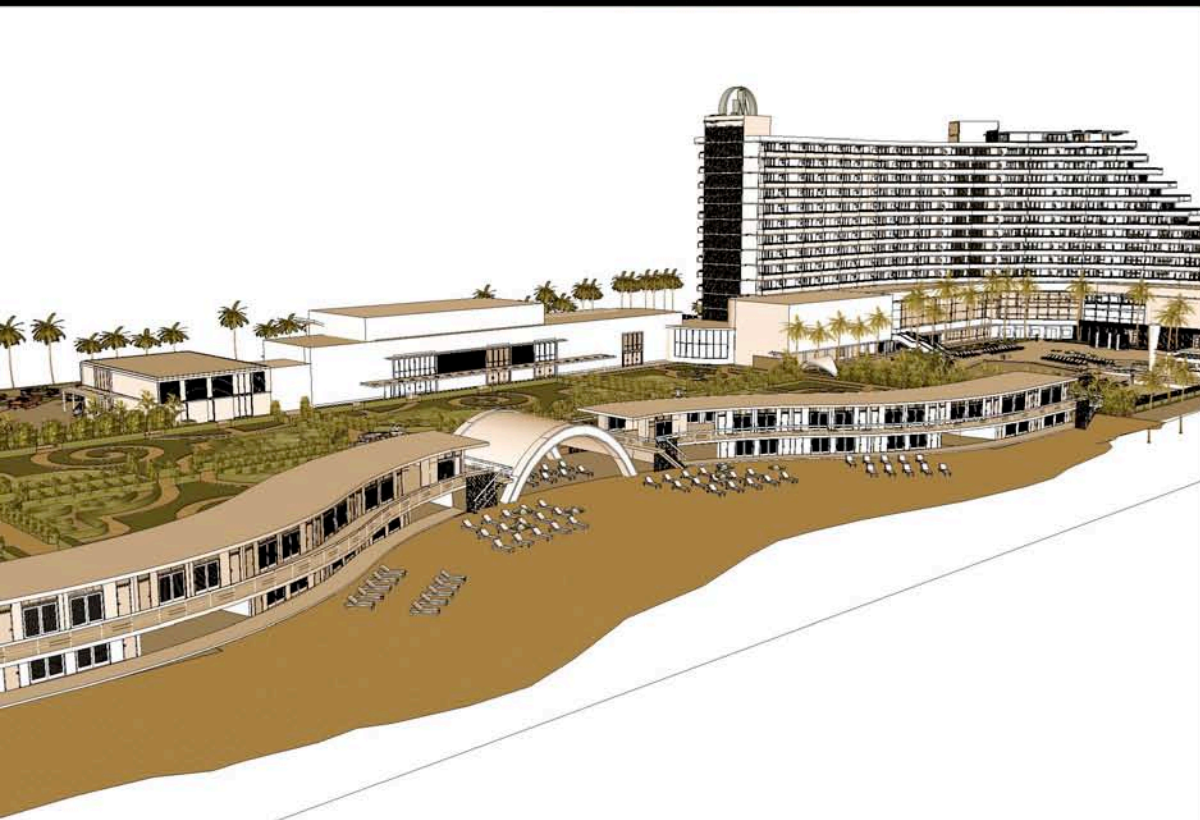
After a few design schemes, we finally zero into a concept that worked perfectly and the mad rush was on. It took under five months and a construction team of one hundred and fifty from the moment I was hired to the day in which principal photography started. At the end we had our gleaming Miramar, complete with a fully landscaped exterior drive up, a majestic lobby with grand "stairs to nowhere," administration offices, mezzanine, arcade, the Atlantis Lounge with portholes into the pool, the Sea Breeze Lingerie, the Riviera restaurant, the Atelier Maurice beauty salon, the owner's penthouse, the tenth floor elevator lobby and hallways, hotel rooms, and a hotel suite. Our vast set in addition to existing MiMo, Art Deco, and classic Spanish style locations created the totality of our 1959 Miami universe and the world for Magic City to unfold.



Evoking the architecture of Lapidus, the Miramar Playa with its signature leisurely curve and main drive-up as seen from Collins Avenue. The main lobby, canopy, adjacent two-story building, and landscaped drive-up were all built as practical sets, whereas the hotel tower is a virtual extension. All elements fused together to create The Miramar Hotel in its entirety.



In addition establishing the Miramar's signature look, the hotel tower's curved configuration also defines the pool, deck, and cabana areas. Facing the ocean view, a series of stepping terraces were introduced to reinforce the iconic hotel shape.



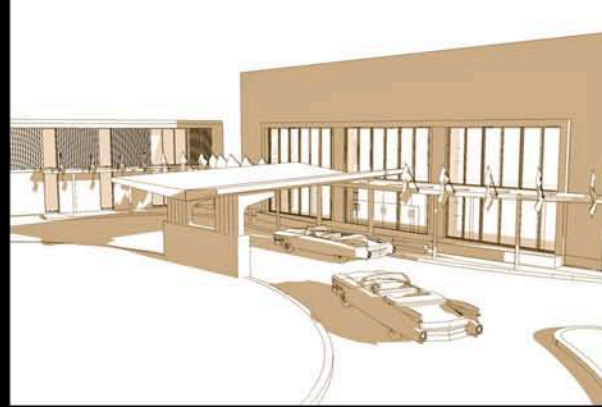
A complete master plan was created as a 3-D model to be used for visual effects. The design includes formal Versailles style gardens and fountains, ballrooms and banquet facilities, a swimming pool and cabanas, staff and guest parking, a private beach, and a six-hundred room hotel tower.



One of the main challenges during the design process was fusing the existing mass of our stage into our virtual hotel design and transforming its industrial facade into a glamorous lobby entrance with a fully landscaped drive-up. The result was a practical environment that could be photographed 360 degrees without having to use any green-screen or visual effects. Only when panning upwards past the roof of the existing stage is there a need to add the virtual hotel tower to complete the frame.



The entrance to the Lobby of the Miramar Playa merges the converted facade of the existing warehouse with the newly built canopy covered walkways, porte cochere, driveway, and the facade of a building housing multipurpose rooms to create a glamorous and practical shooting environment.



Both exterior and interior hotel environments are directly linked making it possible to walk from one to the other in one take with no edits. The top of the converted warehouse building's exterior denotes the line where the practical and the virtual world meet. Mounted from the rooftop are the supporting trusses that carry the lights that provide controllable daylight for the lobby interior.



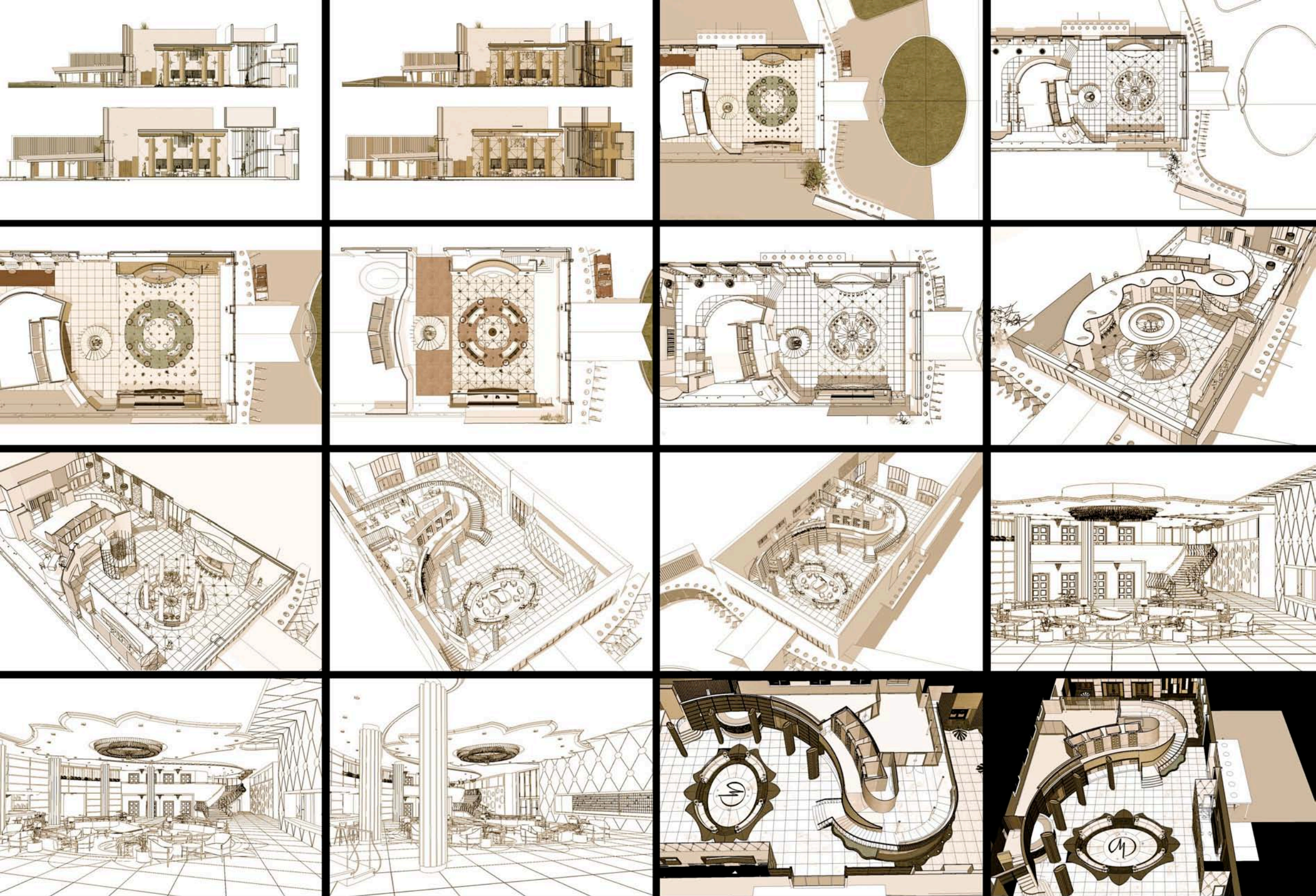
By week five on the project we had a concept and layout for the lobby that prevailed basically unchanged until the end. The focus and organizer of the space is an elliptical sunken lounge in the middle of the lobby over which a flower shaped floating ceiling holds the main crystal chandelier.



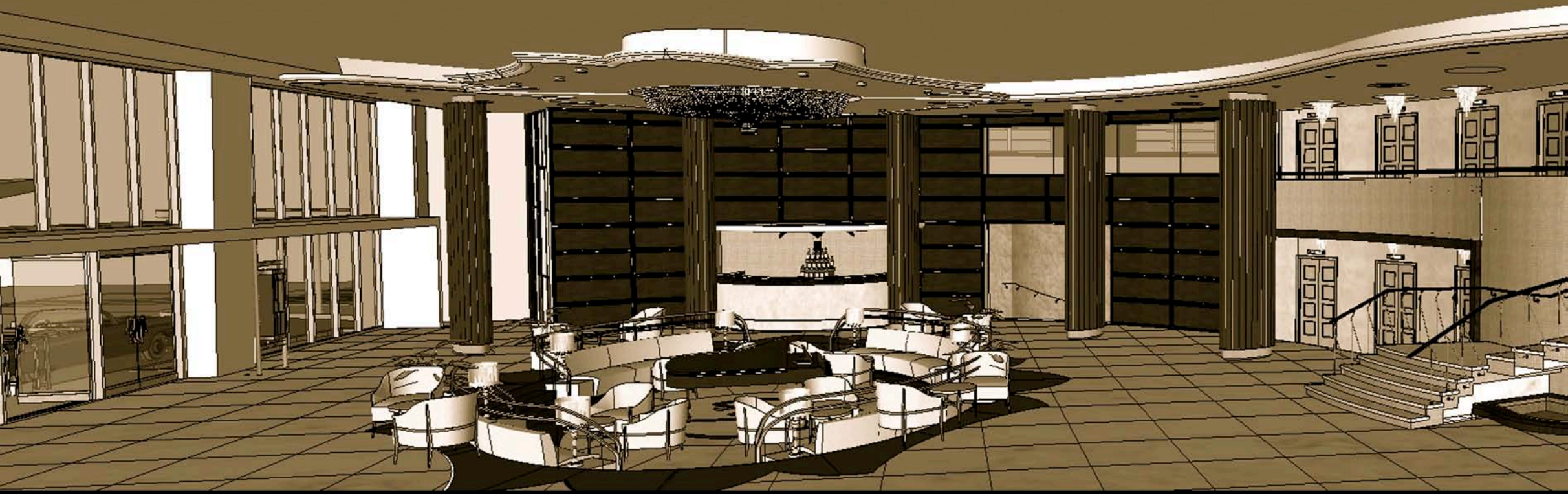
The lobby interior is an original design inspired by the architectural language of Morris Lapidus. Elements in this lobby are reminiscent of the late 50's interiors of the Fontainebleau, the Eden Roc and the Deauville.



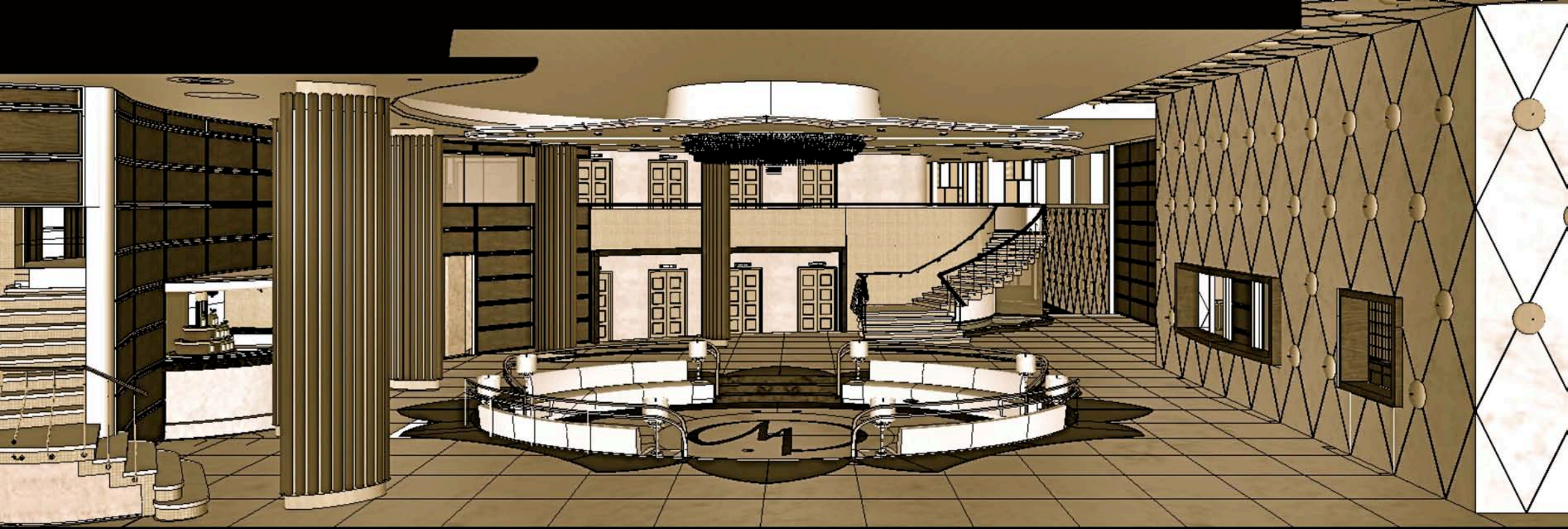
These selected sketches serve to illustrate the multiple exploratory design solutions considered for the Miramar lobby.



The last seven sketches on this page display the lobby's final design solution. One of the main design constraints was that no new door or window openings could be cut into the existing warehouse. Doors and windows for the new design had to be placed exactly where the old ones existed.



The perspective sections on this page and at the top of the following are studies of the main lobby space final design solution rendered about five weeks into the project. Very little changed between these renderings and the final built product.



The perspective section at the bottom of this page shows how a sweeping curved volume serves as the transition from the front main lobby into the rear arcade. The "Stairs to nowhere" wrap around this volume leading from the lobby up into the mezzanine level and to the administration offices of the Miramar. The entrances to the ballrooms and to the lingerie store are located in the rear arcade.



This rendering of the main lobby was also finished about five weeks into the process. The only element that was changed from the original design to the final product is the reception window. It was split into two smaller ones, the larger for the reception and the smaller for the concierge.



A gold palette accentuated by black was chosen for the main lobby. Predominantly white marble floors and walls with black onyx accents were the finish of choice in order to reflect the golden light designed to bathe the interior evoking the Florida sunshine.



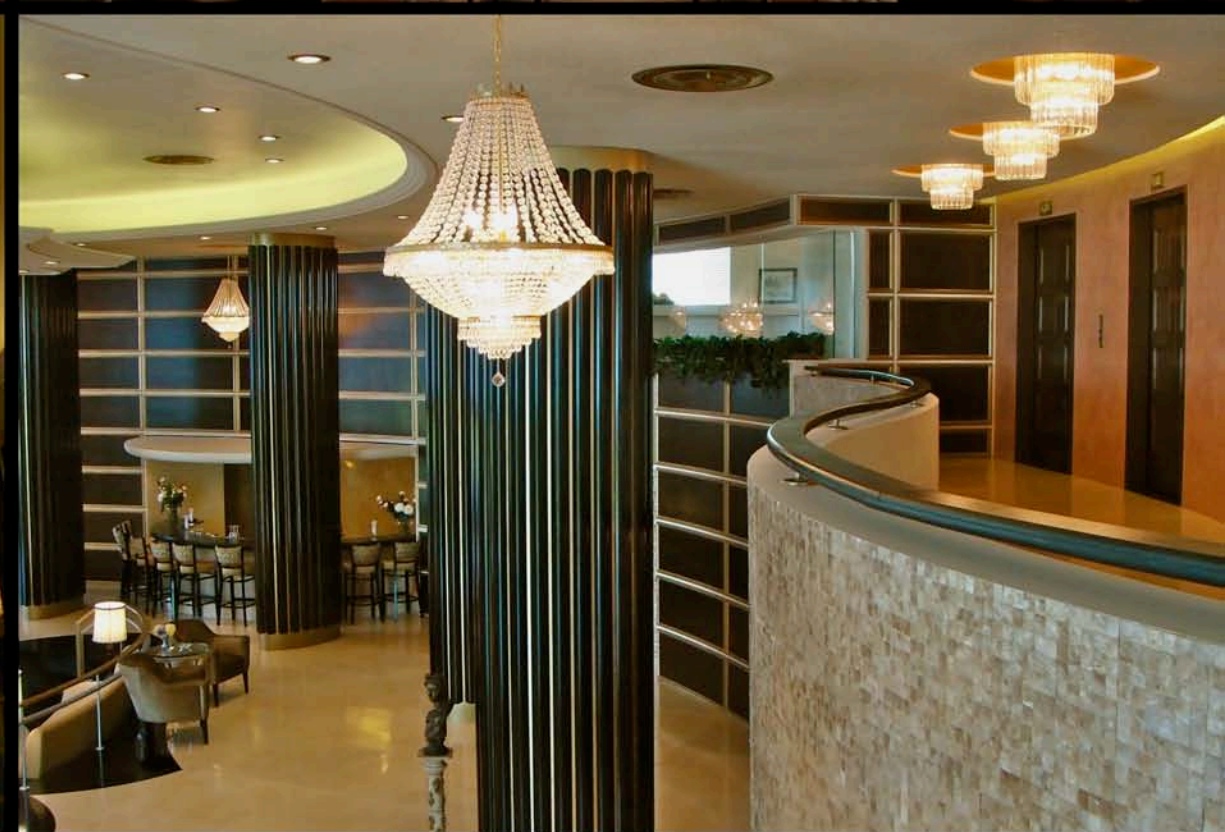
The centerpiece and jewel of the Miramar Lobby is its crystal chandelier. It was originally fabricated for the Eden Roc hotel in Cuba before the revolution. It was discarded during a renovation but rediscovered at a local antique store by set decorator Scott Jacobson.



Architecture, Interior Design, Wardrobe, Hair, and Make-up are the elements that blend to create the flawless environment of the glamorous Miramar lobby in 1959 Miami Beach.



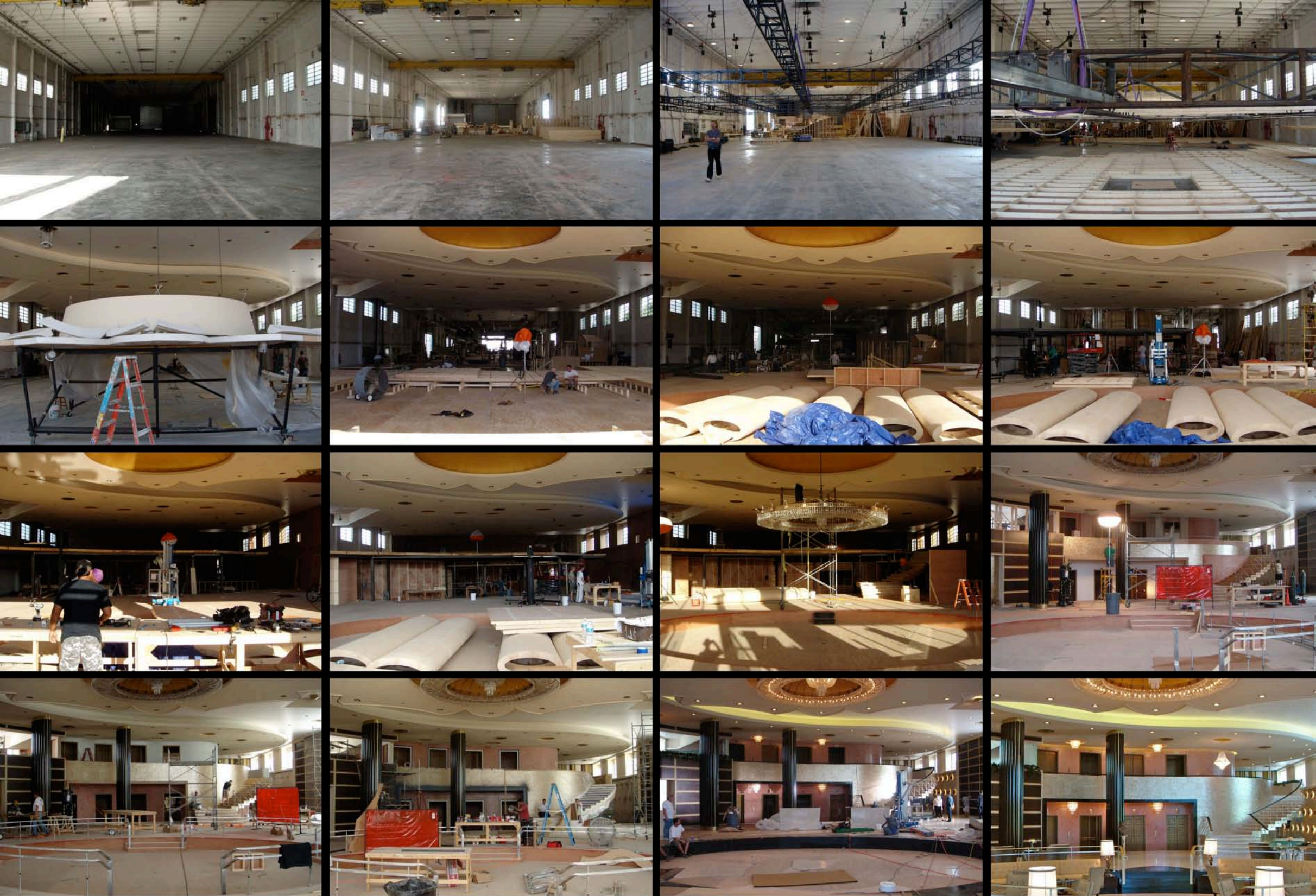
One of the key elements that give the lobby set its authenticity is the link between the exterior and the interior space. This link was achieved by utilizing the existing door and window openings of the warehouse and making them part of the lobby's design. Watching 1950's cars pull up into the driveway and drop off arriving guests while sipping a Cuba Libre at the lobby bar or at the sunken lounge sells the illusion.



Designing the practical lighting was as important as designing the space itself. Shooting stars, luminescent comet tails, eclipsed spheres, and star constellations are a few of the ways to describe the playful arrangement of the lighting fixtures which delight the eye while bathing the space with golden light.



An existing warehouse with three bays of steel roll-up doors and a parking lot was transformed into the glamorous Miramar lobby entrance with a porte cochere, covered walkways, new driveway and a landscaped roundabout.



The exterior and interior of a vacant warehouse were transformed into the lobby of the Miramar Playa in under three months. A truss system was installed to hang the multilayered lobby ceilings and then raised with chain motors into place. The subfloor was laid in next and the walls followed. Construction Coordinator James Harris devised and carried out the plan flawlessly.



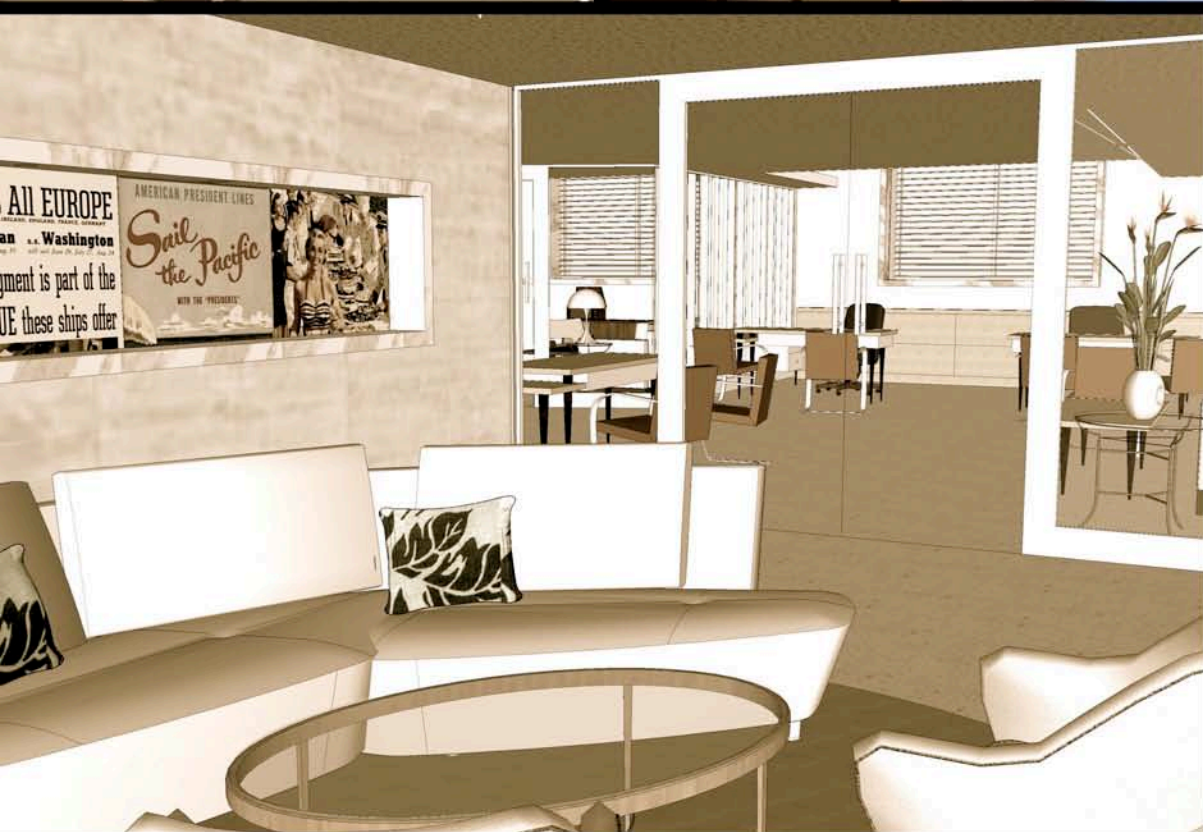




White marble and onyx floors with Athenaeum motifs lead from the main lobby to the arcade where the entrances to the ballrooms are located. Black Mahogany, gold tiles, pink marble, and gold metal mesh are some of the materials used to deconstruct surface continuity and create a rich interior.



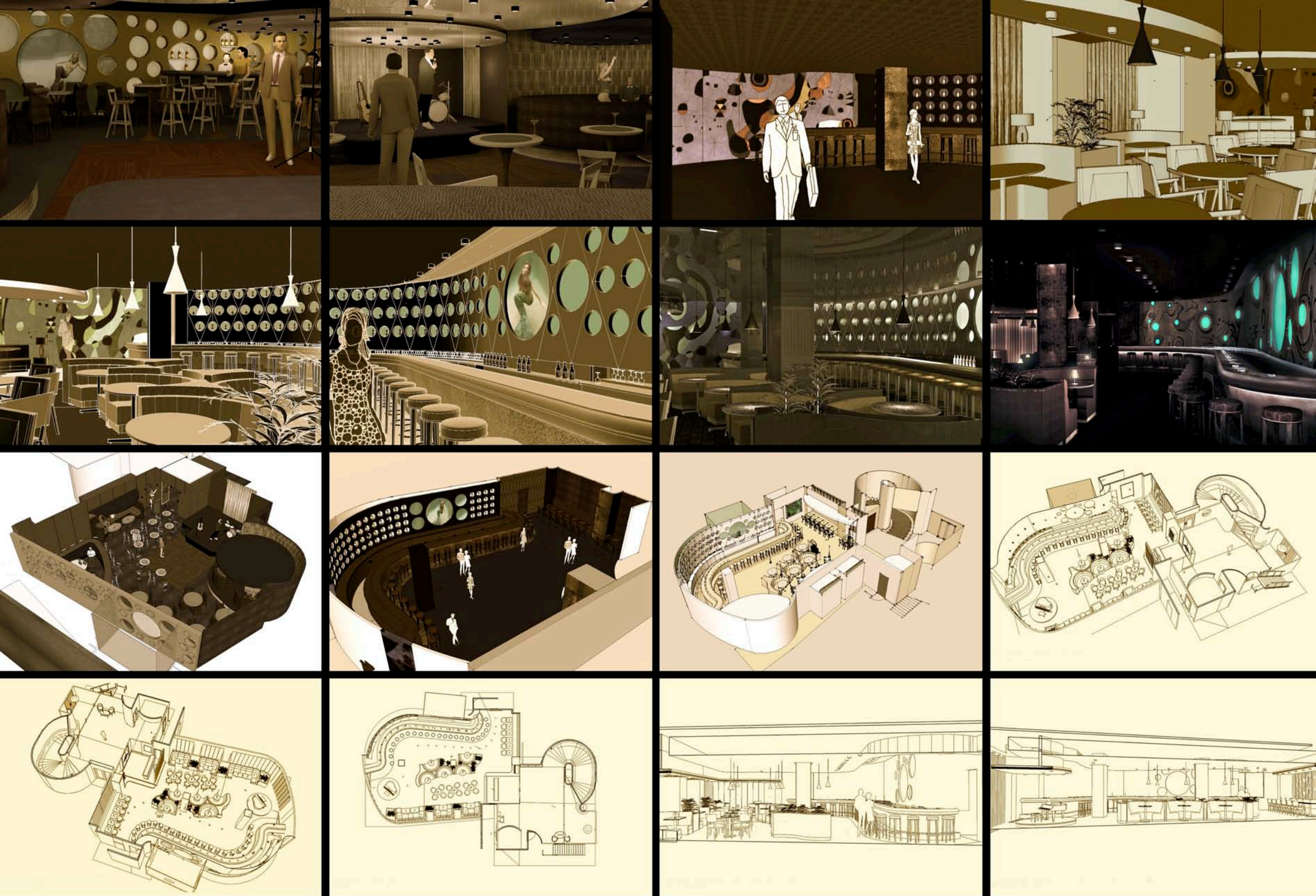
A paneled mural with amber glass provides a source of golden light to the arcade. In addition to the ballrooms entrances, the arcade provides access to the Sea Breeze Lingerie shop. Next to it is the tobacco, magazine and shoeshine stands. The round glass storefront of the lingerie store provides total transparency allowing a visual link between the main lobby and the arcade.



The Miramar administration offices are located on the mezzanine level over the lingerie store. Partitions between offices are all glass to allow for maximum transparency and visual depth.



Ike is the owner and king of the Miramar. He rules his world from his office on the mezzanine level with a strategically planned panoramic view of the main lobby. To access his office one must first pass through the secretary's office and the mezzanine lounge.



In seeking to capture the perfect mood for Atlantis, several design solutions were explored, from the upbeat Cha-Cha a la Carmen Miranda style of a cabaret to the understated decadence of a smoke filled sophisticated lounge.



Like its name implies, the Atlantis Lounge is meant to be sunken underneath the waters of the ocean. Here mermaids cast their mesmerizing spell as blue light filters over the faces of the souls that seek to hide their sins.



Located deep in the bowels of the Miramar, the Atlantis' main feature is the bar. It's serpentine wall of glass portholes offers views into the waters of the swimming pool as mermaids splash around, blue light filters through thick cigarette smoke, dark deals go on, and alcohol consumed.



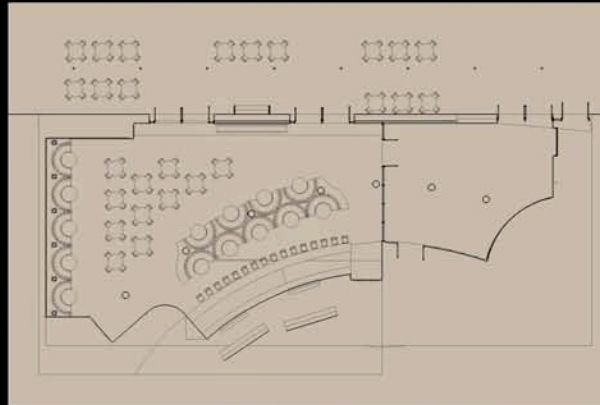
After descending from the Miramar lobby through a golden cylinder containing stairs wrapped around a caged water fountain, the patrons arrive to a small foyer where they get a glimpse into the Atlantis underworld.







From its conception to its execution, the Riviera's concept never changed. An eclectic combination of styles mixing the curved lines of mid century modern architecture with Doric order columns, gilded Rococo panels, and Tuscan landscape murals, the Riviera offers a unique environment that is both elegant and 50's kitsch.



The seeds of Post Modernism as expressed by stopping the Doric cladding short of the ceiling to reveal the structural columns in an explosion of light can be traced to the late 50's.
The curved ceilings and the arched alignment of the columns were intended to imply the distinctive footprint of the hotel building above.



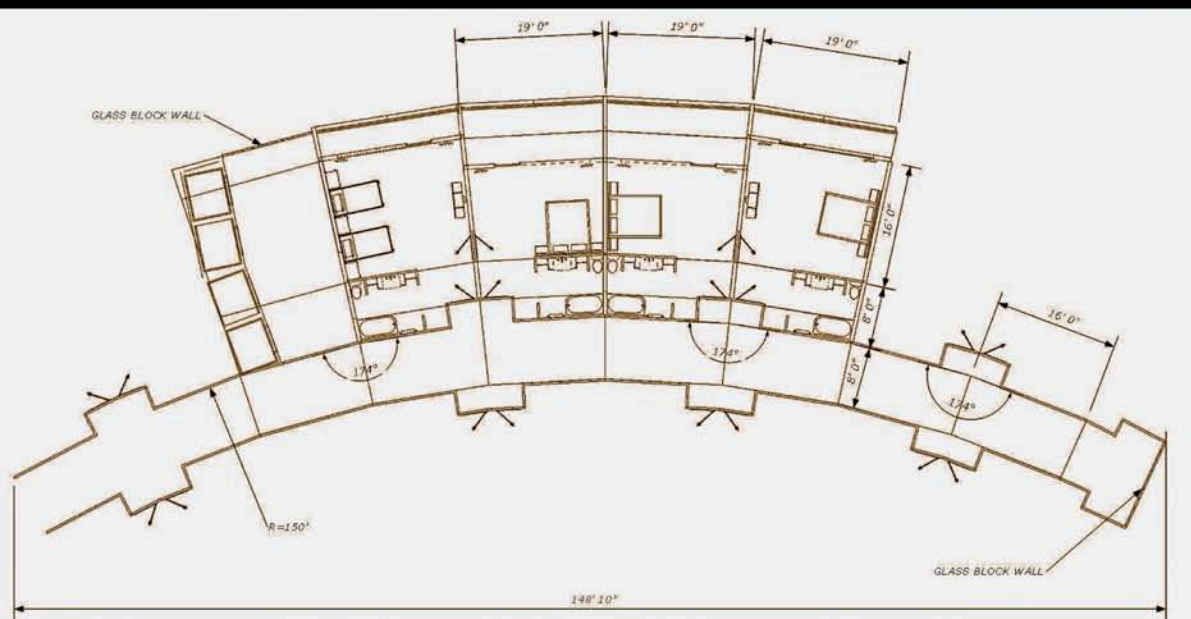




The rear arcade serves as the entrance to both the Riviera and Atelier Maurice, the Miramar's beauty salon. Here hotel guests can get the latest hair style, or get a manicure or pedicure while seating under the "Turbonator", the latest of hair dryers at the end of the decade.



Soft tones of pink, cream, and lilac create the palette to complement the modern streamline architecture and create a playful atmosphere conducive to beauty care.



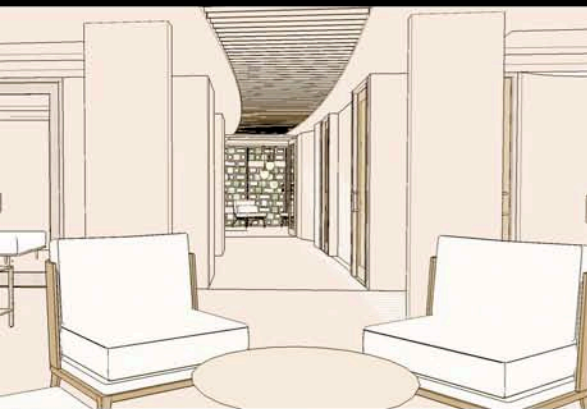
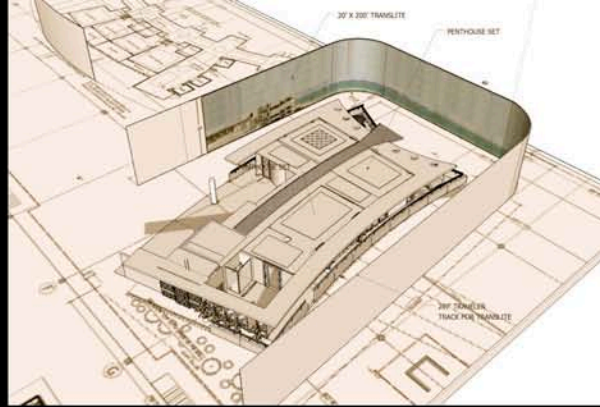
All hotel rooms are organized along a double loaded curved corridor creating the signature shape of the Miramar building. A combination of recessed soffit lighting, chandeliers, and wall sconces creates a rhythm of darker and brighter areas that accentuate depth and helps define the entrance to the rooms.



A translucent MiMo style block wall is featured on each floor's elevator lobby.
A typical Miramar guest room combines French Provencal and Baroque elements in juxtaposition to mid century modern architecture to create a unique and eclectic interior environment.



If Ike is King, Vera his Queen, his castle the Miramar, then the crown jewel is the penthouse. Sitting atop the Miramar, his penthouse offers 360 degrees view of 1959 Miami. Leading from a private elevator foyer, a curved hallway forms the organizing spine of the floor plan culminating in a wrap around terrace with infinite ocean views.



Built inside a stage, the penthouse is surrounded by a track designed to hang either a wrap around translight or a blue screen according to camera needs. The result is a structure with completely realistic views of the ocean.







A Jewish Princess' Basmitzva, Miss 1959 Beauty Pageant, the modest home of a Magic City character, are all sets that are conceived and built throughout various episodes, always striving to capture the essence, realism, and uniqueness of the period.



Ben Diamond's mansion, Ocean Drive, The Miramar's pool deck, the beach, the pool cabanas, and a hotel in Overtown, are portrayed depicting life in 1959.





CARLOS BARBOSA

Trained as an architect with a Masters degree from Tulane University, Carlos Barbosa's credits as a production designer include Magic City, the pilot for Terra Nova, the pilot and season eight series of 24, Lost, CSI-Miami, Studio 60, Action, Coach Carter, The Invisible, and Hurricane Season among many others.

www.carlosbarbosa.com

