

CMBA HONOR SOCIETY EDITORIAL

The History of Pilates

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Pilates is a form of guided exercise that uses resistance and slow, controlled movement to strengthen, stretch, and condition the inner muscles of the body. Since its creation, Pilates has been a favorite cross-training method of many, many high-level dancers. Pilates was created by Joseph Pilates who began developing his exercise technique during WWI while he was in the English - German and English - Austrian internment camps created by Britain on the Isle of Man. Then after the war, he immigrated to the United States with his wife Clara. In 1926 they opened a "body-conditioning gym" in New York where they taught the Pilates technique. This studio quickly became very popular, especially with the large dance community in New York as it provided an efficient way to improve technique and strength while also helping dancers to more quickly and more successfully recover from injuries! Some of Mr. Pilates's clients included many famous dancers and choreographers, such as Martha Graham and George Balanchine. Besides running his conditioning studio along with his wife, Mr. Pilates also wrote two books on his technique which he called Contrology. Only after his death in 1967 was the name changed to "the Pilates Technique." In the years between then and now, Pilates has evolved slightly, mostly to include our modern advances in biomechanical science and some more modern pieces of equipment. But, it still remains virtually the same (and just as effective) as when Mr. and Mrs. Pilates pioneered it 90 years ago.

And there you have it, a brief history of Pilates. I hope you found this article interesting and maybe now, you'll even try a pilates class!