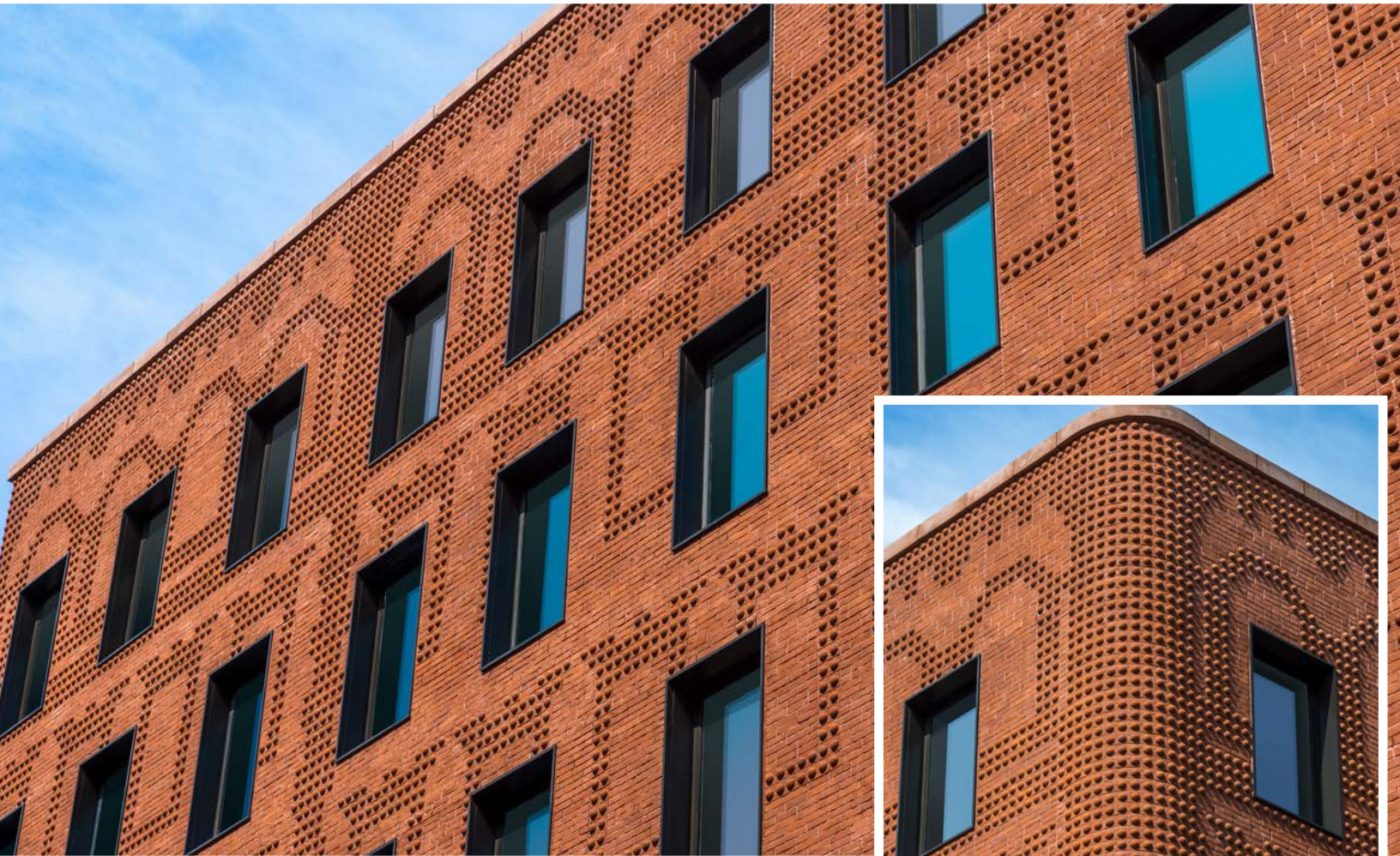


case study: a closer look at **THE GRAND MULBERRY**



56-DD, Special Shapes

The Grand Mulberry • New York, NY

Behind these brick fronts is a seven-story, 35,765 square-foot building with twenty units of housing. The Grand Mulberry is also the new home of the Italian American Museum, which is accessed via a double-height atrium on the ground floor. Adjmi describes the residential interiors as, “warm, minimal, and beautiful.” He says, “What we tried to do with the facade, obviously, was to relate to the neighborhood, but also to contrast with the crispness of the modern building inside.”

The brick detailing of The Grand Mulberry—with tripartite banding at base, pediment windows in the middle, and arched windows at top—reference historic Italianate tenements. This seems an almost obvious choice for a new building on Mulberry Street, the last surviving remnant of Little Italy in Manhattan. Yet the detailing is anything but obvious.

As Joanne Kaufman wrote in the *New York Times*, the brick pattern “could have emerged from a dot-matrix printer.” Adjmi explains the unique device that MA used on The Grand Mulberry. The detail on the window surrounds, the coursing of the bricks, the cornice—all of the articulation that you’d normally see in colored brick on these buildings,” he says, “we reimagined using dots on the bricks in a series of patterns.” The dots are in fact domes built into custom brick. These bricks come in roughly thirty different shapes: double brick with double domes (the most prevalent), double brick with single dome, curved brick, lipped brick, simple shapes without domes, etc. All have a uniform, clay color, and all are laid using a double-stacked running bond coursing. Only the dots are unusual.



The dotted patterns run on a system separate from that of the new building. “The pattern is an abstraction of a literal copy, as complicated as that sounds,” says Adjmi. “The idea was to create something that had the appearance of a historic building.” He notes that the classically inspired, irregular grouping of the ghost windows creates a tension or juxtaposition with the regular cadence of real windows. Rows of twelve brick windows meet nine glass windows on the Mulberry Street front, while ten brick windows and eight glass windows are on the Grand Street facade. “It’s maybe a little bit of cheating,” Adjmi admits, because we could have done anything we wanted.”

Excerpt from FOLIO 2 by ORO Editions

key players:

Architect • Morris Adjmi Architects
Distributor • Extech Building Materials
Mason Contractor • Ark Builders Corp
General Contractor • Empire State Contractors

the brick breakdown:

46,000+ 56-DD Custom Size Brick
15,000+ 56-DD Various Special Shapes

A brand of Brickworks

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