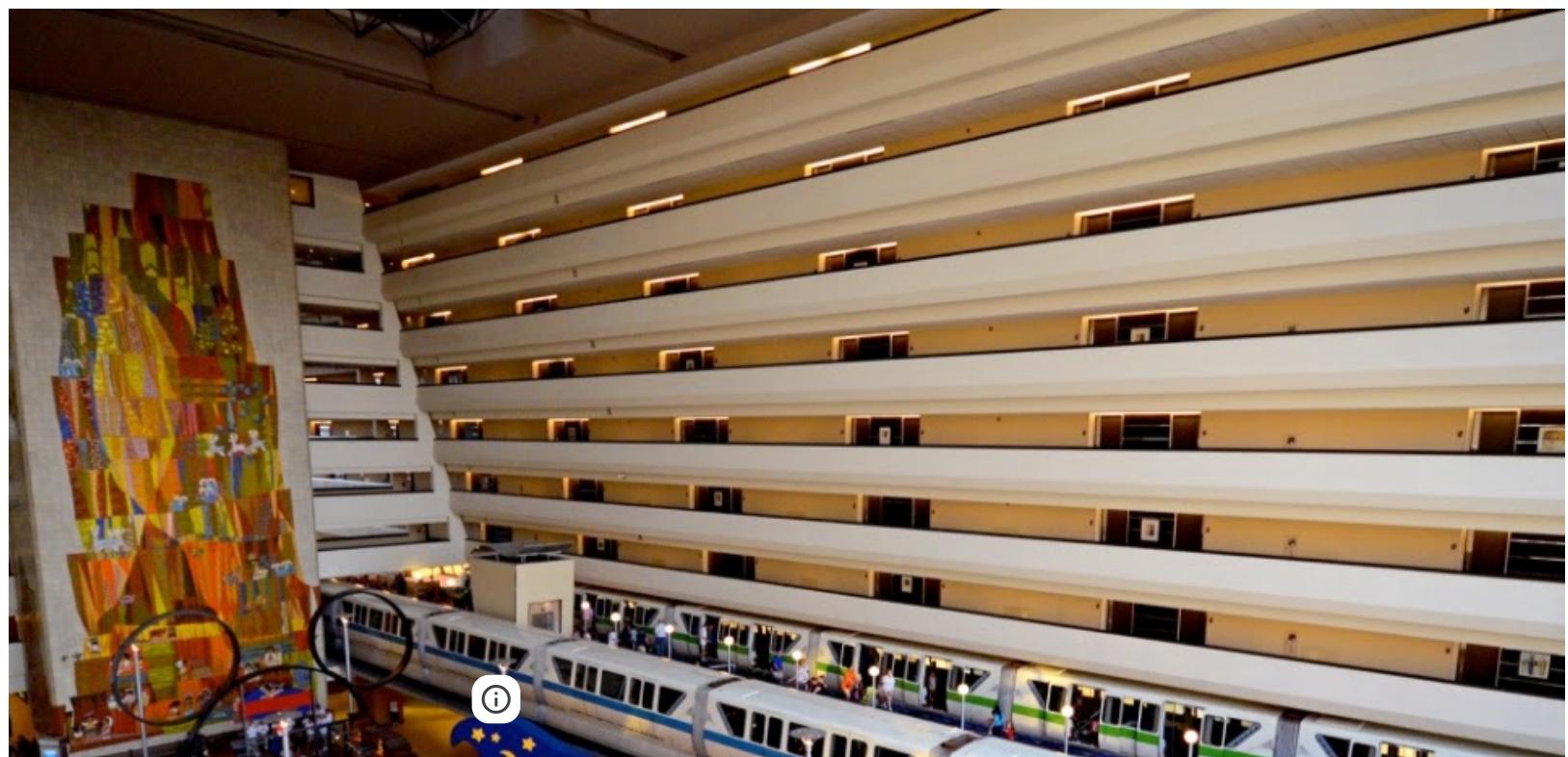




TEMPO BAY / CONTEMPORARY RESORT

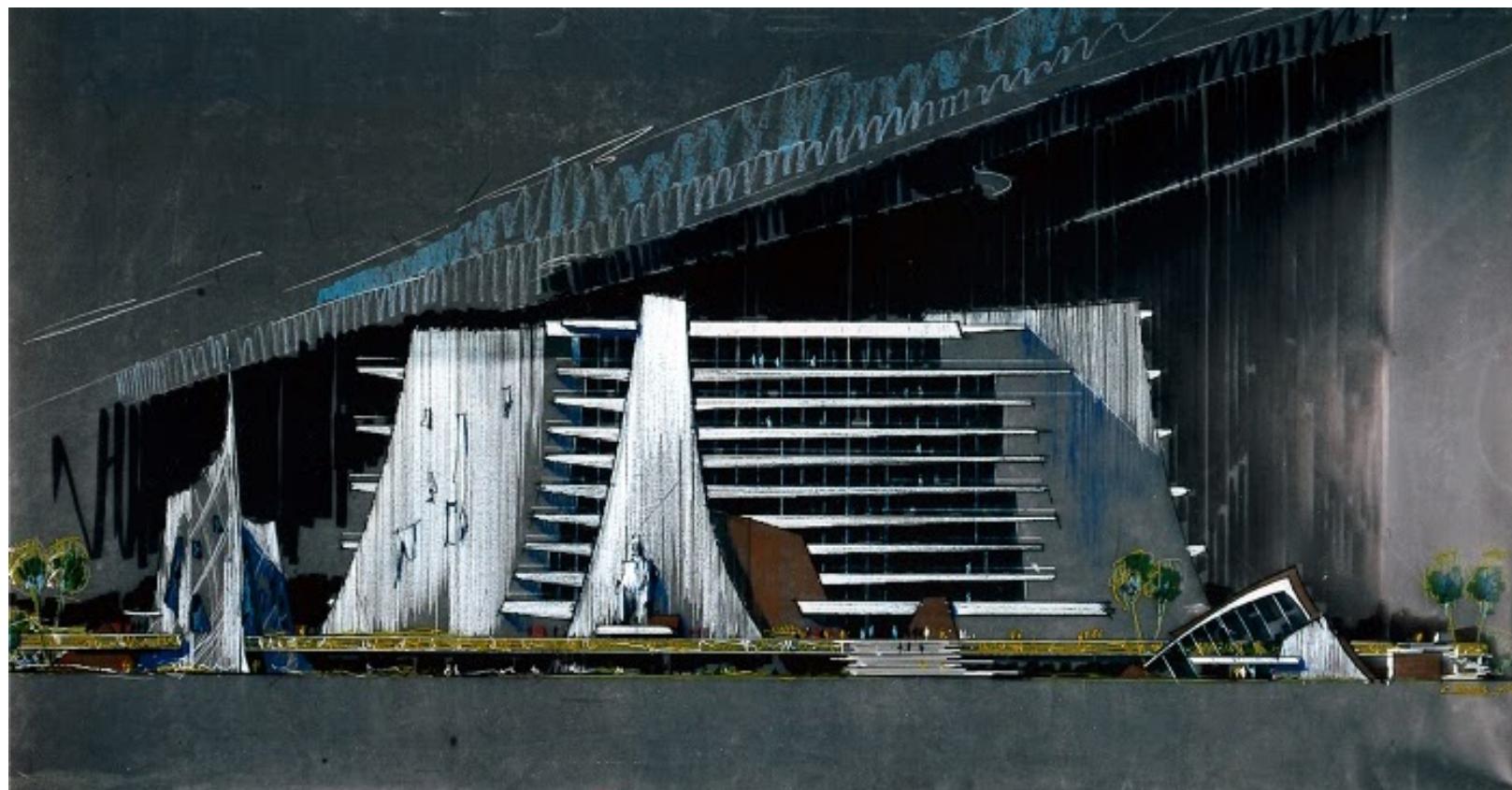




Disney's Contemporary Resort was one of the original hotels on opening day at Walt Disney World Resort on October 1971. The connection with Walt Disney's original E.P.C.O.T is that it's an architectural and conceptual interpretation of both the central urban towering hotel and an additional building both planned for the project.

On the conceptual drawings, the urban hotel was designed as a glass tower with a transportation hub in the lower levels. The hub would have included monorails and peoplemovers.

With the city phased out of Walt Disney World in the late 60's, there was no need for the urban center hotel as a 30 stories tower which would have been constructed in the middle of nothing, just in a wildlife setting twice the size of Manhattan. But Disney at the time did not phased out all of Walt's early concepts.



Conceptual drawings by architect George Rester, 1968.

Therefore, a building already present in early drawings was inspirational for the construction. This building is believed to have been designed originally as a shopping complex between the city center and the green belt. On the concept art above, you can clearly see the hotel building and the huge city center behind where the cosmopolitan hotel and the enclosed shopping center were located. It was decided to keep the very basic design of the building and to turn it into the original flagship resort hotel of the Disney property.



Contemporary Resort Concept Art by George McGinnis, 1969.

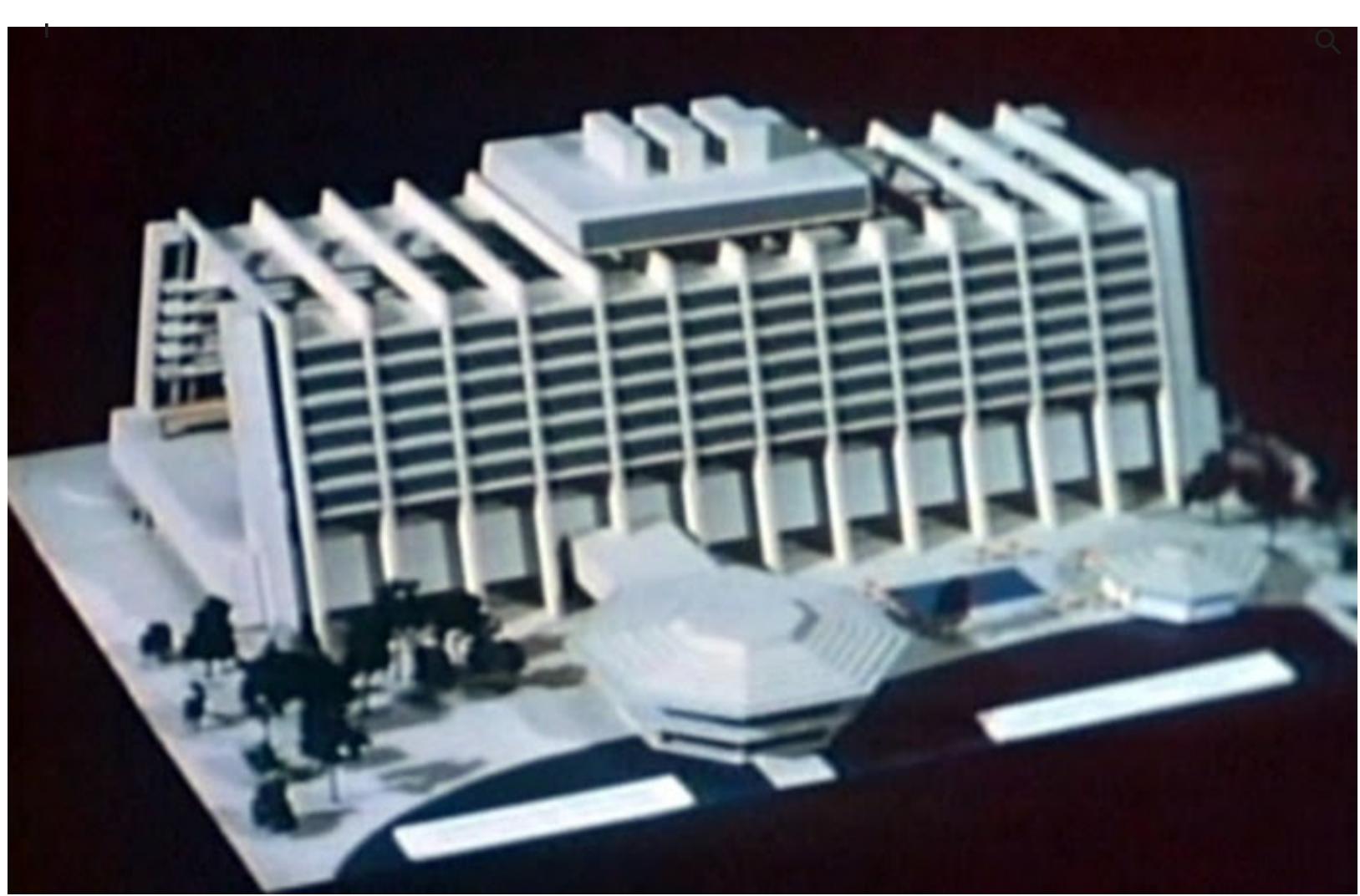
(c) Disney.

The hotel, first known as "Tempo Bay Hotel" was to feature a modern and futuristic look and to include a transportation hub in its lower level in the form of a monorail line going literally through the building.



Contemporary Resort Model

(c) Welton Becket Associates



Contemporary Resort Model

(c) Welton Becket Associates



© WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS

Contemporary Resort Model

(c) Welton Becket Associates

The most prominent of the hotel's buildings is the Contemporary Tower, built as an A-frame with outer walls which slope inwards around an inner atrium. This design was a collaboration by Disney, the United States Steel Corporation, and Los Angeles architect Welton Becket. To construct it, steel frames were erected on site and modular pre-constructed rooms were lifted into place by crane. Approximately 500 guest rooms line the outer walls of this building. Room renovation should have been a simple matter of replacing modules when refurbishment was needed; however, it was found that the modules settled and became stuck in place, rendering them irremovable. Most of Disney's Polynesian Resort was built this way also.

The Contemporary Tower houses most of the resort's key facilities, including resort registration and guest services (concierge). The main hall, named the Grand Canyon Concourse, is also located in the main Tower, and houses two restaurants and a variety of shops. The Walt Disney World Monorail System runs through the inside of this building, providing a monorail station here for resort guests. Also adorning the concourse walls is an enormous mosaic designed by Mary Blair.

Designed at a time where E.P.C.O.T was still planned for phase 2 of Walt Disney World, Disney's Contemporary resort give an idea of the "look and feel" and architecture of what E.P.C.O.T could have looked fully realized.



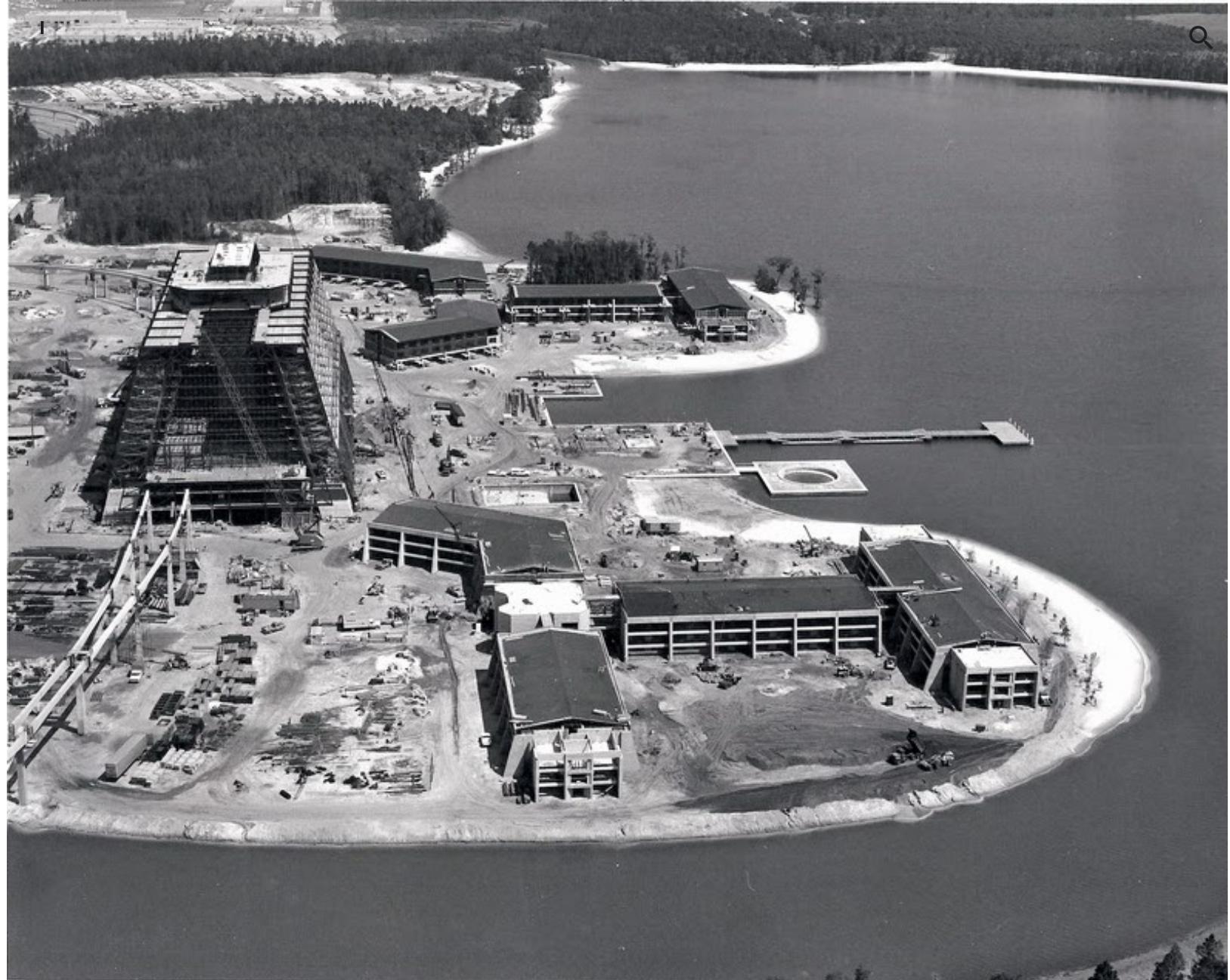
Construction Photos, 1969-70.

(c) United States Steel Corporation / Disney.



Construction Photos, 1969-70.

(c) United States Steel Corporation / Disney.



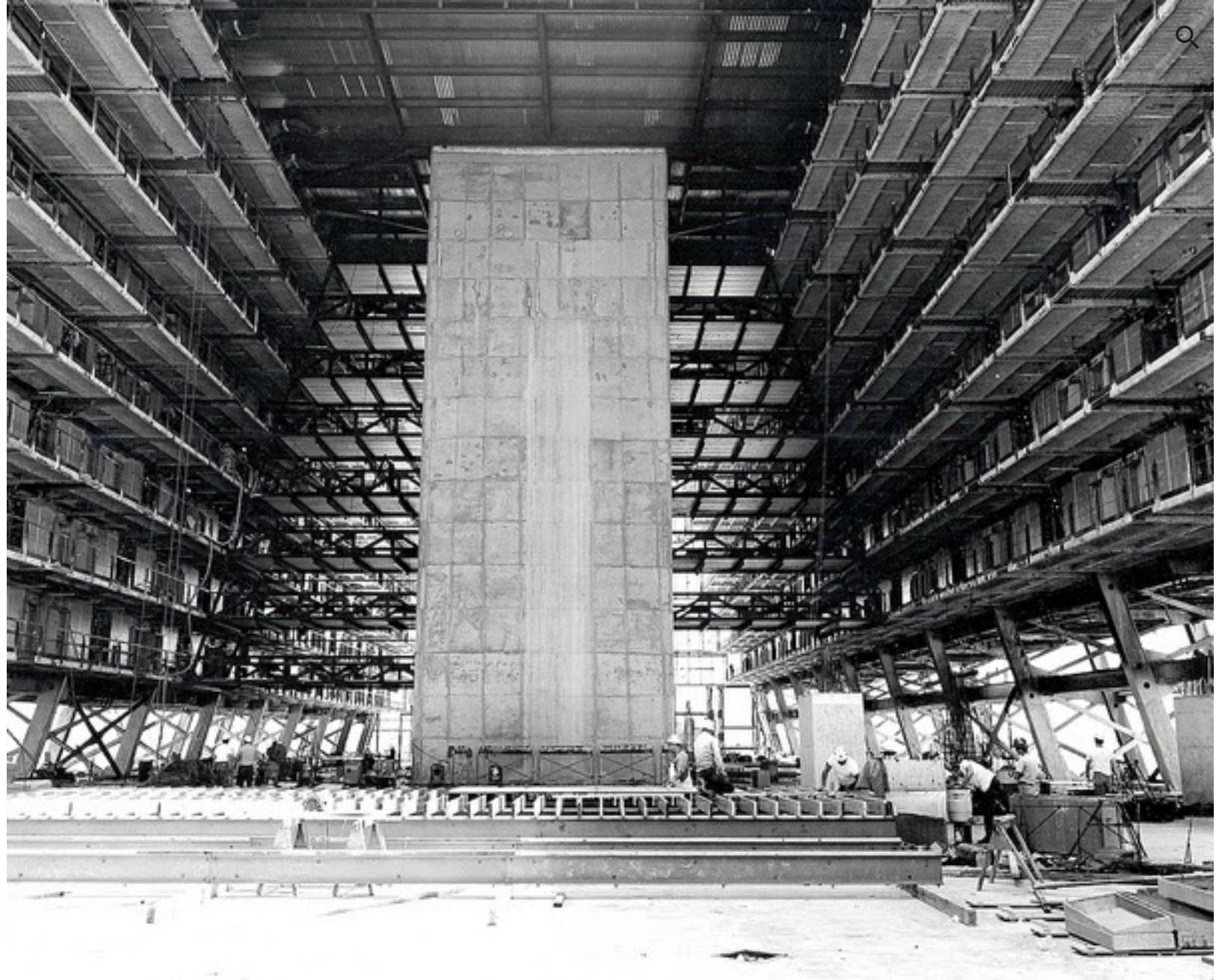
Construction Photos, 1969-70.

(c) United States Steel Corporation / Disney.



Construction Photos, 1969-70.

(c) United States Steel Corporation / Disney.



Construction Photos, 1969-70.

(c) United States Steel Corporation / Disney.



Construction Photos, 1969-70.

(c) Disney.



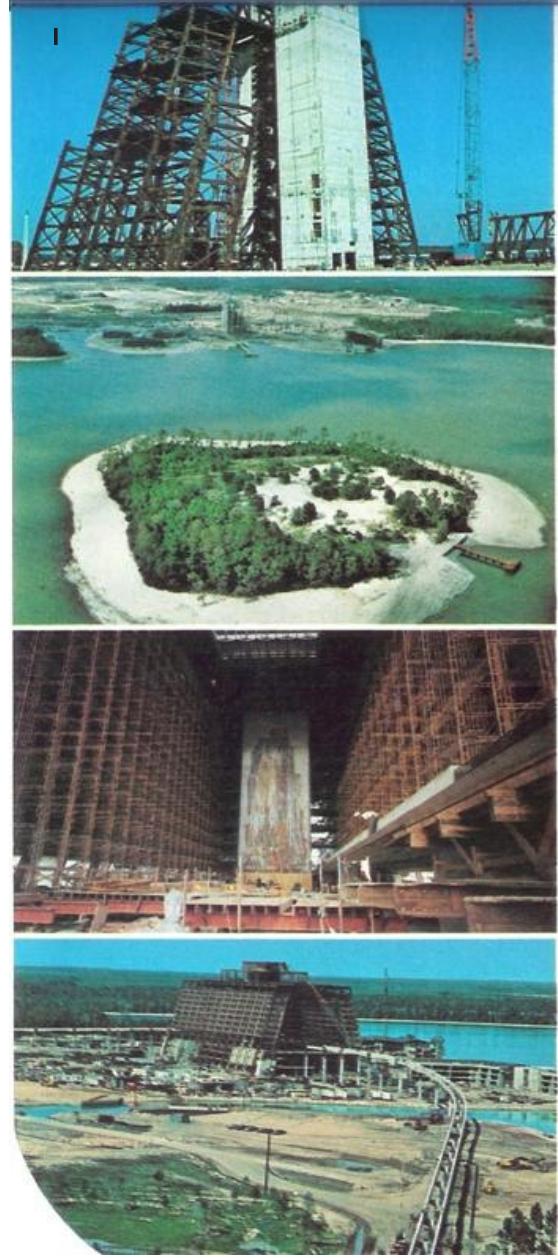
MODULAR MAGIC IN CONSTRUCTION



The exciting innovations Walt Disney envisioned when he said Walt Disney World would be "a showcase to the world for the ingenuity and imagination of American free enterprise," are nowhere better illustrated than in construction of the first two hotels. Here, steel-framed unitized or modular construction has been given its first major showcase. All 1500 rooms of the Contemporary Resort-Hotel and Polynesian Village were fabricated by United States

Steel at an assembly plant three miles from the hotels (top photo), trucked to the building site, and lifted into place by giant cranes (illustrated at the 14-story A-frame Tower

Building of the Contemporary Resort-Hotel). Before leaving the on-the-job assembly plant, these light-weight steel rooms had been completely outfitted—walls covered, bath fixtures installed, mirrors in place and lights ready to be "plugged in."



train is an extraordinary experience. The monorail climbs at 45 MPH to a height of 45 feet along the "highway in the sky." Suddenly—without warning—the Grand Canyon Concourse wraps itself around the train. The Concourse—actually the Hotel's fourth floor—derives its name from the highly stylized mural that dominates the view, completely covering the four sides of the elevator shaft with more than 18,000 hand-painted and fire-glazed ceramic tiles. From the mural came both theme and colors inside the Concourse—brilliant colors for restaurants and shops to complement the "fun" mood of Walt Disney World.

In addition to monorail and mural, the Contemporary's main Tower Building is especially unique in that its nine-story tall, 148-feet wide open mall—containing the restaurants and shops—has been treated as though it were the space between two buildings. Thus, it appears as a highly stylized "landscape," complete with "trees."



40

Disney's Contemporary Resort Construction (1970-1971)



Disney's Contemporary Resort Presentation (1971)







(C) 2002 - 2023 THE-ORIGINAL-EPCOT.COM

This website is not associated in any manner whatsoever with the Walt Disney Company ("Disney"). The purpose of this site is to present a completely independent presentation and is a personal exercise in online journalism. This presentation is for entertainment only. Walt Disney World and Epcot are registered trademarks of The Walt Disney Company. This website does not claim any rights to any intellectual property of The Walt Disney Company.