

TOURIST CITY IN ABHA, SAUDI ARABIA

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GIANNINI EDITORE

THE DREAM OF ABHA  
Aseer Governorate Municipality  
in collaboration with  
The General Authority of Tourism and Antiquities  
Planning and Architectural Competition

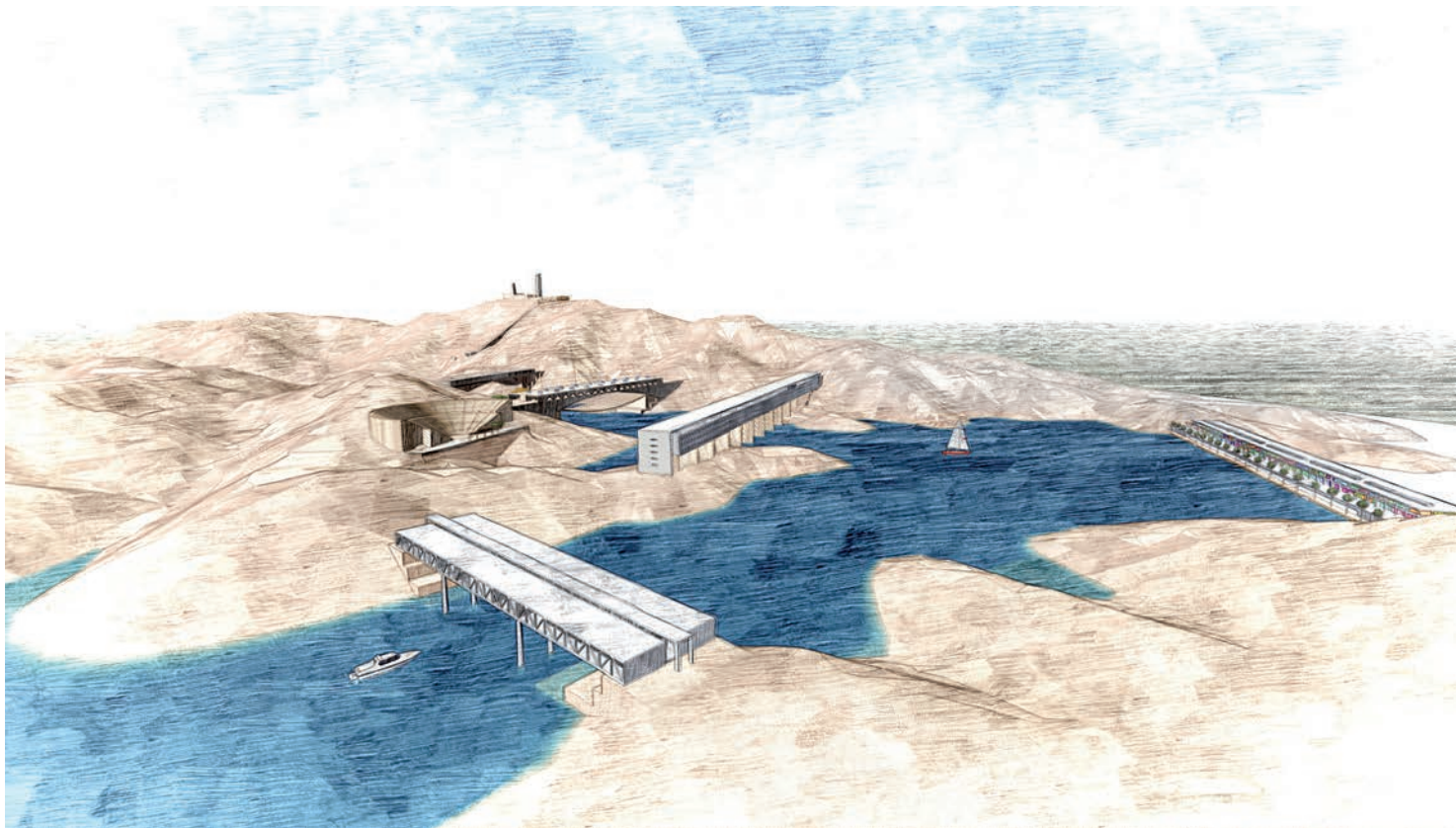
TERRACING AND BRIDGES - NATURE AND TRICKERY

SANDRO RAFFONE

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## PREFACE

This publication, proposed by my publisher, contains drawings and texts of the six tables A0 competition entitled “The dream of Abha” with the addition of some views of the buildings, some captions and notes about the trip. I removed the graphics and the concept of zoning and as regards the nine organized villages, I bring up just two of these, and four housings among the different six types of these.

The competition, organized by the city of Abha in collaboration with “The General Authority of Tourism”, is aimed to planning a tourist city to host the Arabian Peninsula vacationers who are attracted with the mild climate of 2,200 meters above sea level. In addition to make an investment, the project is placed as a core for the development of local and regional plans. In the north of Abha, with an area of 11 square kilometers and crossed by two highways, the guidelines consider a low-density action with an important development about the topography and reflect the architectural heritage of the place. Tourist resorts of different classes were requested: there are a lot of restaurants, events room, entertainment, sports, and in addition, there are green places, tourist activities, bazaar, arts and crafts heritage, museums and art exhibitions.

Among the architects invited to the competition, just seven of them presented their projects: Albisinni Piero, Cellini Francesco (first prize), Micara Ludovico, Nabeel Al Kurdi, Pisani Mario, Raffone Sandro (third prize) and Tuzzolino Francesco (second prize).

The survey took place from 7 to 11 January 2014; while the meeting for the delivery took place from 25 February to 2 March in the same year.

In the morning of 26 February, Prince Faisal Bel Khaled, who presides over Asir province, inaugurated the projects exhibition in the spaces of the new town hall in Abha, which was followed by the explanation of the projects to the panel of judges. The Abha mayor thanked everyone stating that it can take ideas from various projects. It isn't efficient because the ideas competitions don't produce necessarily solutions but typically produce attractive images.

## METHOD

Best to my limits I faced the competition in the only way I know to plan: guiding the choices in order of the actual feasibility with a method that is independent of the scale to find solutions “inside” the theme. I'm aware that while the buildings are realized in a few years, the city shall comply in centuries; however, I believe that cities like Sabaudia, Chandigarh and Brasilia are the outcome of the architectural projects and not urban planning. So my incompetence in planning was an advantage that favored the solution overlapping to the needs required in accordance with the topography, economy and feasibility. Source of the project are the level curves from which, with the aid of model, we have obtained the frame of the paths and basins to collect rainwater, which gave the title “Terracing and bridges, nature and trickery”.

From the general to the particular and then from the detail to the buildings to measure and place the bodies, although the urban scale is between 1/10000 and 1/5000, I investigated the designs on detail as the roofing of the auditorium and the HEB 220 beams of the hotel.

The competition was developed in six weeks of intense work with all members of the young architects team.

