

COMPLEX CEILING FOR A COMPLEX SCIENCE

CASE STUDY



DIVISION 9 ENGINEERED-TO-ORDER WOOD CEILINGS

Complex Ceiling for a Complex Science

UC Berkeley – Li Ka Shing Center

Designed by ZGF Architects, Portland, Oregon, this project integrates a very

intricate, almost jigsaw-puzzle composition of over 18,000 SF of perforated tiles, linear wood, grilles and various trims.



The University of California at Berkeley Li Ka-Shing Biomedical Center's mission is to generate significant scientific advances in biomedical, health teaching and research. Its modern exterior of glass, concrete and steel connotes the height of technology while its interior of warm Douglas Fir speaks of nature and healing. Like the cutting-edge science that inhabit this space, the interiors of this project were extremely complex and required a level of unprecedented detail and coordination – so much so that, according to L&W Supply's Jim Ratzlaff, "Pound for pound this was the most difficult project I've ever been involved with."

Designed by Zimmer Gunsul Frasca in Portland, Oregon, the project first came to 9Wood's design support team in August of 2008. 9Wood supported the design process through holding meetings at the firm, manufacturing several design samples and providing custom architectural details. The design was to integrate a very complex, almost jigsaw-puzzle composition of perforated tiles, linear wood, grilles and various trims. Adding to the

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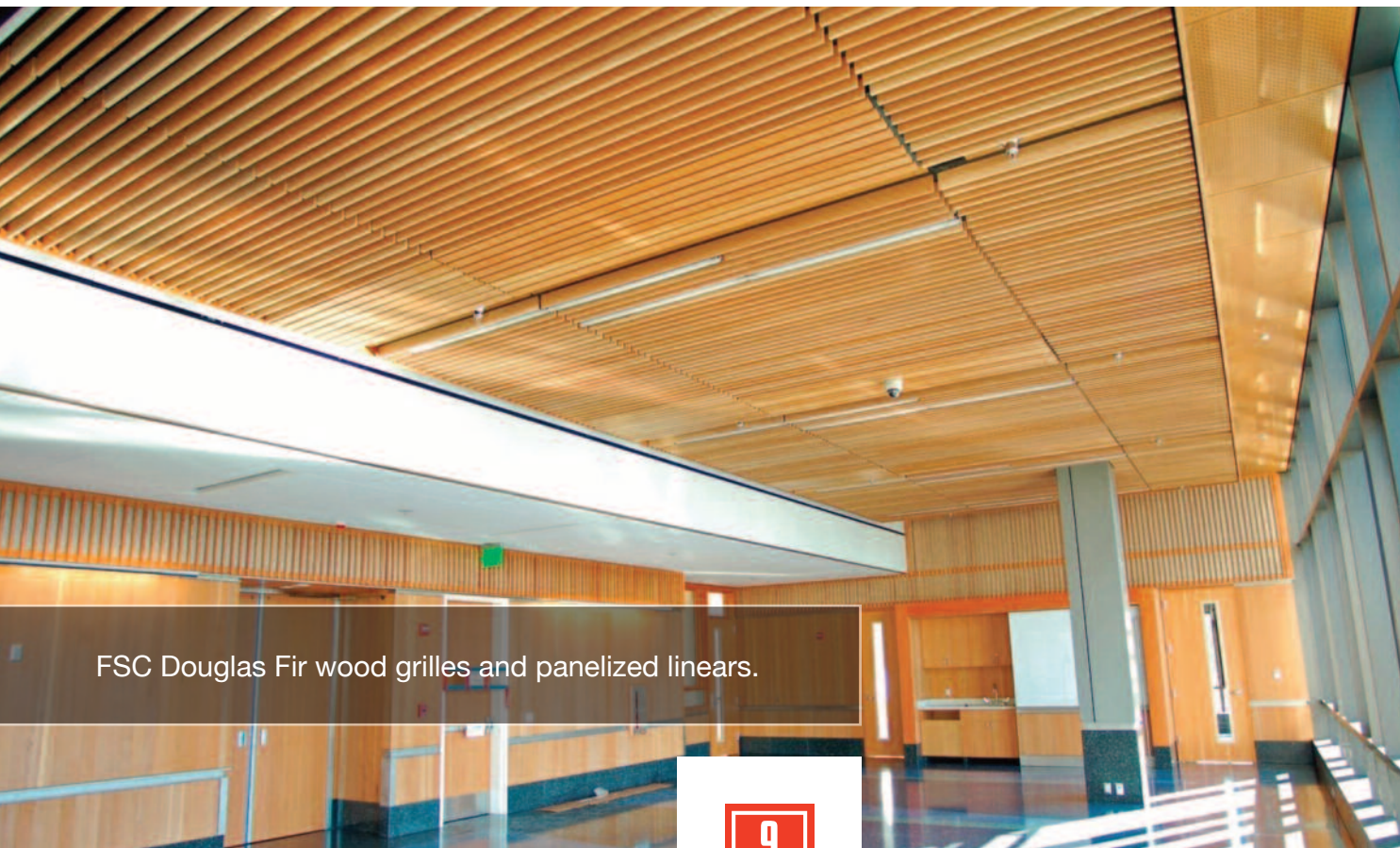


complexity, each of the five floors had unique layouts: all perforated tiles required non-standard borders. The customization was attractive on the design end, but how would 200+ custom panels be handled through production and installation?

In late 2009, 9Wood won the contract and embarked on the journey required to execute this behemoth project. There were five products, including linears and grilles made with solid FSC Douglas Fir as well as tiles and perforated tiles made with quarter-sliced FSC Douglas Fir veneer. There were ten types of trim. The design intent was to integrate all the products together with other design elements including Douglas Fir wood walls done by other millworkers. Instead of the standard *(continued on page 4)*



Custom-sized FSC Douglas Fir perforated tiles.

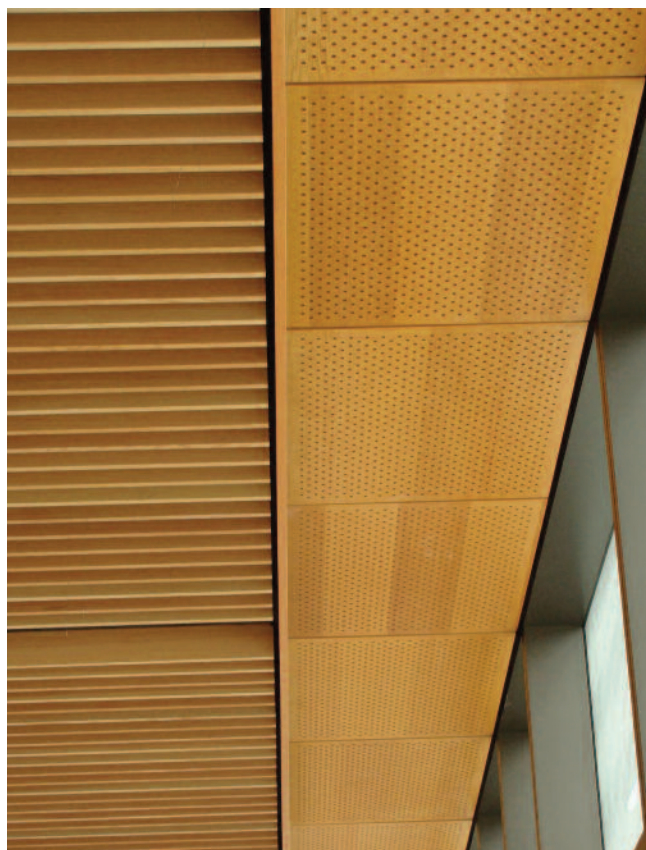


FSC Douglas Fir wood grilles and panelized linears.

9Wood Lift & Lock attachment that required a standard grid configuration, Ratzlaff coordinated with Lindner of Germany to devise a custom suspension that would more easily accommodate the custom, angled perimeters. This system was the definition of integration: 9Wood and Lindner working together.

The biggest challenge for this project was to coordinate and fabricate the perforated tiles. Due to the sheer volume of custom panels (where the 200 theoretical unique panels had turned into over 500), cutting and perforating in the field was not feasible. As such, the tile dimensions were measured in the field and sent back to 9Wood for detailed CAD dimensioning, tile by tile. Ratzlaff executed this intensive field dimensioning effort in order to get the tiles to fit the space. There were many non-typical angles and round columns to be accounted for. Because of these exceptional requirements, 9Wood's project management and drafting departments had to devise a painstaking system for tracking the panels through production and installation.

The final shipment was sent in September of 2011 and installation was completed shortly thereafter. As time goes by the Douglas Fir will patina to give the space a rich, warm glow with pink and peach hues. Said architect Amy Columbo of ZGF, "The use of the wood creates a balance of materials and expresses the sustainability of the center, unifying the public spaces."



Project Details

UC Berkeley – Li Ka Shing Center
Berkeley, CA

Total Scope: **18,137 SF**

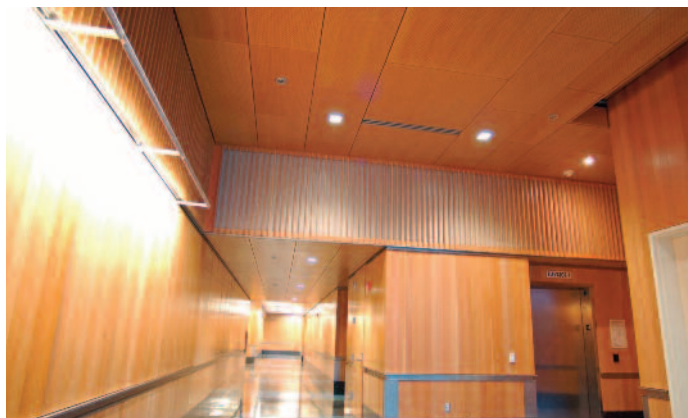
Products: **5200 Staggered Perf Tile,**
2100 Panelized Linear,
1100 Cross Piece Grille

Architect: **ZGF Architects**

Contractor: **Spacetone Acoustics**



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