

CASE STUDY

GIVING SELF-BUILDERS RELIABLE RESULTS

James Wharram Designs recommends WEST SYSTEM® epoxy for strong, beautiful self-built boats

WEST SYSTEM®

Customer

Wharram Designs

Website

www.wharram.com



Photograph courtesy of Wharram Designs



“To ensure its self-build customers construct strong, safe boats, James Wharram Designs recommends the use of WEST SYSTEM epoxy with each of its plans.”

James Wharram, Owner, James Wharram Designs

James Wharram Designs has recommended WEST SYSTEM epoxy to its customers since the early 1980s. The company knows that it is stable, strong and easy to use, making it ideal for the amateur boatbuilder market.

The ambition for any amateur boatbuilder is to construct a vessel that is both robust and beautiful. For many years James Wharram Designs has been helping self-build enthusiasts to achieve these goals.

Based in Cornwall, UK, James Wharram Designs draws detailed plans that enable amateur boatbuilders to construct sailing catamarans with the bare minimum of materials. Inspired by the ancient Polynesians, James Wharram built his first catamaran and sailed it across the Atlantic in 1956. Less than ten years later he began designing plans for self-build catamarans and was joined in the 1970s by his co-designer, Hanneke Boon.

Their self-build business truly began to flourish with the advent of epoxy systems. In the 1970s James and Hanneke met Meade Gougeon and heard him make a number of presentations about the ease and strength of epoxy for boatbuilding. James became convinced that epoxy would transform the self-build market. He said “I’ll make boats like origami using this material!”

Epoxy, coupled with James’ and Hanneke’s refinement of construction methods such as epoxy filleting and ‘stitch and glue’, have indeed made it possible for self-builders to achieve near-professional results by themselves. To date, James Wharram Designs has sold nearly 4,500 sets of epoxy-based plans (out of a total of 10,000). Its range includes iconic boats such as the Tiki 21 coastal trekker – which has sold almost 1,000 units alone – and the Pahi 63, a tribal boat which James and his team have built for themselves.



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James Wharram, Owner,
James Wharram Designs

WEST SYSTEM epoxy resin has a phenomenal shelf life!"

Hanneke Boon, Co-Designer,
James Wharram Designs

Giving self-builders strength they can trust with epoxy

To ensure its self-build customers construct strong, safe boats, James Wharram Designs recommends the use of WEST SYSTEM epoxy with each of its plans.

James and Hanneke have always used WEST SYSTEM epoxy – both when designing for self-builders and when building boats for their own use. "We started out using WEST SYSTEM epoxy and it has a proven track record," says James. Hanneke agrees. "I have never wanted to use a different brand and I've heard some not-so-happy stories from people using other products.

"Back in the 1980s, the company chemist would visit us and share his research into WEST SYSTEM epoxy compared to other epoxies. This helped to build our trust," she adds.

Using WEST SYSTEM epoxy allows you to use lower quality plywood instead of very expensive marine plywood. We have used douglas fir plywood to build our 63ft flagship Spirit of Gaia"

James Wharram, Owner,
James Wharram Designs

An easier self-build process

Using WEST SYSTEM epoxy also makes amateur boat-building a much simpler process. "Our aim is that anyone with a practical bent can build one of our designs," says Hanneke. "Because WEST SYSTEM epoxy is gap-filling and strong, self-builders don't have to be so accurate with their cutting; panels don't have to fit together precisely. In fact you could say that the bigger the gap, the better the joint with epoxy!"

An excellent shelf life for hobby construction

Hanneke has used WEST SYSTEM epoxy for a long time and knows it to be a physically stable product. This is important for self-builders, who may take weeks, months or even years to complete a build in their spare time. "WEST SYSTEM epoxy resin has a phenomenal shelf life!" she comments.

To find out more about James Wharram Designs, visit <http://wharram.com>.

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Hanneke Boon, Co-Designer,
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Benefits

Self-built boats with reliable strength

The physical strength of WEST SYSTEM epoxy ensures that James Wharram's customers can build reliable, durable boats. "Our designs use no screws, bolts, rivets or other fastenings. It's vital our customers trust that the epoxy will hold everything together," says Hanneke. "We know that WEST SYSTEM epoxy is strong enough to make fastenings unnecessary. Ply panels coupled with WEST SYSTEM epoxy are as strong and durable as any fibreglass boat."

Elegant results for amateur builders

Using WEST SYSTEM epoxy allows self-builders to create boats that are both strong and beautiful. "With plywood and epoxy you can make beautiful shapes using very simple methods," says James. "Using WEST SYSTEM epoxy also allows you to use lower quality plywood instead of very expensive marine plywood. We have used douglas fir plywood to build our 63ft flagship Spirit of Gaia".

Hanneke believes that beauty is an important element of their work. "I see our designs as functional kinetic sculptures. They must stay strong through gales and large waves but they must also be beautiful. We help people achieve that with detailed drawings, trusting WEST SYSTEM epoxy to hold it all together."



Photograph courtesy of Wharram Designs



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Challenge

- Making self-build boat construction as simple as possible
- Helping self-builders to create strong and beautiful boats
- Ensuring self-built boats are constructed to last

Solution

- James Wharram Designs has used WEST SYSTEM epoxy since it was first launched
- WEST SYSTEM epoxy helps the company's customers construct reliable, beautiful self-builds

Benefits

- Ultra-strong epoxy with a proven history of success
- Self-built boats that can be trusted to last
- Elegant designs that amateur builders can achieve themselves
- An easier self-build process
- An excellent shelf-life that's ideal for the hobby builder

West System International products

**WEST
SYSTEM®**



The WEST SYSTEM® range

After nearly five decades of continuous innovation, WEST SYSTEM epoxy is still recognised as one of the best general-purpose marine grade epoxies in the world. It is formulated to ensure ease of use and we also offer the best technical support to all our customers. The range, originally developed for boatbuilding, boasts superior strength and moisture resistance which makes WEST SYSTEM epoxy the number one choice for marine repair and maintenance.

PRO-SET®



The PRO-SET® range

PRO-SET products are used for building high-performance, lightweight composite structures that can withstand the harshest environments. Designed for use in wet lay-up procedures involving woven and multi-axial glass, aramid, carbon-fibre and hybrid fabrics, our PRO-SET resin-hardener combinations have been formulated specifically for laminating, infusion, tooling and assembly. The range has been recently reformulated and expanded to better meet the demands of modern composite manufacturing.



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West System International is a division of Wessex Resins and Adhesives. It has been working in close partnership with Gougeon Brothers, Inc., the formulators of WEST SYSTEM® and PRO-SET® epoxies, for more than 30 years. WEST SYSTEM and PRO-SET epoxies are manufactured under licence in the UK. WSI has an extensive international distribution network throughout Europe, Africa and the Middle East.