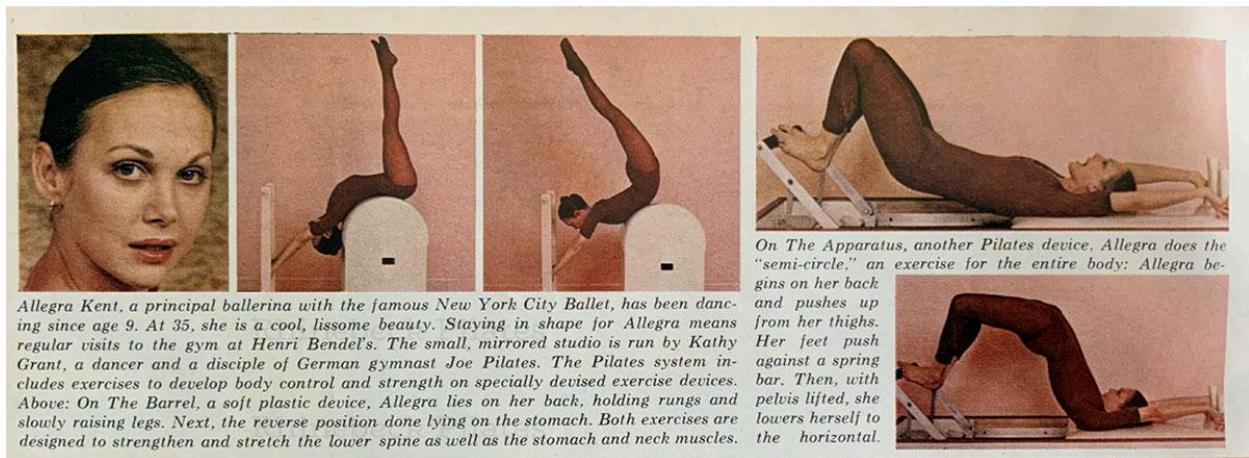


The Pilates Studio at Henri Bendel

Geraldine Stutz was a pioneer businesswoman and extremely creative thinker. In the 1950's she was Vice President of I. Miller Shoes, where she helped launch Andy Warhol. From there, she was hired as president of the failing Henri Bendel department store and was given three years to make it profitable. By 1964, Henry Bendel had experienced a 10 percent increase in sales, the largest increase in its history. By 1967, it had doubled its sales. Also in 1967, with financing from an international consortium, Stutz purchased Bentel for 8 million dollars, becoming its managing partner and 30 percent owner.

During her time at Henri Bendel, Geraldine Stutz took risks and did things that had never before been done in department store history. She invented the idea of a "Main Street of shops" on the first floor of the store, which gave new designers small "store fronts" to sell their wares, many becoming famous during and afterwards, such as Ralph Lauren and Perry Ellis.

Another totally unique idea she had was to put a pilates studio on the top floor next to the hair salon. Joseph Pilates oversaw its installation, and Naja Cori ran it before Kathy Grant took it over.



This 1960s article mentions the Henri Bendel studio and depicts Allegra Kent on the ladder barrel and reformer that Joe Pilates had installed within the salon. Interestingly, the article calls the Reformer "The Apparatus," which Carola Trier was also known to have called the Reformer. *Image first shared on 2/18/24.*

HENRI BENDEL



Under the direction of Dolores Corey, Bendel's Beauty Floor stresses the Pilates method—exercises done on mats with spring-and-pulley machines. Emphasis is placed on posture and “combing out the spine.” Try

the Wunda Chair. It makes you sit straight and relieves tensions in the lower back; it also exercises nearly all parts of the body via spring tension. After you work out, pick a cream — lemon, strawberry, crushed almond, or bland—and indulge in a solid hour of massage in the scent of your choice.

10 West 57th.



An article about Kathy Grant at The Henri Bendel's Pilates Studio, and what the studio was like under her supervision.

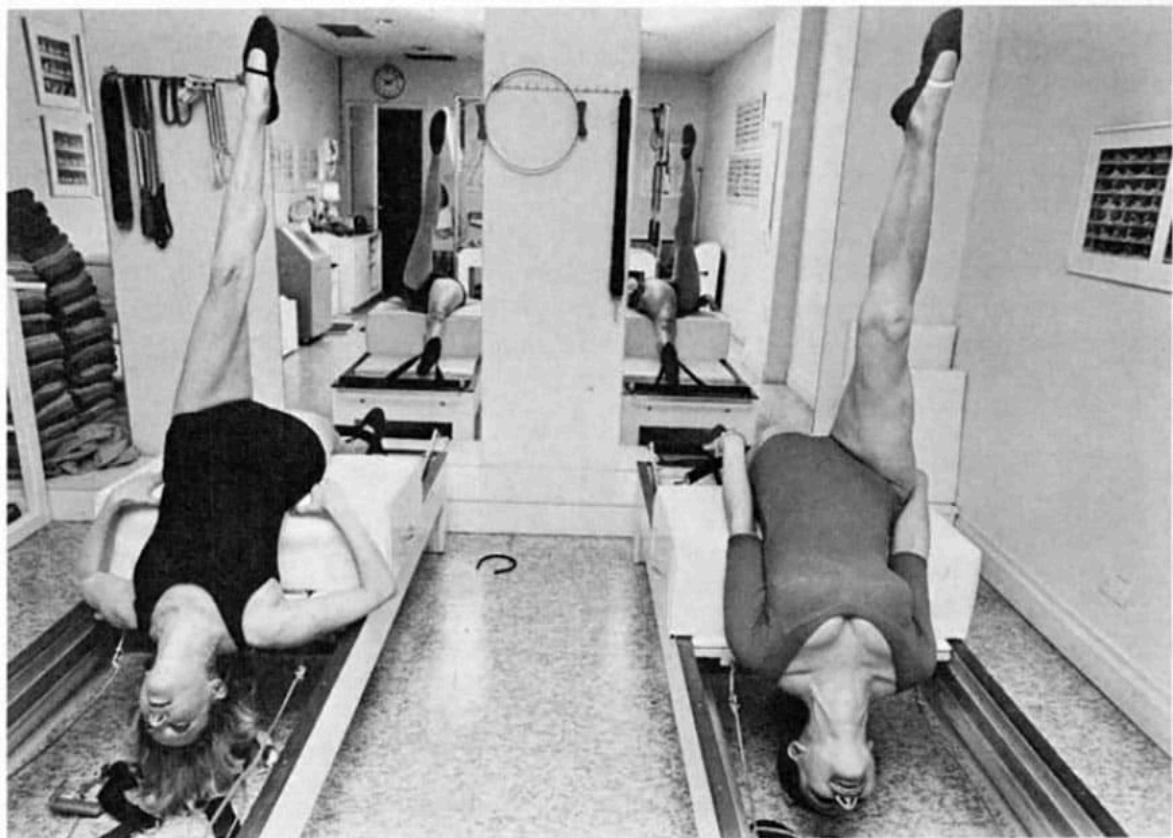
Tummies In

Kathy Grant is also a follower of the Pilates method (she worked for Mrs. Trier at one point), and she teaches it with an eagle eye at the small, compact gym on Bendel's sixth floor (women only). "Keep control of your abdominal muscles," is Kathy's constant refrain, and she does succeed at making you very aware of them. I found myself, putting on my stockings afterward, very aware and in control of those crucial abdominals, and as a result didn't lose my balance as I usually do. (Grace and balance are not among my strong points.)

On a first visit, she or one of her instructors works very closely with the client to see just what shape one is in. You go through a routine of mat exercises, most done very slowly and with precise attention to perfect execution. "On that sit-up," Kathy pointed out, "you're coming up crooked—one side of the body is leading the other. Come up straight. And watch those abdominals."

The Pilates-design machines—the padded bed with weighted springs so that you exercise against resistance—are also in the gym here, and Kathy was keeping a watchful eye on the people using them. As is the case at Carola Trier's studio, everyone is an individual—each pursuing her own personal exercise regime under close supervision. And Kathy Grant is a stern supervisor—you definitely end up doing the exercises right and watching those abdominals. She's also warm, friendly, and obviously concerned, demonstrating when necessary, giving you a slap in the tummy if your abdominals sag.

The first, introductory session costs \$15, \$5 of which is applicable to a series of ten, which costs \$75 and is good for three months. Unlimited use of the gym



Working out on white vinyl with Miss Corey (right) at Bendel's gym

Limbering Along

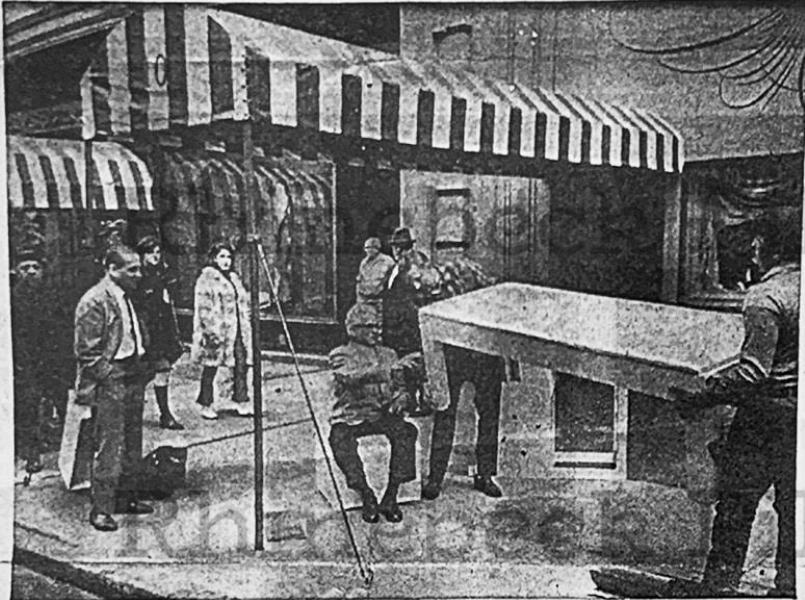
Upstairs, through the bowers, there's a gym at Bendel's, where Everywoman, not just Bendelwoman, can shape up. There's a subdued little room with a tactful number of mirrors and white vinyl machines. Chains rattle, the machines squeak, and assorted grunts and puffs can be heard. After exercise the lady is rewarded with yellow shower rooms, Bendel's pink soap, silver-topped talcum shakers. Later, but not all that much later, comes a whole new body—longer neck, smaller waist, straighter spine—whatever is needed. At Bendel's the method of exercise is the Pilate way, as sternly taught by Corey. There are no group run-throughs, just three or four people at a time working out as Corey dictates. Even Bendelian rhetoric couldn't describe the exhilaration of total physical gratification through work. And, possibly because Corey is a woman and not a mad male Hungarian taskmaster, the gym has some of the most instructive locker-room conversation in town.

—Jane O'Reilly

THE GYM AT BENDEL'S/*The Beauty Floor/Call Corey at CI 7-1100/First Session \$10; 10 Sessions \$75; 30 Sessions \$200. Unlimited use of the gym for one year \$500 (and worth it).*

This famous article about the beginning of Henri Bendel's Pilates Studio shows Joseph Pilates sitting on a Wunda Chair outside the department store. At the same time, the other apparatus is being carried in. Shown in the photo is a Cadillac bed, Ladder Barrel, and what looks to be a long box. We know that the apparatus in Henri Bendel's studio was wood, not metal, although at this time Joe was using metal for his own equipment. History points to 1960-61 as the year that Joe switched to metal for his equipment at 939 8th Ave. *Images first shared on 7/1/21.*

Universal Reformer Comes to Bendel's



Left: Joe Pilates directs the moving of his new exercise equipment into Henri Bendel. Joe sits in the Wunda chair, a piece of equipment which can be used for the whole range of his exercises. "Every home and hotel should have one."

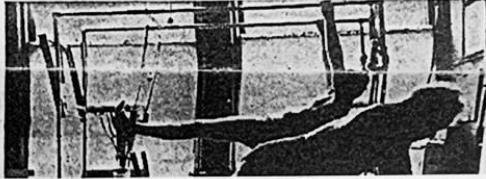


Herald Tribune photo by BOB NOBLE

Priscilla Tucker

real vinyl spool Joe
or... is the ideal
customer ready for
Universal Reformer?
a confrontation!
face of it 85-year-
Pilates, striding
his black bathing
to meet the ideal
Bendel customer,

So she is opening up the exercise room on Bendel's beauty floor next week, not with an easy, pretty young and slim-muscular, but with Joe Pilates and his internal machines. The Wunda chair (which looks like a potty chair for the papa bear); the barrels; his exercise table called the Universal Reformer; the all-purpose Bednasium (known affectionately, including many famous dancers, as one of those complete originals who invites tongue-in-cheek feature stories. There he is bursting with the message of physical fitness, and his arms and the machines he invented against the walls thick with pictures of Joe lying on his bare back in the snow exercising; of Joe at 60 looking 25. of Joe ner-



By Priscilla Tucker

Will floral vinyl spoil Joe Pilates? Or . . . is the Henri Bendel customer ready for the Universal Reformer?

What a confrontation! On the face of it 85-year-old Joe Pilates, striding forth in his black bathing trunks, to meet the ideal size 3 Bendel customer, who is taking small steps so as never to reach middle age, is a startling picture.

But if Bendel president Geraldine Stutz is right, her customers, many of whom are ardent skiers, surfers and water skiers, are ready for real exercise in a gym.

So she is opening up the exercise room on Bendel's beauty floor next week, not with an easy, pretty program for slimming, but with Joe Pilates and his infernal machines.

The Wunda chair (which looks like a potty chair for the papa bear); the barrels; his exercise table called the Universal Reformer; the all-purpose Bednasium (known affectionately as the Cadillac); the exercise mats. "We didn't have room for the tower, thank God," said Miss Stutz. (The tower is a machine which stretches, to the accompaniment of searing pain, the Achilles tendon.)

"We are not going to gloss over Joe's exercises. This is a real branch of Pilates, the first branch. That old time religion . . . only on 57th St. Of course," Miss Stutz added, "Glaze has chick-ed up the machines."

Bendel's reproductions of the very gym-my looking Pilates equipment now look like this. Lacquered white bodies, white vinyl padding, polished cherry wood trimming, and fitted, only where absolutely necessary with chrome, the shiniest chrome.

However, Bendel decorator H. McKim Glazebrook has ordered up bolts of flowered vinyl, to match the walls of the beauty dressing room, which he plans to slap all over the lacquer and the vinyl.

Any one who knows Joe Pilates is making bets that it will never happen.

Joe, whose Eighth Ave. gym has a devoted follow-

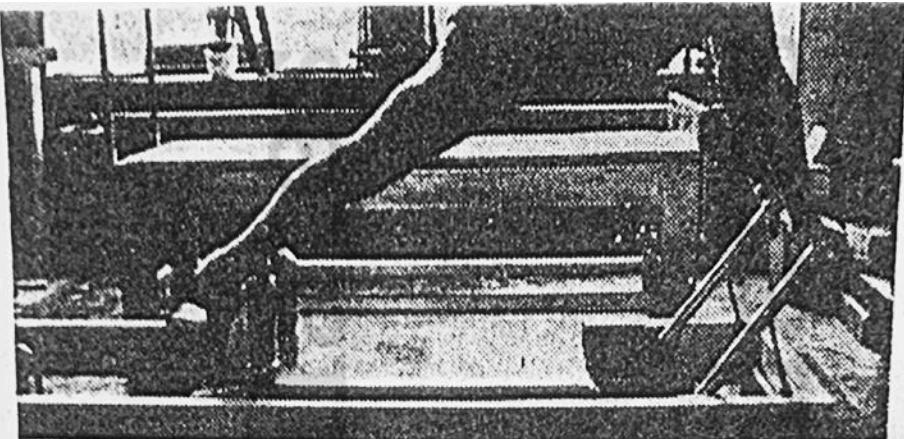
ing, including many famous dancers, is one of those complete originals who invites tongue-in-cheek feature stories. There he is bursting with the message of physical fitness, standing among the machines he invented against the walls thick with pictures of Joe lying on his bare back in the snow exercising, of Joe at 60 looking 25, of Joe performing all sorts of feats.

Pretty funny, all right, except here is Joe fit as a fiddle at 85 ("feel my arm . . . if I punch a man, I break four ribs"), with not a flap of slab on his thighs, and here is the rest of the world stooped and crumpling by 50.

And there is his wife, Clara, a frail-looking little lady in a white uniform. A few years ago when Clara was 72, Joe was heard to remark over the phone: "No, I don't think Clara will be skiing this year. She's having a little trouble with her knee."

The Pilates system is about 30 minutes of "good hard work," in Gerry Stutz' words. Can the Bendel ladies take it? President Stutz already has.

"About three years ago when I was beginning to huff and puff, Cathy di Montezemolo persuaded me to go to Joe's." Vogue editor Cathy and her sister Jeanne Murray Vanderbilt, who is the gorgeous mother of two, are two of Joe's best exhibits in the fashion/social world. "I went five days a week at the crack of dawn. I never felt better in my life."



Above: Back in his own gym on Eighth Ave. Joe works out on the Universal Reformer while writer Sandy Friedman stretches on machine known as the Cadillac.

One suspects that half the reason for opening a Pilates branch at Bendel is so Gerry Stutz and Bendel beauty impresario David Crespin, another Pilates regular, won't have to waste all that time trekking over to Eighth Ave.

As for Joe, he sees Bendel as the first step towards reaching the national government. "Important people go into that store, people who could get the government interested. I have prayed for this for 38 years."

Joe, who worked out his program and his machines on the Hamburg, Germany, police force early in the century, has been trying to convert the U. S. for more than 40 years. He insists that there hasn't been a decent physical fitness program in this country since the first world war. "All our athletic programs are to produce big athletes, ball players who are muscle bound cripples."

The Pilates files are full

of clippings about American softness, about the draft rejection figures, about how one of the President's physical fitness experts dropped dead of a heart attack at 50.

Joe even attributes the crime rate to poor muscle use. "Modern man only uses about 10 per cent of his muscles. Man no longer knows how to move like an animal. He stands wrong, sits wrong, sleeps wrong. I'm not concerned with body building. I'm just trying to make people normal human beings. There are almost no normal human beings."

He will take up this problem with New York's most upper crust chic starting a week from Friday. Joe himself will be at Bendel part of the day every day at the beginning. In charge of the Bendel operation is Dolores Corey, an ex-dancer who has trained with Joe for some years and is one of his star pupils and aides.

The cost is \$10 for the initial lesson, \$75 for subsequent sets of 10 lessons. The first session costs more because as Gerry Stutz puts it: "A lot of people slink out after the first one and never come back. And the first session takes a lot of Joe's time."

The whole series, on the mats and on the machines, takes about a half an hour and more complicated maneuvers are added as each pupil gets stronger. No class sessions since what each person can do varies widely.

Are you dead tired afterwards? Joe says his pupils always come "springing" out of the shower. That's what gets Gerry Stutz. She has always wanted her beauty floor to be a place where a woman got healthy, not a hothouse that turned out carefully sprayed indoor plants.

Her ideal Bendel customer is someone like Cathy di Montezemolo. "When Cathy walks into a room she just knocks you over with her beauty and vitality. And not pasted on beauty . . . just all that good blood racing through the veins."

Young Executive Emphasizes Personality

Like smart woman, store has 'look'

By Lucile Preuss
Of The Journal Staff

New York, N. Y.—"This is a personal business," said pert and personable Miss Geraldine Stutz. She sat behind her desk at Henri Bendel, a specialty store which she heads as president. The store and the changes taking place in it since Miss Stutz assumed her duties in 1958 have created a stir in the merchandising world.

A woman store president is still unusual. And a store with a personality is something to talk about. Miss Stutz is creating "a store I'd like to shop in," she said simply.

Special Appeal

"We are aiming at style and a look for a specific audience," explained Miss Stutz. "This is perhaps the only city in the world where you could do it. Our audience is a snappy woman aged 22 to 62," Miss Stutz described. "She puts on her back elegant clothes of understated taste. Simple, but not too simple."

"This woman is small. Most of our clients are size 8 with sizes 10, 6 and 12 following in that order. This woman is slender and stays young as long as possible."

To appeal to this elegant, understated taste, the store gets merchandise that is its own. They discover new designers or take a dress and switch colors, fabrics to make it their own.

Assisting Miss Stutz with this program are two women vice-presidents: Jeanne Rosenberg, who merchandises European ready to wear, and Miriam Neubert who merchandises better coats, suits, dresses and bridal.

Serenity, Service

At the end of a long work day, Miss Stutz looked un-ruffled in tailored pink and gray tweed dress with sleeveless bodice and gently shaped skirt.

"The famous stores of the past had personalities," Miss Stutz said. "They reflected their owners or managers. I looked around the city to see what needs were not being filled by other stores. There



Miss Geraldine Stutz

is no point to fill a need someone else is already filling.

"When I came, the store had a beautiful old name slightly tarnished, a bad locale that was left over from the carriage trade, old time clientele, skilled personnel, but it was out of fashion."

"All the old specialty shops of the early 1900's had mostly disappeared or had become big. There were none of the old time traditions. This was a need we could fill. So, we set out to offer serene atmosphere, service and a fashion personality."

Small Shops

The atmosphere begins on the first floor with an inviting street of shops. In her five year renovation program scheduled for completion Sept. 1, the store will become a series of small shops in the spirit of the Faubourg St. Honore in Paris or the Rue de Rivoli.

First floor shops have separate entrances and display windows which invite attention to handbags and belts in one shop, millinery in another, jewels in the rotunda at the end of the "street."

The bridal salon, opened recently, has a drawing room atmosphere. Five private salons are elegantly and se-

cretely decorated. Here a bride can have help with every detail of her wedding, including the reception.

The children's shop, called "Growing Up," and a salon for maternity wear will complete the building program.

"We give customers individual attention," Miss Stutz stressed. "We never lost that. More than 50 salespeople were here 25 years."

Storewide Service

A customer is taken around the store, if she wishes, to be assembled from dress to hat, shoes, gloves, jewelry. Part of the staff training program is working in all departments. One day each week a salesperson works in another department to gain the necessary experience.

Miss Stutz is the same well spoken executive we interviewed in 1957 when she was vice-president and general manager of I. Miller and Sons' retail division. Because she proved herself able in that position, Miss Stutz was named to her present office.

Not the high pressure executive type, she is charming, relaxed and friendly. It was

Sales Approval

After graduation, she came to New York and held various jobs writing fashion promotions and as accessories editor of a fashion magazine before moving on as wholesale fashion co-ordinator for I. Miller, a division of Genesco, Inc. After Genesco acquired the Bendel store, Miss Stutz was named to put new life in the old store. From actual merchandise, to renovation program and advertising plans, the project is in her capable hands.

Miss Stutz's favorite fashion color may change with the changes in fashion, but her favorite color on the store's ledger is black. For the first time, during the first six months of this fiscal year, the store is in the black.

Jewels, Ores Exhibited in Lavish Array

New York, N. Y.—**P-A**—Gems and jewelry worth 25 million dollars are on display at the National Retail Jewelers show at the Waldorf Astoria hotel.

The exhibition is one of the most lavish to date. One stone, a 25 carat, pear shaped diamond called the "Moon of Baroda," is valued at \$100,000.

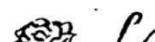
A spokesman said the show will reflect changing styles in engagement rings, where the trend is toward heavier, and more costly, stones.

The center stone in such a ring, often one-third of a carat years ago, now is apt to be one-half carat.

On display, too, is gold that sparkles in many colors, wider bracelets and more elegant jewelry for evening wear.

A display of ores from other planets, borne to the earth by meteorites, will offer a preview of possible gems of the future.

The show is expected to attract 15,000 retail jewelers.

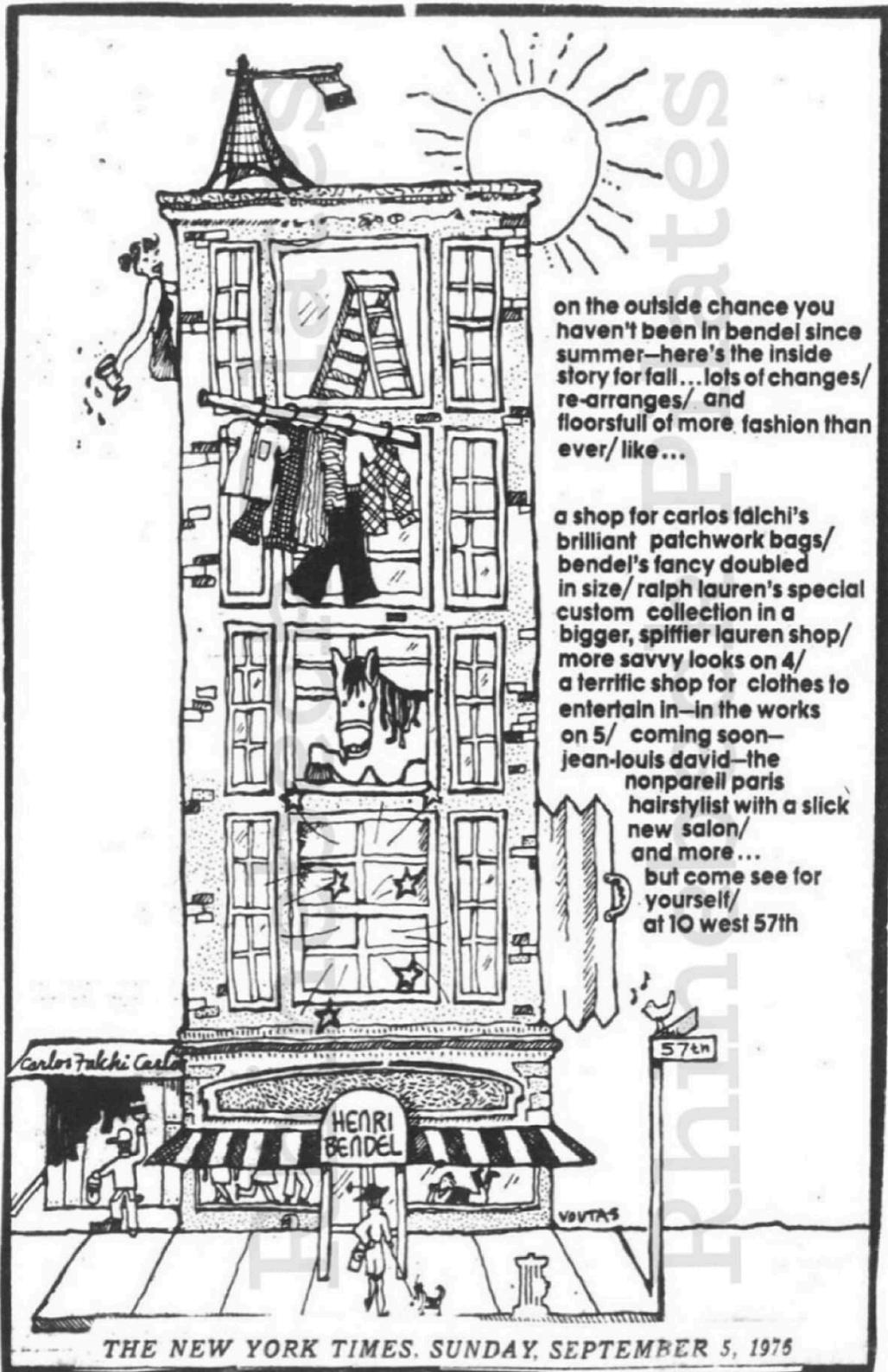


GERALDINE STUTZ, the young president of Henri Bendel of New York, had a miniature gym with white vinyl apparatus installed in the store for her use seven years ago. Her lithe figure is testimony to its regular use.

Image first shared on 3/26/21.

A very rare advertisement for Henri Bendel, which shows the figure at the top, implying that there's a place to exercise on the top floor- which we know was the pilates studio!

Image first shared on 4/7/21.



on the outside chance you haven't been in bendel since summer—here's the inside story for fall... lots of changes/ re-arranges/ and floorsfull of more fashion than ever/ like...

a shop for carlos falchi's brilliant patchwork bags/ bendel's fancy doubled in size/ ralph lauren's special custom collection in a bigger, spiffier lauren shop/ more savvy looks on 4/ a terrific shop for clothes to entertain in—in the works on 5/ coming soon—jean-louis david—the nonpareil paris hairstylist with a slick new salon/ and more... but come see for yourself/ at 10 west 57th

THE NEW YORK TIMES. SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1975

If you're curious as to what the hair salon next to the pilates studio at Bendel's looked like, this is it. *Image first shared on 4/7/21.*

A clip from an article about places to work out in New York that mentions Kathy Grant at Bendel's. *Image first shared on 4/7/21.*

Kathy Grant at Bendel's, CI 7-1100. Ext. 208.

Miss Grant, a Dance Theatre of Harlem alumna, operates in a small space and keeps her classes to a maximum of four. Ballerinas come for 8 A.M. work-outs, while businesswomen sneak in for an hour during the day, using the self-propelled machines under Miss Grant's watchful eye.

Introductory session, \$10; 10 one-hour lessons, \$75. (A woman with an extra \$15 might enjoy spending it on Leslie Day's massage table next door.)

An article that mentions the original Pilates Studio as well as the Bendel's Studio. *Image first shared on 7/22/22.*

*Short walk
on the
healthy side*

One of the most constructive walks you could take in New York today is: down the chest and abdomen of the celebrated strong man, Joe Pilates. ("Go ahead, walk right on my chest, see if it hurts me.") A non-believer in backaches, headaches, or beauty aches of any kind—especially the sort induced by un-racy legs and jiggly arms—Pilates is a hero to the handsome and the beautiful whose bodies he has remade. Often said to be older than Eighth Avenue itself (on which street he's kept gym for years), Pilates is in monumenally good shape. So good that he's now in Youth Phase Two. Phase One, which continues uninterrupted, consists of applying his Contrology exercise system to people, to paper (he's done a book or two), and to designing (of the contraptions by which Contrology is advanced). . . . Phase Two is simply a matter of onward and upward; of lending his system to the sixth floor of Henri Bendel. There, for the first time in the history of what has to be called the department store, a dashing little gymnasium has been built for women, locker room and all. It's thoroughly Pilates—Pilates-trained teachers, Pilates-built equipment—and don't be fooled by the gleaming white patent-leather upholstery: the disciplines are just as rugged as those on Eighth Avenue. . . . The no-kidding exercise program is a part of an innovation at Bendel's. Everything that might remake a woman's looks has been put under one roof: exercise, hair salon (about which, more in a minute), makeup, facial treatment, body massage, and on into the night. . . . Then, when you've got your strength, you can always run your fingers over the goodies collected in the fashion shops downstairs. . . .

A rare article that covers Naja Corey's time at the pilates studio at Bendel's. *Image first shared on 5/6/21.*

Henri Bendel's "beauty floor" (10 West 57th Street, CI 7-1100), are a series of tables, pulleys and springs that would make Torquemada drool with delight. These instruments belong to the store's exercise department, and the ladies pulling and stretching their little hearts out on them seem to find all the exertion worth it. The method used here, called Contrology, was invented by a physical fitness expert named Pilates, now deceased, and it's still being taught at his gym as well as amid the more affluent surroundings of Bendel's. (Pilates' Gym, now under his widow's direction, is at 939 Eighth Avenue, CO 5-9186; the fee is \$6 per session.)

Every little pulley has a meaning of its own. There's the "Reformer," a couch with springs where the client can eventually do up to 40 exercises, the "Wunda Chair" where she may push and stretch herself in 50 different ways, and similar work areas all designed for pulling the body into better shape. There's no do-it-yourself exercising here. Floor exercises and other routine calisthenics are included, but even though the student is in a prone position most of the time, this is definitely not the easy road to sleekdom.

A slim and pleasant lady, Corey, oversees the exercise operation. There are never more than four to a class, all of them performing tasks on machines that Corey promises will "tone, firm, stretch and develop stamina." In her five years at Contrology, Corey claims she's never had a figure failure. "It may happen in three lessons or in three years . . . but," she promises, "it will happen." Of the regimen Corey says. "The more often you come the better. Initially, several times a week to learn the routine, but after that, even once-a-week brings results."

Getting results costs \$10 for an introductory lesson. After that it's \$75 for ten half-hour lessons; \$200 for 30 and \$500 for a yearly membership that lets you use the gym as often as you like. Contrology is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Women only.

This series of exercises comes from Kathy Grant while she was running the Henri Bendel's Studio in the 1970s. The model in the photos is Wendy Amos, who was a protégé of Kathy Grant at the Henri Bendel's studio and who still teaches today.

Image first shared on 12/20/24.

BODY & MIND EXERCISES

psych your muscles to work and find your physical center

leg swing

Lie on back with one leg stretched out, toe pointed; other leg bent at knee with foot a comfortable distance from buttocks. Raise outstretched leg straight up, using abdominal muscles. Flex foot. Point toe again and continue to swing leg over your head as far as you can comfortably go. Slowly roll down and repeat with other leg. 1-3-4

the ball

Sit with knees pulled up close to chest, thighs together, hands grasping legs just above ankles. Slowly roll back along spine, pulling with abdominal muscles, until you're on the back of your neck and shoulders, feet pointed straight at the ceiling. Slowly roll back down to a sitting position.

knee lift

Remember—you're using your abdominal muscles. Start in the position you see our model in, feet about 6" apart. Lift legs very slowly off the floor, and pull them up to the point you see in final picture. If your stomach muscles aren't very responsive, your lower back will come up off the floor. If this happens, try lifting one leg at a time at first.

the pole

You need a broom-less broomstick or similar lightweight pole for this one. Sit with legs as far apart as is comfortable, feet flexed. Hold pole up over head, then slowly twist one end of it down in front of you and across, up again and across the other way. Keep wrists and elbows as straight as possible and control movement with those abdominal muscles.

the tray

Holding a tray or magazine in your outstretched arms, roll slowly down along your spine just to your coccyx and back up. On your next move, roll down along your spine to your waist line and up. Then, down as far as your bra line and up. Finally, roll down to your shoulders and back up. Keep your eyes on the tray during the entire exercise, and keep the tray level. If you find this one difficult, do the entire exercise with knees bent slightly.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PATRICK DEGROTTE

OUR MODEL: DANIELLE WENDIE AMOS

This rare article talks about a special that the Henri Bendel studio ran for getting a massage with Leslie Day and taking a pilates lesson with Kathy Grant.

Image first shared on 8/22/23.

Another system that does a lot for *your* system is **massage** . . . and if you're like us, just the word sets off the urge for one. Which sent us off to **Leslie Day, Henri Bendel's new Swedish Massage expert**, who spent the first few minutes asking questions—about our working habits, general health, life-style, what kind of exercise, and how much. Then: a breathtaking, tingling, superbly relaxing massage that somehow managed to touch on every tired, tense spot—the result of Leslie's questioning, because the answers tell her where to find the spots of stress and strain.

If you feel like doing a little **exercise of your own first**, you can do that at Bendel's, too, with **Kathy Grant**, their exercise expert. If you do, Bendel's takes \$5 off the \$15-an-hour massage price . . . sort of an incentive system.—**VALORIE WEAVER.**

The only vintage pilates article I know of at this point in time that discusses Ron Fletcher and Kathy Grant in that same article. *Image first shared on 8/22/23.*

KEEPING FIT – EAST TO WEST

By coincidence both Ron Fletcher, who operates an excellent body-shaping studio in the West (Los Angeles), and Kathy Grant, who runs the massage and exercise part of Henri Bendel's beauty floor in the East, became disciples of the Pilates method of exercise after bad accidents. Both claim the Joseph Pilates method—based on spine alignment, the development of muscles around the spine, and the vital importance of correct breathing—put them back on their feet. For the past three years, Ron Fletcher has been the only one west of the Mississippi authorized to teach the Pilates method, which Kathy Grant also teaches at Bendel's. In both places, pupils work out on apparatus designed originally by Pilates to help correct every bad feature of the body. Both Ron and Kathy like to concentrate on individual lessons so that every exercise is programmed for one shape at a time.

Tags: [Ron Fletcher](#)

Robert Fitzgerald and Alberto Vecchio at The Kenneth Beauty Salon Studio

Another Pilates History Research Archive™ Discovery!

In 1965, Joseph Pilates opened a pilates studio inside the famous, cutting edge Henri Bendel Department store in New York City. It was located next to the salon on the top floor.

Through my research I discovered another pilates studio in New York City that was open in the 1960s BEFORE the Henri Bendel's studio! It was inside a different hair salon that was also very famous at the time, The Kenneth Beauty Salon.

Marilyn Monroe and Jackie Onassis were known to have their hair done by Kenneth, and this salon was very well publicized at the time. From these two grainy photos, we can see that this salon had at least a junior reformer that resembled the ones that Carola Trier had inside her studio, a small barrel, a Cadillac, and a raised mat. If you look carefully at the reformer, you'll recognize the handles as the same ones that Carola used as well.

One of these photos shows Robert Fitzgerald teaching on the reformer, and Alberto Vecchio teaching on a small barrel and raised floor mat. There appears to be some additional apparatus around him.

Its amazing to now know of another studio that during Joe's lifetime that existed in NYC. Not only that, but this studio pre-dates the Henri Bendel studio as a studio that existed within someone else's business and in conjunction with a salon.

While we know for sure that Joe Pilates directed the opening of the Bendel studio, its not clear if the Kenneth Salon studio had a direct connection to Joe. Perhaps these teachers opened a studio without him?

Either way, what a super cool research find! Enjoy!!

Images first shared on 2/3/24.



A client receives an exercise lesson from Alberto Vecchio. Two types of exercises are offered. They are, according to the Kenneth Beauty Salon, "isometric" for toning and strength, and "isotonic" for endurance, co-ordination and grace. Lessons are \$15 an hour.

By PAUL BERG of the PICTURES Staff

An ex-serviceman who studied hairdressing under the GI Bill has opened the most elegant beauty salon in New York City. He is Kenneth Battelle, best known by his first name. His number one customer is Mrs. John F. Kennedy and the much-publicized styling of her hair has considerably enhanced his reputation. Discreetly placed but in easy view on a silver leaf Regency table in his private haircutting room are three autographed photographs of Mrs. Kennedy and the President.

The new Kenneth Beauty Salon occupies the entire five floors of a mid-Manhattan Edwardian town house valued at about \$1,000,000. It was decorated and furnished for an atmosphere of opulence. More than 900 yards of carpet of an Indian jungle flower design cover the floors and staircase, and in the room where women sit under hair dryers the walls and ceiling are lined with 500 yards of Paisley print fabric.

Customers are indulged with an abundance of attention and services. If an economy-minded woman is able to devote the major part of a day to herself and wants to get the "works," she can do so for a special price of \$75, not including tips. Paid for individually, the same services would cost \$87.50. They include a sauna bath (\$5), an hour of massage (\$10), an hour-long facial (\$10), eyebrow arch (\$3.50), an egg shampoo (\$4), hair treatment (\$7.50), a haircut by Kenneth himself (\$25), a set (\$6), an oil manicure (\$5), a pedicure (\$6.50), and instructions in make-up (\$5).

The salon employs 54 people and can handle 40 customers at one time, which occasionally happens on the day of a big social event. Among Kenneth's clients are many celebrities — actresses, singers, international socialites, models. Successful as he is, Kenneth believes the most important thing he has to sell is service and he does not mind considering himself a servant. He even makes house calls at a fee of \$100 an hour or \$500 a day plus expenses.



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Rhinebeck Pilates
6400 Montgomery St.
Rhinebeck, NY 12572

(845) 876-5686
Contact Us

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