

# MIGRATION TO THE MAGIC CITY: EARLY MODERNISMS IN AN EVER-EXPANDING MIAMI

## BACKGROUND

Now known as the “Capital of Latin America,” Miami was first referred to as the “Magic City” due to its explosive development in the early 1900’s. With just one thousand inhabitants at its incorporation in 1896, this relatively young city now houses 440 thousand in the city-proper, and six million in the entire metropolitan area. While multiple waves of immigration have landed on Miami’s shores, it is the city’s early exponential growth prior to World War II that has gifted it with various iconic architectural styles. With a railroad built at the turn of the 20th century by Bahamian immigrants, and a burgeoning economy after World War I, Miami was poised aggressively, leading to the Florida Land Boom. As internal and international immigrants rushed to Miami, they brought architectural and artistic ideas that were translated and transformed to fit the environmental context of South Florida.

## PROPOSAL

**Miami contains its own unique flavors of Art Deco and Modernism, mainly due to the influence of global architecture movements, local artisans, and the large waves of people coming into Miami in the early 1900’s. Our project will take us to Miami to study this living time capsule, which has preserved prime examples of iconic moments in architectural history, with a strong sense of identity still present today.** We will be primarily focusing on examples of Art Deco and early Modernism as they evolved in South Florida. By studying these architecture-specific details through a broader lens, we intend to paint a more complete picture and understand precisely what was changing in Miami due to these waves of immigrants.

By focusing on the first half of the 20th century, and specifically the Roaring Twenties, we will be able to track Miami’s evolution concurrently with the rise in structuralism. From Addison Mizner’s ideas translated from Latin America to create the Mediterranean Revival style, to L. Morris Dixon’s translation of New York and Parisian Beaux Arts into Art Deco, Miami became a melting pot of multiple genres. This translation was a two-way street, as Miami’s unique art deco style was transplanted back north in the latter half of the 20th century. By investigating this time period’s designs and influences, we can better understand the modernisms and postmodernisms that emerged from it.

## METHODS

We will use a variety of study tools and techniques to create a visual timeline of early Miami. Through visiting important architectural landmarks by key architects of each movement, as well as visiting art museums and cultural institutions to meet with historians and other professionals, we will determine and investigate the architectural typologies that defined the rise of Miami. Aside from these key discussions, our methods will include on-site sketching and color studies, photographic documentation, and analytical diagrams of orthographic drawings from the micro-detail to macro-urban scales. At RAMSA, precedent research is critical to our design process. With this project, we aim to broaden the definition of precedent to encompass historical and sociological-economic context as driving architectural forces. **Understanding how these iconic buildings came to be will provide greater insight into the impact of immigrants and global architecture movements on what eventually became an iconic architecture of the United States.**

## RESOURCES:

1. MIAMI DESIGN PRESERVATION LEAGUE
2. ART DECO SOCIETY OF NEW YORK
3. ARCHITECTURE IN TRANSLATION, ESRA AKCAN
4. MODERN ARCHITECTURE: A CRITICAL HISTORY, KENNETH FRAMPTON

## BUDGET

FLIGHTS:	\$375.00
HOTELS:	\$1,650.00
FOOD:	\$1,050.00
TRANSPORT:	\$650.00
ADMISSION:	\$100.00
TOTAL:	\$3,825.00



MCALPIN



THE COLONY



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THE FLAMINGO