

Letter from the Editor

As summer begins to close, I am reminded that another year is soon to begin. Celebrating the first PMA Pilates Day was a good reminder of the rich heritage we have and the amazing amount of effort it takes to preserve it. So, where are we today in that endeavor? Let's take a look inside and bring the "past to the present". In this issue, Ron will continue his vivid story of how it all began, Pat will share with us the landscape of her travels within the community and finally a personal testimony from one of Ron's devoted students and teachers Ken Gilbert. Today, the Ron Fletcher Company and The Ron Fletcher Program of Study™ are increasing steadily and maintain an unparalleled commitment to preserving Ron's work and heritage. As we press on, the possibilities are endless...

Catherine Anderson — Editor, *The Fletcher News*
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Letter from Ron: The Pilates-Fletcher Saga, Part 2

I had been sober 4 years and was 50 years old when this handsome poster style sign went up on a building smack on the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Rodeo Drive: Ron Fletcher Studio for Body Contrology – Pilates Method. *I took top billing because my name was more familiar on the west coast due to my work in television and film studios...*

I had Clara's blessings... My business manager, Howard Borris, had arranged for me to meet Aida Grey who was the beauty maven of Beverly Hills and owned the building. She had empty space upstairs with a separate entrance and thought it was a nifty notion to have an "exercise facility" on the premises for her posh clientele — many of whom did venture upstairs after their comb-outs, including itsy, bitsy, Betsy Bloomingdale and Nancy Reagan. The rent Aida charged me was so ridiculously small, thank heaven, that I don't remember the amount. I had made a few bucks on a tacky show my agent had sold to the Desert Inn, which was a flop — ironic after all the successful shows I had done in Las Vegas when I was a "practicing alcoholic". My friend, Hal David, the famous lyricist, loaned me a hunkaloot so I could hire a space designer to create a beautiful and practical studio up to the standards of the Aida Grey Salon de Beaute. I was able to bring reformers, a tower, hi-chair, ladder barrel, cadillac, spine correctors and floor mats from New York, made from the plans given to me by Clara, along with the big photograph which had hung on their studio wall for so many years. (Balanced Body now features posters made from that photograph.)

"Ya gotta know the territory", and I did indeed, so I invested in a pricey, beautiful leaded glass door to match Aida Grey. I bought Gucci sandals, a dozen cashmere sweatshirts, and several pairs of made-to-order black trunks (I still had great legs and foxy buns) for work clothes. An artist friend designed handsome and well written brochures which I distributed to "all the right people in all the right places". One of Aida's clients was a feature writer at the *LA Times* and gave me a terrific half-page piece with great photographs. Well, you realize this was a whole new thing for the west coast, and "what the hell was a reformer?" I ordered a red phone with an unlisted number following the good advice of the owner of Ma Maison, the most popular eating place in Beverly Hills. When high profile, affluent folk can't get your number they are intrigued and will go to any means to get it.

I bought a great antique pine rocking chair, placed it under the photograph of the old Pilates studio, sat down, crossed my legs and slowly rocked, shaking my Gucci clad foot... and waited!

To be continued...

Pat's Perspective: Pilates Today

Ron Fletcher often comments that due to his extensive workshop schedule in the USA, Canada, and Singapore, he probably sees more "Pilates" than most other teachers. Since I have the privilege of accompanying Ron on his journeys, I also see the growth and increased interest in this work.

Pilates makes common sense. The principles that infuse this regimen are universal principles of any good movement program. New students to the work, recognize that this method has the power to transform the physical body and to uplift the spirit. So it is easy to understand why the clamor and enthusiasm for classes and good teachers, has created so much dimension in teaching.

Ron often fusses about the low quality of education that has led to a quality of work that is substandard. It lacks the excellence that Joe and Clara taught. Many applaud his candor. It is Ron's passion and dedication to the Pilates method and to Joe and Clara Pilates that gives his message the biting edge of truth and honesty. One student came forth courageously after one of Ron's more passionate Sunday sermons, as he calls them, and stated that she had no idea that this work had so much depth, precision, and quality. She was now inspired to find a good teacher with whom to study. Another wonderful teacher who has studied extensively with Romana, stated that she was pleased that one of the master teachers, a true leader in the field, would take it upon himself to tell the truth to the Pilates community.

Ron Fletcher has often said that he was lucky to find true luminaries in dance and Pilates. His study with Joe and Clara spanned many years. For this reason, he was reluctant to endorse any training program. Ron preferred to encourage students to study. The Ron Fletcher Program of Study has been the culmination of years of discussion, consideration, and field work. Ron Fletcher has been convinced that there is a need to develop a comprehensive teaching program. Wherever we travel, there are many who want to study and they are willing "to take the time that it takes". These true students undertake Herculean effort in cost and travel to come to workshops and courses. At the Ron Fletcher Intensive in Tucson, twenty students gathered from the USA, Canada, and Mexico to study and share for ten days. Ron and I are inspired to find this level of commitment and enthusiasm.

So as I travel and see students and teachers working the practice, I feel heartened that we can make a difference. We can continue to work and to study and by example, lead others to a path of greater excellence. I am grateful to sit in the audience when Ron speaks at another "Evening with Ron Fletcher" event and hear him bear witness to the gifts that he received from his teachers. I have listened to Kathy Grant, Eve Gentry, and Bruce King speak with the same gratitude about Joe and Clara. It is powerful to know that this message can be shared with others and that each of us can be a messenger.

Pat Guyton, Master Teacher — Director, TRFPOS

Upcoming Events

FLETCHER WORKSHOPS

August 12-15, 2004

University of Colorado Boulder, CO

Info / register patguyton@comcast.net

September 10-12, 2004

The Studio Pilates Toronto, Canada

Info / to register (416)929-7405

October 8-10, 2004 (new dates)

University of Arizona Tucson, AZ

Info / register ... bodyworksstudio@earthlink.net

PROGRAM OF STUDY EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Level I 6-Month Program

October 2004-March 2005 Tucson, AZ

Info / register... bodyworksstudio@earthlink.net

Fletcher Towelwork Course

November 12-14, 2004 Cincinnati, OH

The Pilates Center of Cincinnati

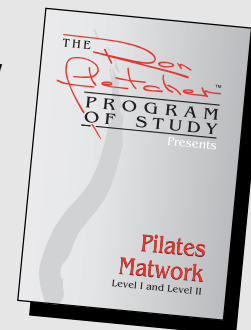
Information bodywell@one.net

*Visit www.ronfletcherwork.com/education
for more information about intensives and courses.*

Available August 30th

We are pleased to announce the release of our newest addition to the Fletcher DVD series: the Pilates Matwork DVD. It is now available through our Company website: www.ronfletcherbiz.com.

Don't miss it!



From My Own Experience

In 1996, at a Del Mar movement studio, I stood behind Ron Fletcher and took a breath. As he raised his arms with his percussive breathing, I witnessed a grace and ease that I had never before experienced. At that moment, I made a choice to follow the work of this master teacher. For years I attended two and four-day workshops in Tucson, Costa Mesa, Del Mar and Santa Barbara. At each workshop I would discover the components of his work through the practice of movement pieces and breathing patterns. Proud and determined I searched for fundamentals and principles that wove together the Towelwork, Floorwork, and the work on the equipment. I was inspired to become an accomplished “Pilates” teacher when Ron granted me the titles of “Apprentice Teacher” and later “Qualified Teacher” of the Ron Fletcher Work.

Then, in 2002, after attending the Ron Fletcher Conference at Boulder, I decided to make the commitment. I enrolled in the Level I Intensive of TRFPOS. Three women working intimately with Ron had developed a program of fundamentals and foundational movements to Ron’s work. I spent ten days learning and exploring movement and breath patterns, improvising, and solving movement “problems”. The program organized the principles found in Ron’s work and was presented in a way that I could understand. I was guided into the creation, development and evolution of every pattern, realizing what I had to do in my practice to evolve as a teacher.

I am now in the Level II Program and have been chosen as a Senior Program Facilitator. I assist the Program Directors of TRFPOS by guiding the prerequisite hours of new students in their preparation for Intensives and Level I Six Month Programs. I still return to my remembrance of that first breath with Ron — I realize that this work is a life’s study.

Ken Gilbert

Fletcher Facilitators

We are pleased to introduce you to The Ron Fletcher Program of Study™ **Senior Facilitators** in this newsletter. This uniquely talented group of individuals, from across the country and around the world, have completed (or are in the process of completing) the full 2-Level Program of Study and are responsible not only for preparing future students to go through our training program, but also for helping maintain the highest standards of our work in their respective regions.

Catherine Anderson — Half Moon Bay, California

Catherine is a Qualified Teacher of the Ron Fletcher Work™ and a Senior Program Facilitator for The Ron Fletcher Program of Study™. She holds a B.F.A. in dance from the University of Arizona and began studying the Pilates with Kyria Sabin at Body Works Studio in Tucson, Arizona in 1996. Catherine has since moved to the San Francisco Bay Area, and although exposed to many styles of movement education, she continues to focus exclusively on the Fletcher lineage of Pilates. In April 2004, Catherine opened Studio 4, and is currently completing TRFPOS Level II Program.

Sagrario Castilla — Toronto, Canada

Owner and director of The Studio Pilates in Toronto, Sagrario has practiced Pilates since the early 1980’s and been a student of movement all of her life. Certified in three Pilates methods and licensed as a Senior Program Facilitator in The Ron Fletcher Program of Study™, Sagrario also trained as a ballet dancer in Mexico and Romania and graduated from the National Ballet School of Canada in 1993 as a ballet teacher.

Alvin Giam — Singapore

Alvin was a corporate attorney for 13 years and began his Pilates studies through Michele Larsson in 1989. In 1998 he opened the first Pilates studio in Asia. He has been a student of Ron Fletcher’s since 1999 and has since taught Pilates at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts in Singapore and assisted in developing a series of travel videos for a number of airlines. He is also the Pilates consultant to the Singapore Back Association.

Ken Gilbert — Santa Barbara, California

Ken, theater artist, teaches movement guided by pleasure and comfort awakening an inner awareness of strength, flexibility and fluidity. His work embraces an individual’s creativity, self-inquiry and free expression. Concentration toward stillness and dynamic movement, spontaneity and ease, filters into every aspect of his work.

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Facilitators: continued from previous page

Deborah Mendoza — Tucson, Arizona

Deborah's strong dance and movement background includes a BA in dance from Santa Clara University and continuing dance studies in New York. She began studying the Pilates method through Body Works Studio in Tucson and has been teaching on staff at Body Works since 1996. She has also studied with Michele Larsson and at the Pilates Center in Boulder and holds a Qualified Teacher certificate from Ron Fletcher. Deborah has been instrumental in assisting with the daily operations of The Ron Fletcher Program of Study™.

Jennifer Mousel-Hetzler — Cincinnati, Ohio

Jennifer danced professionally from 1990-1997 and began apprenticing to become a Pilates teacher in 1992 at Power Plus in Denver, where she taught until 1996. She then moved to Cincinnati and continued to teach privately while completing her studies to become a licensed massage therapist. She has since opened the Pilates Center of Cincinnati and received a Level 201 certification through the Physical Mind Institute in 1999. In 2001, she re-initiated her studies of the Ron Fletcher Work™ and is a recent graduate of the full 2-Level Program of Study.

Jonathan Oldham, MSPT — Boulder, Colorado

After four years of professional figure skating with the Ice Capades, Jonathan began to study Pilates. He earned his certification to teach the method from the Pilates Center of Boulder in 1992, where he taught for 9 years. Inspired to further his education, he graduated with a MS in physical therapy in 1999, and has since studied with master Pilates teachers Ron Fletcher and Pat Guyton. He has completed the Level II Ron Fletcher Program of Study™, and has been chosen to be a Senior Program Facilitator. Jonathan currently practices physical therapy and teaches Pilates and the Fletcher Work™ in Boulder.

Sabra Zimmer — Denver, Colorado

Sabra is a Senior Fletcher Teacher and holds a B.A. in Dance from Loretto Heights College in Denver where she studied under James Clouser. She began studying with Ron Fletcher in 1991. Since 1993, Sabra has co-owned Power Plus, a Pilates Studio in Denver, with her husband Timothy, and has been involved with TRFPOS since its inception.

Aida Zorrilla — San Antonio, Texas

With a background in ballet and modern dance, Aida began studying Pilates in 1991 and was first certified to teach through the Physical Mind Institute. In 2000, she took her first workshop with Ron Fletcher and has since dedicated herself to the Fletcher Work™. Aida is currently in the process of completing the Level II Ron Fletcher Program of Study™ and is a Senior Program Facilitator. She co-owns Studio A in San Antonio, Texas with her husband Paul — the first in Texas to be recognized as a Ron Fletcher Studio.

Work-Wurk-Werk

Job Opportunities for Fletcher Teachers

Power Plus, Inc.

1776 S. Jackson St. #100 (303) 758-4606
Denver, CO 80210
Contact: Tim or Sabra Zimmer
Specifics: 20-35 Hours per week

Body Fundamentals

Tucson, Arizona (520) 299-6541
Or fax resume to (520) 299-6542
Contact: Genevieve Nedder
Specifics: part time position; dance
or movement background preferred

Studio 4

San Francisco Bay area (650) 560-9571
Contact: Catherine Anderson
Specifics: new studio looking for part and full-time
Fletcher certified teachers.

Pilates Bodyworks

Singapore.....Email: info@pilates.com.sg
Contact: Alvin Giam
Specifics: hiring full time teachers or teachers
seeking a "working holiday". We are a Ron Fletcher
Studio and the first Pilates studio to open in Asia 6
years ago. Prefer teachers with 2+ years teaching
experience. Salary commensurate with experience.