

# Solid and sustainable

**Derako** uses solid wood to produce durable, environmentally friendly and aesthetically beautiful ceilings, walls and facades. Sita Vleer, marketing and communication manager, tells *LEAF Review* about the company's commitment to sustainability and how its solid wood systems benefit architects.

## How does Derako's systems support creativity in design?

**Sita Vleer:** It all begins with the creativity and design of the architect. At Derako, we work exclusively on a project basis, so our solid wood systems are made-to-measure architect solutions with budget flexibility. In cooperation with the architect, and using our knowledge and experience, Derako offers support during the design and engineering phase. By sharing great pictures and stories on our website, we provide a lot of inspiration that will lead to many new designs using one of the oldest and most remarkable raw materials that nature has given us.

## A Derako solid wood ceiling is a key feature at the Atlas Theatre in Emmen, the Netherlands. How did using wood solve the design challenges associated with this type of project?

The design of the building was very unique, as the new theatre forms the transition between the city centre and the new Wildlands Adventure Zoo. It was designed to be a mix between culture and nature, with an undulating shape that is present in the theatre and continues through to the theatre's green roof

The architect chose to use solid wood due to its acoustical values and warm, natural appearance. The Derako linear ceiling system meanders through the building at a height of 5-15m, and it has a convex and concave surface with 5-6 radiation points. In conjunction with the integrated lighting system, the result is extremely impressive. The Derako system

consists of solid wooden slats that are invisibly suspended on a purpose-built innovative suspension system of carriers and clips. In close contact with the architect and installation company, Derako engineered the project up front. Thanks to a detailed plan, the installation was very fast.

## What are the advantages of working with solid wood?

As the co-founder of Greenpeace said, one of the best ways to address climate change is to use more wood – not less. If grown sustainably, wood is an endless renewable building material that can lock enormous amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> into the forests where it grows and the building products it produces. Compared with commonly used building materials, wood has no restrictions on its end-of-life phase. It can be upcycled, recycled, burned for green energy production or can biodegrade to become nutrients for microorganisms that nurture the earth for new trees to grow.

## How does Derako's commitment to sustainability add value?

This is an interesting question because the answer starts with the beliefs of our clients, and how they see our sustainability as adding value. Alongside investments in the area of materials and production processes, Derako also invests in certificates and eco-labels. All our products are Forest Stewardship Council, Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification and Cradle to Cradle Silver-certified, and we only work with suppliers that source wood sustainably. Corporate social and



Derako is passionate about using sustainably sourced wood.

environmental responsibility is a very important principle to Derako.

## Can you tell us more about the technical support Derako offers?

Derako offers support throughout the whole process, including engineering and installation. Based on the design, our technical department prepares all the drawings, detailed installation plans and technical information. During installation, we visit sites to provide support. We also take design challenges, the integration of building systems and logistical problems into account.

For our project at Schiphol Airport Amsterdam, the ceiling system deliveries took place at night using a delivery route that was specially created for this work, enabling the installers to work at night while reducing the inconvenience to the other operations at Schiphol. Derako guarantees carrier systems, wood

finishes and fire retardation – it really is a one-stop shop.

## What new projects is the company undertaking?

We have just finished a unique project in Poland, the Wroclavia shopping centre, with the development company Unibail-Rodamco. The design challenge was producing a curved slat from the wood itself that created a very special wavy ceiling. We started with the installation of mock-ups to test if the developed design was possible, then we fully engineered the project.

We are also working on an exciting project in London, where the ceiling forms a circle; to achieve, this Derako is producing fan panels that are specially engineered. ●

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[www.derako.com](http://www.derako.com)

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- Great design freedom
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