

The Jo Anna Kneeland THERAPEUTIC BARRE

Recorded by David Howard

1. TORSO STRETCHING
2. FEET AND LEGS
3. CHEST AND NECK
4. HIP ROTATION, TURN OUT FLEXIBILITY
5. OVERALL TORSO STRETCH
6. LUNGE, TURN IN AND TURN OUT

PRINCIPALS

The principal thing behind the Therapeutic Barre is COUNTER STRETCHING. This is done to avoid the bulking of muscles. In counter stretching, there should be no tension or resistance. One should exhale and let the movement take the whole body; on no account place the body. It is done to a Strauss waltz, as this creates the right feeling in the right category to Classical Ballet. Everything is done in even measures of 8 in the 3/4 time.

1. TORSO STRETCHING

MUSCLES DOWN BACK OF BODY (FORWARD STRETCH)

Stretch out to make the longest horizontal line from pelvis as possible with the chin up. Overall impression - like a table. Stretch forward - 4 counts. Relax down - 3 counts. Stand up on the count of 4.

Repeat again.

FACE THE BARRE FOR BACK STRETCH.

Stretch up, go forward and up from chest, then back and then from the hips, same counts as forward stretch, returning to neutral. Feet can be together or in first position.

Return to original side, turn out feet to a modified first position.

SIDE STRETCHING.

Dégagé second and put the working instep over the supporting instep taking arm slowly sideways up to fifth in four counts, continue over the top and pull away from barre, making a bow like picture, counts 5, 6, 7, 8. Change feet, devant, step forward, place back foot behind, calf to calf, arm going down front and sideways up again. Turn to the other side and repeat side stretches.

Place the feet together and REPEAT THE WHOLE THING FROM THE BEGINNING, FORWARD, BACK and SIDE STRETCHES.

The Jo Anna Kneeland THERAPEUTIC BARRE contd

1. TORSO STRETCHING CONTD

HOLLOWING AND HUMPING

Face barre, feet straight and together, hands on the barre, forward stretch, hollow down as much as possible with the chin up, four counts bouncing. Then hunch and contract four counts, unfolding like a cat returning to straight stance. Return to forward stretch and repeat again, in eight counts. Then repeat twice in four counts and four times in two counts. HUMPING AND HOLLOWING.

CAMBRE

Retrun to original side, feet in relaxed fifth position. Clasp hands above head, palms up, maintaining arms by the side of ears, shoulders down.

Twist away from barre, circle forward and side then return straight. Done once high up and once in a horizontal position. Then place hand on the barre and full cambre including back bend using full port de bras.

Repeat to the other side.

To Change: Dégagé devant step onto it, turn to other side, dégage devant step forward placing feet in relaxed fifth.

Repeat whole exercise from twist away.

Face the original side, feet turned in, parrallel, second position, aim for the knees over the little toes, knees arriving over middle toes.

THIS IS MISS JO ANNA'S PLIE

Plié in second position count 1 and 2
Pelvis swings back legs stretching count 3 and 4
Return to plié at a low level count 5 and 6
At that level push thigh muscles forward, stretching groin and fall into relaxed back bend count 7 and 8

Repeat this plié twice more, three in all.
Each plié should go a little deeper.

Turn to the barre, one plié feeling of bounce with the heels on the floor, then one big bounce into full plié letting the heels come away from the floor, the feet are straight together. TWICE

Face the other side and repeat the whole of Miss Jo Anna's Plié.

2. FEET AND LEGS

FOOT STRETCHES

Turn and face the barre feet together and useing right foot, demi point, full point pushing instep over - no weight on toes..

FOOT STRETCHES CONTD

demi pointe, flat, repeat with left foot. Then repeat whole thing then using right foot straight to full pointe and stay for 8 counts pushing instep over, think of ankle and not pushing down on big toe. Repeat other foot.

Facing barre, cross right foot over supporting leg, crossing calves to shin, aim stiffest part of instep to floor, for greatest stretch, eight counts right and eight counts left, first time very gentle and then repeat with a harder stretch. One can achieve a greater stretch by crossing the foot further over or back according to where it is most required.

ACHILLES TENDON STRETCHES

Facing barre both feet pointing straight to wall, right foot slightly in front of left with a feeling diagonally forward groin, feel out through the chest, eight counts and change and repeat each side again, First time on a demi plié then with a straight back leg.

Trudges

Feet together and for eight counts trudge, changing weight from foot to foot. Then another eight counts with the legs straight at an angle behind the body. Feet and eight counts bounce at the same angle.

Thigh Stretches

Take hold of right foot with right hand, holding toes, place heel to rear end, knees together but with no tension or feeling of pushing into knee. eight counts right and eight counts left very gently Repeat further eight counts each leg, done a little harder, one can also rotate the hip a little according to requirements.

Take right foot in left hand, lift knee to side in an open attitude repeat other leg and again taking right foot in left hand stretching out into a Russian Arabesque with a feeling of the foot going over the head and touching the wall. Repeat the other leg.

3. CHEST AND NECK STRETCHES

(known as the wings)....Arms at shoulder level elbows raised in front of chest palms down, try to push chest forward as elbows go back, once palms down and once opening out palms forward, repeat three more times.

Clasp hands behind back, pulling shoulders down, tilt the head to one side and move clasped hands to same side pulling opposite shoulder down, the angle of the neck defines the stretch, repeat neck stretch going the other way.

Repeat the whole exercise from arm swing.

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3. CHEST AND NECK STRETCHES contd

Then eight counts rotating head one way then back again. The weight of the head takes it round, it is very relaxed but doesn't go to the back.

Back to the barre with hands clasped over it and as close together as possible....keeping as erect as possible for eight counts..... pull away leading with the chest, repeat this time letting the body weight take you forward as if a fist was placed in the middle of the back, repeat whole exercise.

4. HIP ROTATION (TURN OUT FLEXIBILITY)

Face barre dégagé devant right foot not turned out. Leg swing from the knee back and flex knee slightly on the forward, four times low and four times aiming foot over top of the head, trying to keep hip down, repeat the other leg.

Hip Swings.

Face original side and hip swings in a figure of eight, aim at keeping supporting side as still as possible, it has a downward sweep in a wide controlled attitude for fourteen counts, turn and repeat to the other side.

Corkscrew.

Release, grande battement to second in control zone, lower leg turn in and out with bent leg and release, then battement to second and close, four times in all and repeat to the other side.

5. OVERALL TORSO STRETCH

Face barre feet together, pull away flat feet count one and 2. Turn toes up count 3 and 4. Body weight down into plié pushing through counts 5 to 8. Thighs well forward rippling into back bend heels can come off floor. Repeat once again.

Repeat twice more in reverse. Demi pointe bend back - ripple down into deep knee bend, pull out to starting position, toes coming off floor then flat. Twice

6. LUNGE, TURN IN AND TURN OUT

Lunge forward for eight counts turned out, body weight well forward and body fairly erect, Then eight counts turning back leg in and rotating the body the opposite way, looking toward the leg. Can be done either holding onto barre or not. Repeat other leg.