building blocks

Heralded as the world's tallest prefabricated building, SHoP Architects's 32-story apartment tower in Brooklyn, New York, is still on hold due to legal hiccups. In its shadow, meanwhile, the prefab trend has been picking up steam, as witnessed by this successfully completed middle-income residential project in Manhattan. Gluck assembled the Stack from modules framed with steel and concrete. Each measures roughly 12 feet wide by 45 feet long but varies slightly to accommodate the seven-story building's C-shape and stepped facade. "Unlike in the 1960s, today's modular construction is flexible," Thomas Gluck says. Apartments span multiple modules. No cookie-cutter boxes here. Where the modules' polished concrete floors meet, Gluck even left the lines visible. It took a mere four weeks from the day the modules left their mile-long Pennsylvania factory, through the stack-and-bolt assembly process, to Turnkey ready. —Georgina McWhirter

BIG ideas