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Mr. Pilates

Joseph Pilates was born in Germany in 1883. Living in England at the outbreak of WWI, Pilates was interned as an “enemy alien.” During his time in the internment camp, he developed a fitness regime for himself and his fellow prisoners. At the end of the war he returned to Germany, where his fitness method, which he called “Contrology,” became popular in the dance community. In 1926, Joseph Pilates emigrated to the United States and opened a fitness studio in New York City. In this co-production with Retro Report, we visit that fitness studio, and explore the surprising backstory of the popular workout.
