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OBSERVER

Box + Flow Is the Best Way to Take Out Your Aggression

This boxing and yoga studio is a truly unique boutique fitness experience

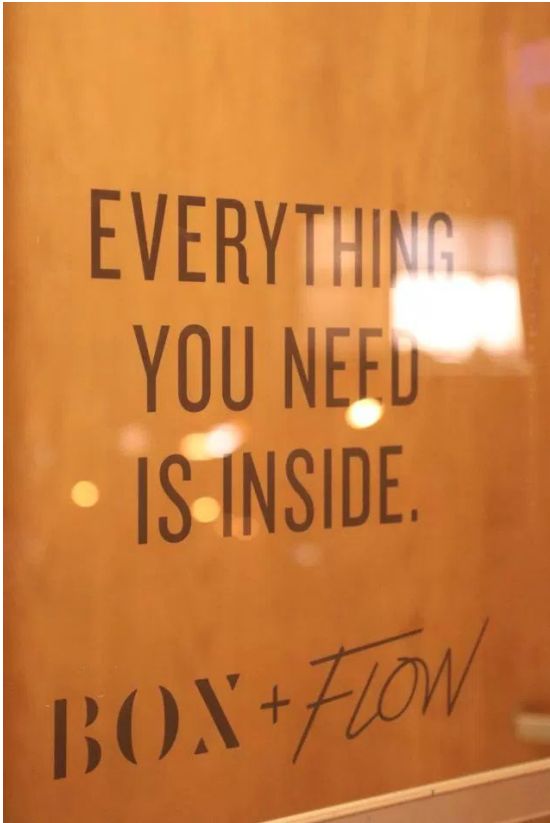


Liv Young (yes, that really is her name) managed to create the one boutique workout that didn't already exist in Manhattan. The aptly named Box + Flow, located in Noho next to the instantly recognizable Fish Cheeks restaurant, is exactly what everyone needs after a particularly heavy week. The 50-minute class consists of boxing directly followed by power yoga in the same dimly lit, Instagram-worthy room, with Drake playing and not a mirror in sight. The format of the class allows clients to get their aggression out, then re-focus.

Stairs leading up to the class are emblazoned with sayings like “everything you need is inside” and “it’s a lifestyle.” Expect shadowboxing with light weights, followed by five rounds of boxing combinations using vintage Everlast bags. Next up is a yoga flow all about mindful movement. The workout was specifically designed for both men and women, unlike many other boutique classes where gentleman sightings are rare.

Pricing is similar to SoulCycle, with a single class—including mat and gloves—is \$33. Private boxing sessions are also offered for \$125. Young nabbed teachers from all of the most beloved yoga studios, including Exhale, Y7 and Laughing Lotus. There are also UFC and MMA boxing teachers, depending on the vibe you’re looking for.

After class, Young led me into her office, which has gold wallpaper, selected to match with championship boxing belts. She soon plans on adding a Miller High Life refrigerator to the decor. “I’ve always been a girl in food who loved fitness,” she declared, explaining how she founded hospitality consulting and brand development firm, Pound for Pound Consulting. “Instead of being out until 5AM



drinking with chefs, I would run home so I could wake up to go workout in the morning. I'm devoted to sweat."

Young found a balance between yoga, which she started 15 years ago, and boxing, which she's been doing for a decade. "I would do them back to back, because I needed more fire to the flow. I'm a very hyperactive person. I found that boxing really kept my attention, because you have to focus on the combinations. With yoga, it's a moving meditation. If you get into the flow and follow your breath, your mind should be really clear," Young explained. She has endless energy, waking up at 5AM and running two miles each morning. "It's way more work for me to stay in bed," she admitted.

"My whole thing is burgers, backbends, boxing, beer. To me, it's so much more than just fitness. It's being able to be versatile. The best fighters have the most flow, they dance," she said, and her advice helps her students understand why the movements are about more than simply punching.

"Boxing gave me that empowerment, but yoga gave me that grounding," she continued, describing boxing as giving her an "edge of arrogance," that led to "leveled empowerment." Two years ago, she started focusing on developing a studio where people could find "the sweetness after the struggle." When she teaches, she keeps the movements minimal, so people who haven't tried yoga or boxing before can "be in the fight."

"When you get your mind out of it and you just hear the music, a lot of it is the cadence of the beat," she told me, adding that she finds many people overthink their motions. "This is for women who can get messy and men who aren't afraid to flow," Young declared. "Interesting people have two sides."

She made the conscious decision to not have any mirrors in the small space, which tops off at 22 people per class.

"Everyone cares about what they look like. I don't want that in my space, because I don't have space for it. Everyone's going

to deal with that shit somewhere else. If you come here and you're sweating, you're going to have a better workout than staring at yourself in the mirror. To me, it's all about connection."

Box + Flow is a combination of anger management, therapy, and of course, fitness. If you're looking for a bright boutique fitness experience where you stare at yourself in the mirror and drink a green juice afterwards, this workout might not be for you. But if you're having a rough week, Box + Flow is the way to move through the difficulty. While there are plenty of boutique, hyper-curated workouts in the city claiming they're different, Box + Flow offers an experience unlike any other.