

Elastilon by OSBE, the Netherlands

The floating installation revolution

Elastilon, an adhesive mat for installing solid wood flooring, is an entirely new revolution, and it is making its way around the world. And it has got recent follow-ups and innovations.

Solid wood strip parquet is still considered the most prestigious of wooden floors. Its installation is a matter for professional craftsmen, conventionally using glue or sizeable screws to keep the resisting forces within the wood in check. However, fast and clean floating installation has become ever more popular. Developments in clamp solutions and lock joints made this possible.

At about the same time Fred van Bers, who launched the Dutch company OSBE Parket back in 1963, came up with a new sub-layer called Elastilon. It features a rolled-out elastic adhesive mat covered with a protective layer upon which the wooden slats are driven together and adjusted as necessary. Then the protective layer is pulled out from between the floor and the mat. The adhesion of the elastic mat then pro-

vides continuous tension that holds the flooring pieces together, virtually prohibiting the formation of gaps. Of course, a worldwide patent has been obtained.

Because 'Elastilon' is difficult to pronounce in the English language, the product is called 'PlankLoc' Installation System in the U.S. And it has more to offer than just keeping parquet slats together. The underlay serves

both as an acoustic and thermal insulation, making additional dampening measures unnecessary. It also prevents cupping and crowning in the flooring elements.

Different Elastilon types

Basically all kinds of parquet and strip floors with tongue & groove joints are suitable for use with the Elastilon system. The 'Basic' version of the mat can be chosen when hardwood species like oak and walnut, which do not shrink or expand much, are to be installed. Not to forget laminate flooring.

But narrow slats, wooden tiles and less stable wooden floor covers, such as pine woods and two-layer, engineered and pre-finished parquet of beech and maple, are better off with the 'Elastilon Strong' version. 'Basic' and 'Elastilon Strong' are available in thickness of 3mm (Standard), 5mm (Sport) and 10mm (Sport) –on request even thicker. Still, it is not the thickness or the strength of the glue or the quality of the foam which makes the difference between Basic and Strong. It is just the density of the foam, Basic having 30kg per cubic metre and Strong offering 50kg per cubic metre.

Of course, 'Elastilon Strong' can be combined with click-joint systems. The German parquet manufacturer Terhuerne recommends the use of Elastilon with



Lara keeps guard of managing director Fred Van Bers, account manager Valentijn Dekker, sales development Ingrid Vleminckx, administrator Monique Bogaards and marketing manager Mark Simkens.



Wooden flooring on Elastilon can be fixed either by removing the protective layer after two rows have been locked together or by just stepping on the surface of the installed parquet.

its Real Wood Click products, especially when installed on radiant floor heating. The reason: Elastilon provides very low resistance to heat transfer.

Even more suitable for radiant heating is 'Elastilon Lock'. This 2mm thick version with 50kg foam per cubic metre offers an adhesive layer on both sides of

the underlay. The wooden boards are completely attached to the underfloor heating system using this method. Logically 'Elastilon Lock' can also be recommended

when the user opts for a non-floating floor. The German test institute IFF concluded: "The firmness/strength with which the tongue&groove connection is ►

Advantages of the Elastilon installation mat

- turns a concrete slab into a hardwood floor
- suitable for engineered hardwood or laminate flooring on or below grade
- closed cell, foam pad provides cushion for superior comfort
- ultra strong, fibre reinforced mesh with locking-pressure, sensitive adhesive
- peel off system allows for easy installation
- quick, clean and removable
- can be used in residential and commercial applications

Elastilon reduces impact noise

Reduction of impact sound and footfall noise is becoming more important as the demand for parquet and floorboards in apartments is growing. In the Netherlands, a floor's construction has to provide for a noise reduction of 10dB. Elastilon was tested in 2004 at the 'Peutz' Laboratory for Acoustic Testing, firstly in accordance with Swiss and then Dutch standards regarding impact noise reduction. Tests were executed using wooden flooring products from Lieverdink, the Netherlands (EQUI solid, 10mm), Cosmo, Italy

(Listoncino 2-ply, 10mm) and Lopark, Germany (Royal Plus and Royal Maxi 2-ply, 11 and 12mm).

However, these kinds of tests are purely empirical because subjective sound perception cannot be mathematically calculated and is impossible to predict, Osbe's results from that day's measurements were never achieved before in the parquet branch. Just four out of 15 tests resulted in an impact noise reduction less than 10dB. Other findings showed improvements of 11-23dB.

Shear strength and thermal resistance

The German IFF test institute calculated in 2005 that samples of flooring connected to tilo-elasto-fix/Elastilon Lock have a maximum shear force resistance of 1149 Newton. After artificial aging the strength of the bond was reduced by approx. 40%. Still the IFF confirmed that the strength of this locking system, maintaining the tongue&groove connection, is higher than with the click connection used in other products of the same or similar kind.

With regard to use on radiant heating systems, the IFF concluded that Elastilon Lock together

with a prefinished, multilayer floorboard of 10mm thickness results in a thermal resistance of 0.14 – thereby staying below the value of 0.15 required by the guidelines of the Federal Panel Heating Association.

Major dealers worldwide

Belgium: Hout Ambacht, Pilgrim JISCO, Houthead Marijnissen, J. Vandenbergk

Canada: Briggs Engineered Wood Products

Denmark: Båring Savværk

France: Sarl Volsteen

Germany: Ewifoam, Terhuerne and Gründorf

Hungary: Lignum Europa

Israel: Hercules Floor Center

Italy: Ewifoam Italia

Northern Ireland: Wood Innovations

Norway: Boen Bruk AS

Russia: Junckers Parket Russia

Spain: Otto Parquet

Sweden: IMEX

Switzerland: Guignard Parkett

United Kingdom: Atkins & Cripps, Floorco, Haywoods Accessories, Kent Flooring Supplies, Taylor Maxwell Timber, Gründorf UK, Pilkingtons

United States: Owens Flooring Company, Elastilon USA (Zickgraf)

South Africa: Suntups

held together is better than that of click connections."

For sport facilities 'Elastilon Sport' is the appropriate underlay. Either 5 or 10mm thick, it provides uniform absorption and resilience in fitness floors - for

aerobics, ballet and other exercises. The elasticity can be customised according to the client's or architect's specifications to meet individual requirements.

The most recent OSBE development is 'Elastilon Remov-

able'. This kind of heavy elastic polyurethane mat features an adhesive top layer that has a "post-it" effect, providing a high separation strength in the horizontal direction but easy take-up of installed floorboards in a vertical direction. No damage is

done to the material when lifted again, no adhesive remnants are left behind. Indeed, the adhesive layer can be used again if not contaminated with dust. So a new floor can be installed on the same mat.

For the dancer - elasticity

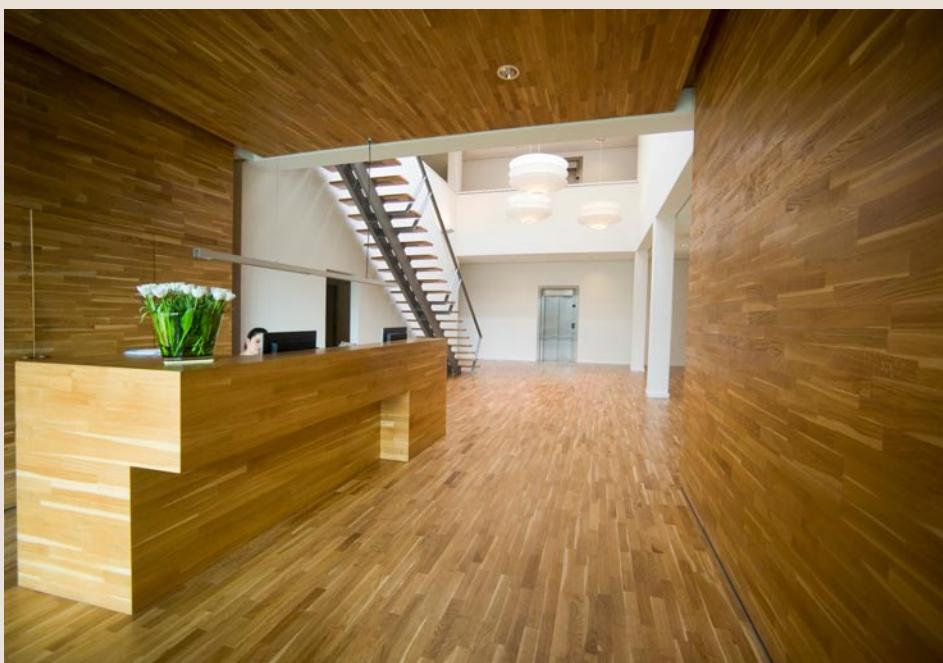
The central exercise room at the Ballet Academy of the University Tilburg had to receive a new wooden flooring. This time it was neither the client nor the architect who specified the floor. The chief ballet lecturer tested and decided on the construction's flexibility, elasticity and friction. Homogenous elasticity across the whole area was her main concern. To meet these high demands, a three-layer construction was installed. First an open-pore, 7mm thick PE-foam of low density was put on the subfloor. Then 'Elastilon Strong' was laid on top – only 3mm thick. Finally solid, 22mm thick slats of beech from the Danish manufacturer Junckers made up the top surface. Of course the parquet was installed without clips. The adhesive force of 'Elastilon Strong' sufficed to provide a floating ballet floor which is unique in Europe.



Below the solid beech parquet, a 7mm foam and a 3mm 'Elastilon Strong' mat guarantee uniform elasticity at every single spot on the floor.

For the lawyer - silence

"De Voort Hermes De Bont" is a big lawyer's office, also located in Tilburg, the Netherlands. The prestigious and well-known office employs 30 attorneys. A floating installation of vertical lamella parquet was carried out in the building some years ago. Drum sound, however, was a problem at the spacious entrance, which connects each of the 30 individual offices, from the onset. Footfall noise generated in the hall, travelled to the rooms where the lawyers had to concentrate on difficult cases. High heeled ladies' shoes, in particular were a regular source of disturbance. The company OSBE was able to save the lawyers from their noisy plight. Of course the floor had to be taken out and re-installed. But this time 'Elastilon Lock' was used as the "mediator" between subfloor and parquet. With its double-sided adhesive bond the underlay now keeps the wooden floor tighter in place – and definitely silent.



The lamella parquet was re-installed using 'Elastilon Lock' as a sound reducing underlay.

'Elastilon Removable' has been especially aimed at shops, hospitals and locations where floors are installed temporarily and the floor cover, following removal, must be ready for immediate re-use. According to the manufacturer, 'Elastilon Removable'

is not limited to the installation of parquet and strip floors, but can be used for all floor covers that are built from individual elements including cork, linoleum, Marmoleum, ceramics, laminate or any other synthetic floor material.

For everybody - durability

Inside the 'Haans Tilburg' building a lot of wood is used for interior decoration, on the floor, the walls and the ceiling. The outline designed by the famous architect Jo Coenen rises like a Chinese pagoda out of a surrounding water basin. It is said to be the most expensive and most creative architectural enterprise in the Netherlands to date. People from all continents populate the building, speaking a multitude of languages. With this project, architect Jo



All the floors in the big 'Haans Tilburg' building are covered by beech parquet.

Coenen really had the opportunity to enjoy his capabilities to the full. The whole floor of the building is covered with a parquet of light beech. Many thousand square metres were installed, which took Osbe Parket BV, the company responsible, more than a year. OSBE contributed with its Elastilon mat to the durability of the wooden flooring which is stressed by heavy traffic.

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