

BARNES & THORNBURG LLP

11 South Meridian Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204
(317) 236-1313
(317) 231-7433 Fax

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

<i>Customer No.:</i>	23643
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<i>Confirmation No.:</i>	2862
<i>Application No.:</i>	16/665,168
<i>Invention:</i>	ELASTOMERIC FILMS HAVING LOW TEAR PROPAGATION
<i>First-Named Inventor:</i>	Iyad Muslet
<i>Filing Date:</i>	October 28, 2019
<i>Attorney Docket:</i>	5723-340421 (18-0655-US-ORD)
<i>Examiner:</i>	SHEWAREGED, BETELHEM

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RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

Mail Stop: AF
Commissioner for Patents
P. O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the final Office Action mailed January 27, 2023, Applicant requests entry of the following amendments to the claims and consideration of the following remarks.

Amendments to the Claims begin on page 2 of this paper; and

Remarks begin on page 6 of this paper.

A Certification and Request for Consideration Under the After Final Consideration Pilot (AFCP) Program 2.0 is filed herewith.

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims presented below replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A laminate comprising a film and at least two nonwoven substrates; wherein the nonwoven substrates comprise at least one layer of spunbond material comprising ribbon-shaped fibers, wherein a cross-section of the ribbon-shaped fibers comprises a width that is at least 1.5 times greater than a height of the ribbon-shaped fibers, wherein the laminate comprises ultrasonic bonds, thermal bonds, or combinations thereof and which has an elongation at break which is at least 10% greater than a comparative laminate in which the nonwoven substrates comprise non-ribbon shaped fibers, ~~and~~ wherein the at least two nonwoven substrates are bonded to either side of a same layer of the film, the film being a monolayer film, and wherein a peel force of the laminate is about 28 N/cm to about 100 N/cm.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) The laminate according to claim 1, wherein the film comprises from about 1% to about 30% of polystyrene.

4. (Original) The laminate according to claim 1, wherein the film has a basis weight of about 65 gsm or less.

5. (Previously Presented) The laminate according to claim 1, wherein the film is a multilayer film comprising at least one outer layer comprising polyethylene and/or polypropylene.

6. (Previously Presented) The laminate according to claim 5, wherein the at least one outer layer comprises from about 5% to about 25% of the total film thickness.

7. (Previously Presented) The laminate according to claim 5, wherein the at least one outer layer of the film comprises polypropylene in an amount of at least about 70%.

8. (Previously Presented) The laminate according to claim 5, wherein the at least one outer layer of the film comprises polyethylene in an amount of at least about 60%.

9. (Previously Presented) The laminate according to claim 1, wherein the laminate is substantially free of adhesive.

10. (Previously Presented) The laminate according to claim 1, wherein the laminate comprises at least two nonwoven substrates bonded to either side of the film.

11. (Currently Amended) A laminate comprising a film and two nonwoven substrates, wherein the film is a multilayer film comprising at least one outer layer and a core layer, the two nonwoven substrates being directly bonded to a layer of the multilayer film, with the multilayer film being extruded as a single film; wherein the nonwoven substrates comprise at least one layer of spunbond material comprising ribbon-shaped fibers, wherein a cross-section of the ribbon-shaped fibers comprises a width that is at least 1.5 times greater than a height of the ribbon-shaped fibers, wherein the laminate comprises ultrasonic bonds, thermal bonds, or combinations thereof and exhibits a noise level of less than 45 dB, and wherein a peel force of the laminate is about 28 N/cm to about 100 N/cm.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Previously Presented) The laminate according to claim 11, wherein the core layer comprises from about 1% to about 30% of polystyrene.

14. (Original) The laminate according to claim 11, wherein the film has a basis weight of about 65 gsm or less.

15. (Previously Presented) The laminate according to claim 11, wherein the laminate is substantially free of adhesive.

16. (Previously Presented) The laminate of claim 11, which has a peel force of at least 15 N/cm greater than a comparative laminate in which the nonwoven substrate comprises non-ribbon shaped fibers.

17. (Currently Amended) A laminate comprising a film and at least two nonwoven substrates bonded directly to said film, wherein the film is a monolayer film that comprises a polymeric composition comprising at least about 50% of one or more styrenic block copolymers; wherein the at least two nonwoven substrates comprise at least one layer of spunbond material comprising ribbon-shaped fibers, wherein a cross-section of the ribbon-shaped fibers comprises a width that is at least 1.5 times greater than a height of the ribbon-shaped fibers, wherein the laminate comprises ultrasonic bonds, thermal bonds, or combinations thereof and exhibits a noise level of at least 3 dB lower than a comparative laminate in which the nonwoven substrate comprises non-ribbon shaped fibers, and wherein a peel force of the laminate is about 28 N/cm to about 100 N/cm.

18. (Original) The laminate according to claim 17, wherein the styrenic block copolymer comprises SBS, SIS, or combinations thereof.

19. (Previously Presented) The laminate according to claim 17, wherein the polymeric composition further comprises from about 1% to about 30% of polystyrene.

20. (Cancelled).

21. (Cancelled).

22. (New) The laminate of claim 1, wherein the film has a basis weight of about 45 gsm or less.

23. (New) The laminate of claim 1, wherein a comparative peel force of the laminate is about 15 N/cm to about 100 N/cm greater than a bilaminate.

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-11, and 13-19 are pending and stand rejected in this application. In this response, claims 1, 11, and 17 are amended. Support for the amendments to claims 1, 11, and 17 can be found throughout the specification and in the original claims. No new matter is believed to have been added.

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Applicant thanks Examiner Shewareged for extending the courtesy of a telephone interview with Applicant's representative Alex Nagorniy on March 14, 2023. During the interview, **agreement was reached** that amended claims 1, 11, and 17 overcome the pending prior art rejections of record.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, and 3-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2014/0255658 (hereinafter "Muslet") in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2017/0014282 (hereinafter "Erlandsson"). Claims 11 and 13-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Muslet in view of Erlandsson. Claims 17-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Muslet in view of Erlandsson. Claims 1, 11, and 17 are independent, claims 3-10 depend from claim 1, claims 13-16 depend from claim 11, and claims 18 and 19 depend from claim 17. Each of these rejections is respectfully traversed.

As agreed upon with the Examiner during the interview, amended claims 1, 11, and 17 overcome the pending prior art rejections of record.

Accordingly, independent claims 1, 11, and 17, as well as claims 3-10, 13-16, 18, and 19, distinguish over the rejections of record and represent allowable subject matter. Applicant respectfully requests that these rejections be withdrawn.

NEW CLAIMS

Applicant adds new claims 22 and 23. New claims 22 and 23 depend from claim 1. Applicant contends that claims 22 and 23 recite independently allowable subject matter. Specifically, claims 22 and 23 distinguish over the cited references at least by virtue of their dependence from independent claim 1. Further, as discussed during the interview, claim 22

independently distinguishes over Thomas at least because Thomas teaches away from a laminate comprising a film and at least two nonwoven substrates, wherein the at least two nonwoven substrates are bonded to either side of a same layer of the film. Muslet teaches that in making elastomeric film, manufacturers must often use relatively thick elastomeric films, with basis weights of about 50-100 grams per square meter (gsm) or more, to prevent the formation of nicks or pinholes which can initiate film tearing, with this range being outside of the instantly recited range. *See* Muslet, para. [0004]. Claim 23 also independently distinguishes over the prior art of record.

Accordingly, claims 22 and 23 independently distinguish over the rejections of record and represent allowable subject matter.

CONCLUSION

In view of the forgoing, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview would expedite the allowance of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned for prompt resolution of any outstanding issues.

Applicant believes that no fees are due with the instant submission. However, if any fees are determined to be due, the Director is hereby authorized to charge those additional fees to Deposit Account No. 10-0435 with reference to our matter 5723-340421.

Respectfully submitted,

BARNES & THORNBURG LLP

/Alex Nagorniy/

Alex Nagorniy
Registration No. 74,382
Telephone: (617) 316-5321

BARNES & THORNBURG
4208 Six Forks Road, Suite 1010
Captrust Tower
Raleigh, NC 27609
(919) 536-6228