

GOODSWEAT

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New Yorkers embrace BodyART, a European fitness phenomenon

Fitness crazes generally start in the United States and then spread across the globe.

BodyART, however, is bucking that trend, as the first European-created fitness method to make waves in the U.S. in a long time.



Creator Robert Steinbacher leads a class in one of his signature BodyART moves.

Created by Robert Steinbacher, a Swiss gymnast and dancer based in Germany, the method is based on principles of yin and yang and combines elements of yoga, Pilates, dance, and Tai Chi.

It was developed as a therapeutic tool, but Steinbacher soon realized it was effective for people without physical limitations. He then made it into a total-body workout with emphasis on strength, cardio, and flexibility, and it was a huge phenomenon all over Europe, with thousands of instructors and more than 30 DVDs created.



Robert Steinbacher, creator of BodyART, with the Crunch team

Fitness Regional Director. So you're doing lunges, squats, and mountain climbers—but in a fluid way that feels almost therapeutic.

Now, New York gyms are taking BodyART and modifying it to appeal to American tastes.

Crunch was one of the first to offer the class, and convinced Steinbacher to layer more intense cardio and strength-training exercises (which he normally offers in a separate class) onto his signature BodyART class, so it would appeal to the gym's clientele, explains Marc Santa Maria, Crunch's Group

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It took a little while to catch on, but the class is now packed with people of all fitness levels in every time slot. (Also changed: the requisite Euro house music. It isn't completely gone, but an Adele song may balance it out.)

The Sports Center at Chelsea Piers added the class to its schedule in January of this year, and while it hasn't taken off as quickly, instructor *Louis Coraggio* has steadily built a loyal class following of BodyARTists, and he's now teaching BodyART in corporate settings for companies like Goldman Sachs and Bank of America.

So will Steinbacher come to be known as this generation's Joseph Pilates?

"I'm exposed to a lot of new things, but there's nothing in a long time that I personally felt compelled to learn and be a cheerleader for," says Crunch's Santa Maria.

"But when I left my first class, my body just felt good."

—*Lisa Elaine Held*

Gefällt mir 6



Louis Coraggio demonstrates a BodyART pose used in extending energy

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