

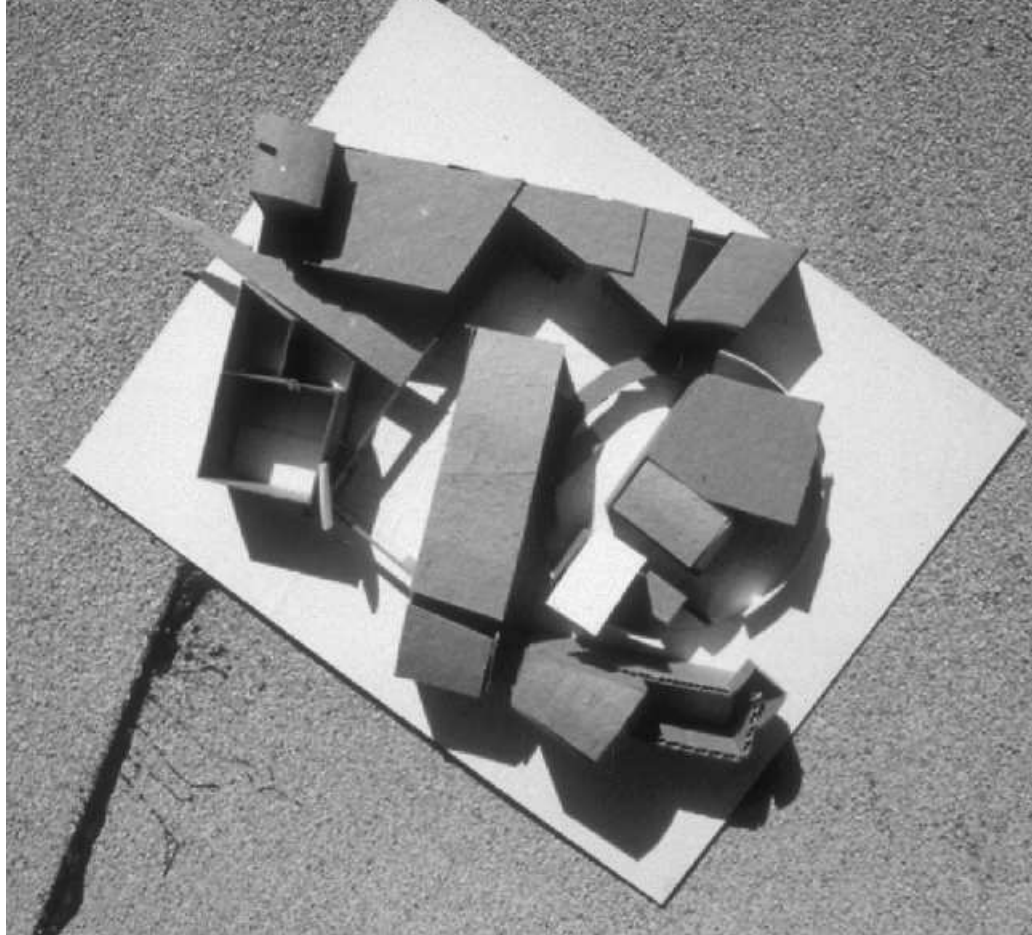
DESERT
RETREAT



OF VISUALIZED ORDER. ORDER AS THE NATURE OF THE THING RATHER THAN ITS DETERMINANT. > PREO

DUBAI SEASIDE RESORT
dubai united arab emirates

1997



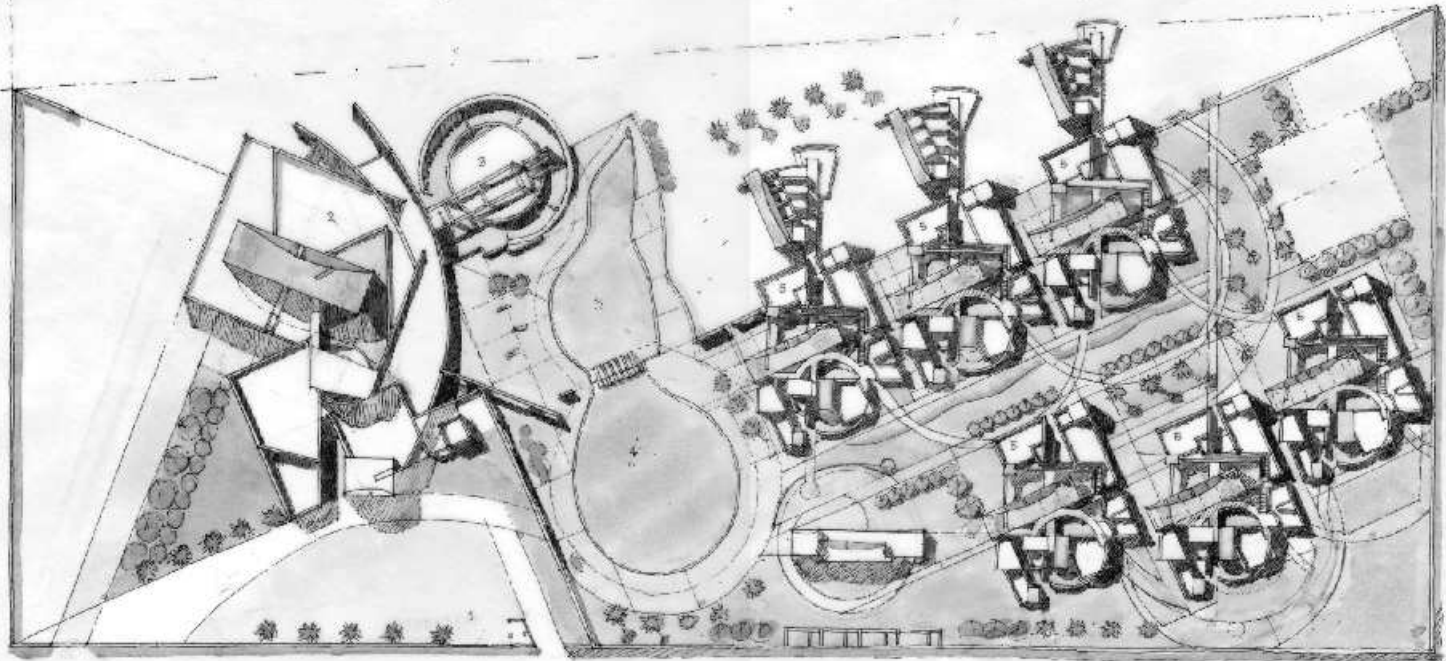
CCUPIED WITH OUR REACTION TO THE HISTORIC DOMINANCE OF FORM WITH THE *INFORME* WE FALL INTO

Architectural images, evincing an Islamic character, were sought by the investor that was in the process of attracting an International Hotelier. The site is an undistinguishable stretch of desert lying on the outskirts of the city and defined only by the edge of the highway and the ocean (the two narrow sides were easily negotiable since the budget was undefined).

Drawing a line in the sand, delimiting became the programmatic imperative in effecting + erasing the line of continuity between the tradition (Islamic architecture) and the present: the "real world" and the "retreat". As in the caravansaries and other human interventions in the desert that assertively occupy the barren desert, the new complex is geometry driven.



one cluster



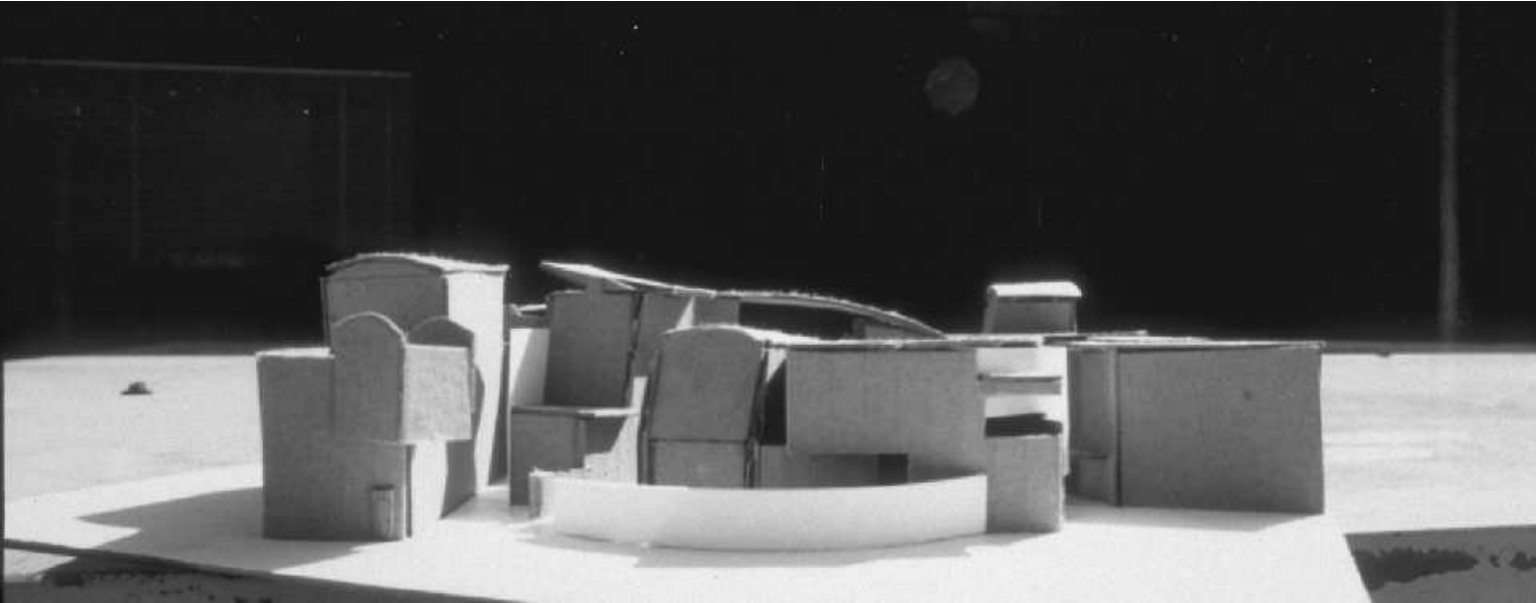
site plan

THE SAME PITFALL OF ANOTHER FORMALISM. IN MENTIONING FORMALISM I IMMEDIATELY DRAW TO THE P



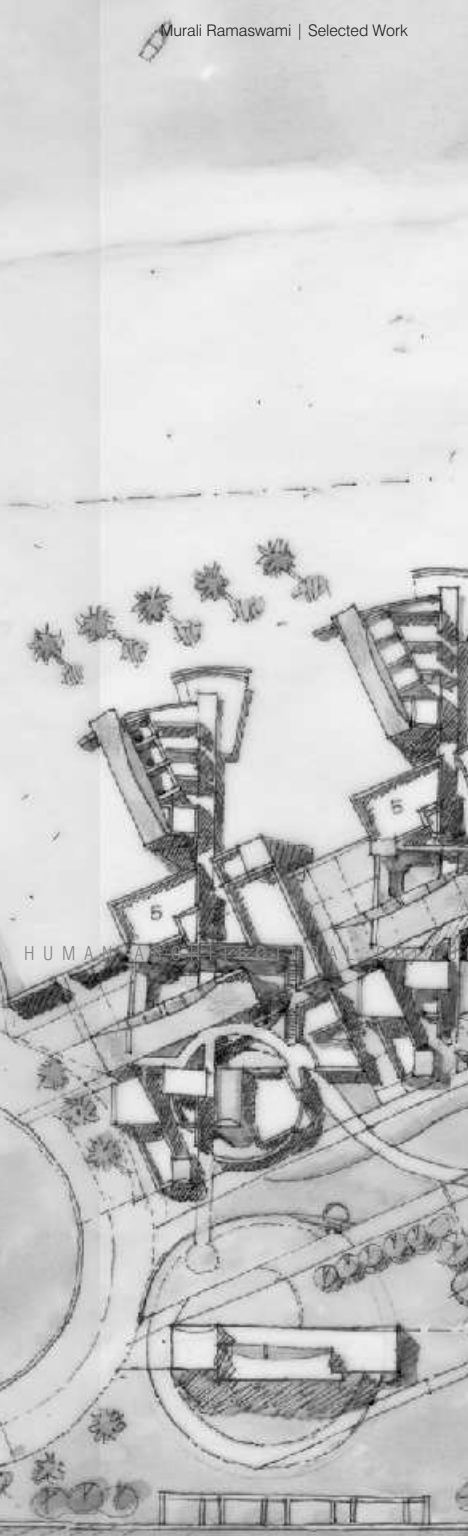


model views - single cluster



FORE, FUNCTION THE OTHER. THE NON-FORMAL, NOT DEFINED, ALMOST A THING, HAS ALWAYS EXISTED IN

Two diagonals drawn through the site organize the elements as well as increase the potential exposure to the sea. The act of the lines eliminates any pretentious organic merger between the unmappable, ever-shifting desert and the building. The notion of the *Arabesque* became the evocation in merging these imposed lines with the previously determined edges (site boundaries) to create a geometric foundation for 8 clusters that contain individual rooms and suites. Islamic roots were seen as *underlying* rather than *overlying* as imagery. The infinitely expandable geometry of the arabesque can be related to the notion of the Divine.



CULTURE AND PLACE:

ARABESQUE: A design of interlacing lines (forming figures of foliage flowers and sometimes animals)

Abstract and geometric and infinitely expandable

More contextual (Islamic) in plan than facades

Caravanseries/Palaces/Markets/Complexes

Stark human presences in the desert: the view from the sky

SITE AND PLACE:

The edge condition: Between Sand and Sea.

"Engaging" the sand: A line through the Sand

The Narrow site: the given frontage and the "Potential" frontage (of the diagonal)

The Diagonals: Line on the sand between the cultured and the natural/the city and the sea

The gesture of the diagonal: simultaneous receding from and advancing to the sea

THE RESORT PLACE:

A place to "slow down" time: therefore the (kitschy) conventions:

Getting to point B without being in a hurry: (snaky sidewalks)

Changing perspectives and views (arbitrary building mis alignments)

Building blocks instead of independent bungalows

Three overlapping squares -- two aligned to the diagonal and one to the site's edge with the city
(creating new edges of influence to guide the geometry)

Blocks overlaid by interpenetrating multiple paths

Objects that cross the line change in character:

Dhows in the sea

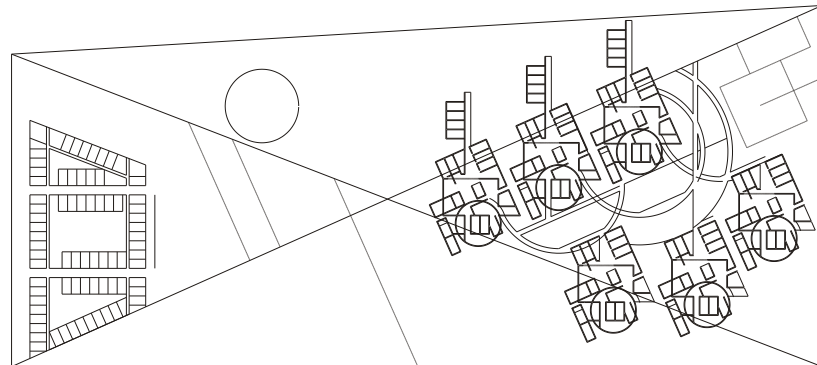
Piers into the sea

Guest rooms readable as individual buildings grouped by the influence of the squares

Interstitial spaces formed as courts

Glimpses of the sea....invitation to the sea....paths to the sea from the contained courts across the line

HUMANITY AS THE OTHER, NOMADIC, AS THE BACKGROUND TO THE SELECTED, EM



lines of arabesque

sea-facing cluster



aerial view of resort

PHASIZED AND THE IDEAL. THIS, OFTEN REFERRED TO AS THE VERNACULAR AND STUDIED "FORMALLY"



model of individual unit