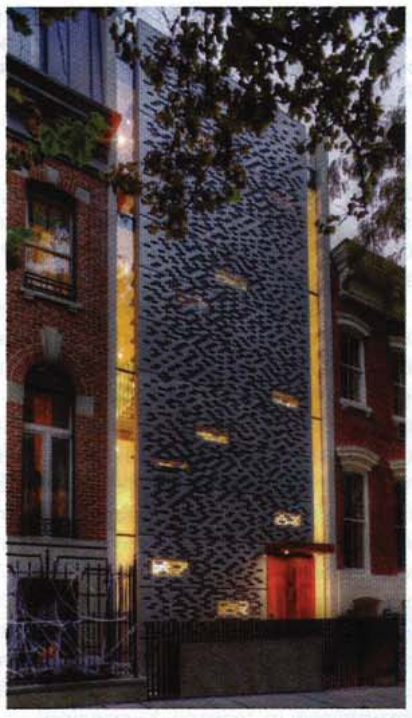
STUDIO VISIT> PETER GLUCK AND PARTNERS

URBAN TOWNHOUSE



BROADWAY PREFABRICATED HOUSING

COURTYARD HOUSE

MARINE SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION GENETICS CENTER

ALL IMAGES COURTESY PETER GLUCK AND PARTNER EXCEPT TOP LEFT: ERIK FREELAND

At a recent competition to design a vertical campus for the prestigious Collegiate School on Manhattan's Upper West Side, several well-known New York firms showed up with snazzy renderings in hand. Peter Gluck did not bring a proposal. When asked by the selection committee why he arrived empty-handed, he responded, "How can we give you a solution when we don't know the problem yet." Gluck got the job.

While anecdotal, the Collegiate competition gets to the heart of the way Gluck's design-build firm works: architects are embedded with the project from inception through construction.

A series of studies in Gluck's Manhattanville office devoted to Collegiate document the early stages of the project. Coordinating with teachers, parents, and administrators, the architects developed hundreds of multicolored flow charts that map the class schedules, weekend events, and sports activities. Brightly colored foam blocks with labels like "English," "science," "main dining," and "art" sit beneath a clear acrylic stand-in for the building. The foam blocks representing the various programs get shuffled about inside the floors of the building in a Rubik's Cube-like fashion. The exercise is designed to coordinate flow and, eventually, form.

Just as the architects are on hand for the clients in the initial design process, they're also on hand for the subcontractors during construction. This integrated approach carries through to drawings. Generations of plans and drawings, developed on-site with the subcontractors, become tools for communication rather than dictums handed down from above.

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URBAN TOWNHOUSE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

This slim East Side townhouse on an 18-foot lot gently nudges its elderly neighbors with a clean-lined modernist riff on their classic red-brick facades. The pierced brick pattern is scatted across a powder-coated aluminum plate rain screen manufactured by Leed Himmel. A warm white interior accented in varying hues of walnut becomes a cathedral for books, with shelves running up the height of the three-story building. Long vertical openings cut into the back of the street wall are paired with stout horizontal openings behind the screen to flood the interior with natural light during the day and create a varied light box by night.

BROADWAY PREFABRICATED HOUSING
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

A lot on Broadway in the northern Manhattan neighborhood of Inwood has sat empty for years. The architect donned his developer hat on this project, working with Jeff Brown and Kim Frank of Porter House condo fame. Gluck wanted to rethink the contemporary apartment building. Instead of a nostalgic take on nearby art deco apartments, the firm sought 21st-century solutions for infill, namely, off-site construction. The 28 prefab modular units of varying lengths will be stacked one atop the other to create a shifting facade alternating with full balconies. The generous depth of the lot will also allow for a courtyard.

COURTYARD HOUSE
ASPEN, COLORADO

The term "nestled into the hillside" can be taken quite literally with this Rocky Mountain retreat, which not only plays off the hillside planes but also is part of them. The sustainable attributes of a green roof are supplemented with white oak sunscreens and solar panels integrated into the south face of the building. The panels in turn feed a thermal system that heats the pool, spa, and radiant floor. Because the firm was contractor for the project, it was able to cut costs in the design of a system that would normally require individual electronic controls for separate loops feeding the pool, spa, and floor. Instead, the architect-builders designed one main loop to feed all three.

MARINE SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION GENETICS CENTER, DUKE UNIVERSITY
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Gluck's designs for Duke University's Marine Lab take the firm to new levels of complexity, highlighting the university's comfort level with design/build. The building's pinwheel-like floor plan places offices and collaborative bullpens beneath the all-important labs above, thereby assuring that tidal waters on Pivers Island never reach the sensitive equipment. Indoor/outdoor spaces on the top floor facilitate what the firm calls "collision commons" for interaction and debate, while ground floor spaces, called "barges," stand askew. The perpendicular angles create outdoor rooms that frame the water views and provide more space for informal interactions.