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H. KLEIN

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BALLET STRETCH DEVICE

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Fig. 1.

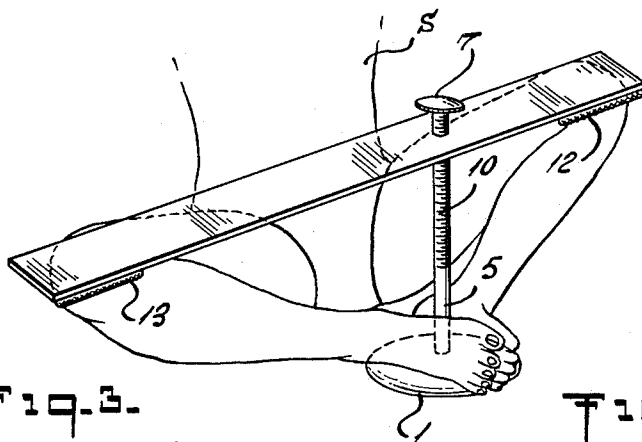


Fig. 3.

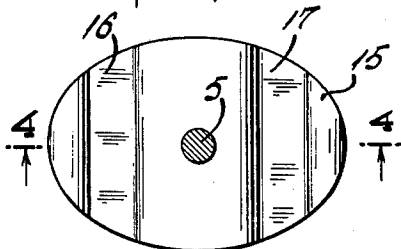


Fig. 4.

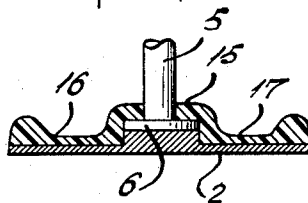
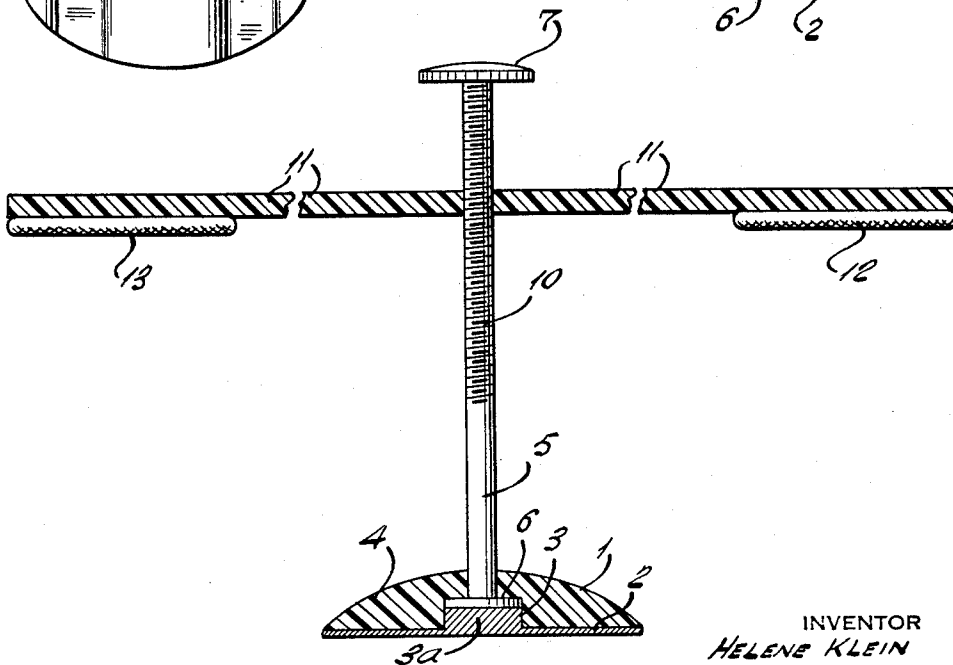


Fig. 2.

INVENTOR
HELENE KLEIN

BY

Burgess, Ryan & Hicks
ATTORNEYS

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BALLET STRETCH DEVICE

Helene Klein, 28 E. 10th St., New York, N.Y.

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3 Claims. (Cl. 272-79)

The present invention relates to an exercising device, primarily for students of the ballet, and consists in the combination, construction and arrangement of parts herein described and claimed.

Before a ballet dancer or student can perform the steps and dances that constitute the ballet, he must have developed a reasonable "turnout." This is the degree to which a dancer can rotate, or turn, his legs outward from the respective hip joints. (A dancer who has achieved perfect turnout can, when standing with body upright, legs perfectly straight and heels together, rotate his legs so that the toes of the respective feet form a straight line at right angles to the direction of the body.)

To develop the capacity for a perfect turnout, it is necessary to work and stretch certain muscles and ligaments in the legs and hip joints.

Many exercises have been devised for stretching those muscles and ligaments, gradually and without dangerous strain. One such, popular and very effective after limbering-up exercises at the bar, requires the aid of another person. The ballet student sits on the floor, torso upright; the feet are placed together, sole to sole, and drawn in toward the body, keeping the knees spread apart. The assistant then presses the insides of the knees gently down toward the floor, the ballet student indicating the extent and duration of pressure applied.

An object of the present invention is to create a device which will enable a student ballet dancer to exercise generally in the manner described but without the aid of another person.

Another object is to produce a device which is operated and controlled by the student dancer so that no more strain is imposed than can comfortably be borne, thus avoiding the hazard of having the assistant bear down too heavily on the inside of the knees during the effort to help the student to exercise.

Still another object is to produce a simple, light weight structure which can be readily manufactured and carried from place to place if desired.

Other and further objects of the invention will become apparent from reading this specification and examining the drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the invention showing it in use;

FIG. 2 is a vertical section through the device shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a plan view showing a modification of the base for the device; and

FIG. 4 is a section through 4-4 of FIG. 3.

Referring more particularly to the drawings, FIG. 2 is a vertical cross-section of the ballet stretch device which consists of a base 1 which may be circular as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 or oval as shown in FIGS. 3 and 4, and is adapted to rest on the floor when the device is in use. In the embodiments shown the bottom 2 of the base is flat with a recess 3 in the middle thereof. The top of base 1 may be smooth and convex as shown at 4 or grooved as shown in FIGS. 3 and 4.

Upstanding from the center of base 1 is a standard 5 which has a flat head 6 fixed to the bottom end thereof as viewed in FIG. 2. Head 6 is designed to fit snugly in recess 3 but is free to rotate thereon. A plug 3a which may or may not be integral with the bottom 2 serves to retain the bottom of the standard in recess 3.

At the upper end of standard 5 is a handle or wheel

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7 keyed or otherwise fixed to said standard 5 and designed to be grasped by the user of the device.

The upper portion of standard 5 is threaded as shown at 10. The threading may extend from the top of the standard down the length thereof more than half way.

Threaded onto the standard 5 is a cross piece 11 which has padded portions 12 and 13 on the underside thereof near the ends as viewed in FIG. 2.

In FIGS. 3 and 4 is shown a modified base construction wherein the base 15 is of oval shape and has two parallel grooves or channels 16 and 17 on the upper surface thereof. When the device is being used, these grooves or channels are designed to receive the outer sides of the feet, the feet positioned sole to sole, which thereby aid in holding the base 15 firmly in place on the floor. The standard 5 may be recessed and rotatably supported in base 15 just as it is in base 1.

The base, either in the form of base 1 or base 15, may be covered with fabric, rubber or plastic to make it comfortable for the user and give the feet a better grip on the base.

In operation the user sits on the floor with the stretch device in front of him between his spread knees (see FIG. 1). His feet are drawn up close to the body and positioned on the base 1 of the stretch device all as shown in FIG. 1 of the drawing where the figure of the student is shown at S. The crosspiece is then positioned on the inside of the outwardly turned knees with the padded portions 12 and 13 pressing onto the insides of the knees. The student then rotates the standard 5 by means of wheel 7 until the desired pressure is exerted on the knees. Pressure can be readily exerted or relieved by rotation of the wheel 7. The user can adjust the device for any desired pressure and because he regulates the pressure himself there is no danger of exerting more than should be used.

The bottom of the base may be covered with rubber, plastic, or felt, whichever material will best grip the floor and thus prevent slipping. The crosspiece, of sufficient length to extend just beyond the spread knees and of sufficient width to cover the area of the leg whereon pressure is applied, may be made of metal, wood or plastic or some parts of one of these materials and some of another. If metal is used the device can, of course, be made light in weight if aluminum is used. The pads 12 and 13 may be made of foam rubber or the like, attached to the crosspiece by adhesive.

While but one form of the invention has been shown and described herein, it will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art that many more modifications may be made without departing from the spirit of the invention or the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An exercising device for ballet dancers comprising, a base adapted to be placed on the floor, a pair of substantially straight and parallel grooves on the upper surface of said base adapted to receive the user's feet, a standard supported on said base in a position substantially vertical to the plane of the bottom of said base and freely rotatable therein, threads on the upper portion of said standard, a crosspiece on and arranged substantially at right angles to said standard and adapted to rest on the user's knees when the device is in operation, a kneepad on each end of said crosspiece, internal threads on said crosspiece adapted to cooperate with the threads of said standard so that said crosspiece may be raised and lowered upon rotation of said standard, a handle on the top of said standard and secured thereto.

2. An exercising device for ballet dancers comprising, a base adapted to be positioned on the floor, a pair of substantially straight and parallel grooves on the top of

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said base, said base adapted to receive the user's feet on top thereof to hold said base on the floor when the device is in use, a standard supported on said base between said grooves and substantially vertical to the plane of the bottom of said base, threads on the upper portion of said standard, a crosspiece on and arranged substantially at right angles to said standard and adapted to rest on the knees of the user of the device when the device is in operation, a kneepad on each end of said crosspiece, and threaded means for positioning said crosspiece on said standard to prevent said crosspiece from rising up along said standard under the reaction pressure of the knees on the underside of the ends of said crosspiece.

3. An exercising device for ballet dancers comprising, a base adapted to be positioned on the floor, said base adapted to receive the user's feet on top thereof to hold said base on the floor when the device is in use, a pair of substantially straight and parallel grooves on the

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top of said base, a standard supported on said base substantially vertical to the plane of the bottom of said base, a crosspiece on and arranged substantially at right angles to said standard and adapted to rest on the knees of the user of the device when the device is in operation, a kneepad on each end of said crosspiece, and means for positioning said crosspiece on said standard and for pressing said crosspiece downwardly on the user's knees in the direction of said base.

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