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Ballet Secrets for Skaters: How to Hone Your Artistic Competitive Edge

By Barbara Denise Files
Artistic Enterprises International
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“I got the base – how to present myself on the ice,” admits Olympic Gold Medallist, Viktor Petrenko, when asked to name the most important lesson he learned from his ballet training.

Viktor Petrenko, famous for dazzling his audience with artistic elegance and emotion while on the ice, sets the “you can do it” tone of *Ballet Secrets for Skaters* with his candid and inspiring interview with the author. While Barbara Denise Files’ opening interviews with celebrity skaters, like Petrenko and Yuka Sato, motivate readers, the book’s main focus is on teaching the specific postures of ballet that will improve a skater’s presentation on the ice in a friendly and exceedingly useful way.

Complemented with over 70 professionally shot black and white photographs, each dance position is clearly represented and broken down into digestible pieces. There are no “purely for ballet” poses for aspiring ballerinas. Instead each posture within the book is focused on the arm, shoulder and head positions needed by figure skaters preparing for competition. The positions chosen are the first elements the audience will notice when a skater is on the ice, and are also the ones the judges will be rating for artistry.

Figure skaters and professional coaches will be happy to note that Files doesn’t just teach the pose, but suggests how and when to use it in a choreographed skating program. Her “Ballet Secrets” sections also provide helpful hints, such as low energy artistic poses for times when a skater needs to catch her breath during a performance, and the “Quick Check” tips sprinkled throughout the book include common pitfalls and how to avoid them.

Barbara Denise Files studied ballet with international dance legend, Andre Eglevsky and is an expert in training athletes and non-dance majors to incorporate “that ballet look” into their programs. Her performing experience as a professional dancer and her confidence in performance coaching are apparent in the well-planned structure and empowering teaching style of the book.

Ballet Secrets for Skaters is a motivating and expertly written book that is results-driven. The techniques and postures taught can be incorporated instantly into many skating programs, improving the artistry of skaters at every skill level.