

**FITNESS**

# HSM Core is now open in Midtown (and it's the hardest workout I've ever done)



by **Katie Levans** | June 29, 2015  
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[HSM Core](#), the second brick and mortar fitness studio from mother daughter duo Liz Hilliard and Clary Hilliard Gray, opened on Saturday in the Kings Pointe Shopping Center across from The Metropolitan. The new concept adds to the Hilliard Studio Method's already established brand and expanding fitness empire, which includes workout videos and a flagship studio location in Myers Park.

I got to attend a preview of HSM Core last Friday and can attest on record that it is one of the hardest workouts I've ever done in my life and I work out six days a week so either I'm just not trying or this is really, really hard.



I'd never done a Pilates reformer class so I was already coming into the workout blind, but as owner Liz Hilliard explained to me on my way in, "Oh this isn't a reformer. The Megaformer is like a reformer on steroids."

Very well then. Can't wait to die.



The studio is slick and straightforward with a row of machines and mirrors on all the walls, presumably so you can watch your body transform into chiseled stone in real time throughout this brutal workout.

HSM Core is a 40-minute total-body workout that calls on core strength for stability on the sliding Megaformer platform; hence, the studio's name. The Megaformer itself is like a spaceship of sorts with a central sliding platform, front and rear stable platforms, levers, pulleys, springs, straps and handles everywhere.





It looks a little intimidating but Head Coach Arthur Pulley opened class by talking us through each piece and how to transition and add resistance. Game on.



I wish I could give you a coherent run down of the workout but it went by in such a blur of sweat and shaking muscles, I didn't really even know what hit me. Before I knew it Arthur, Liz and Clary were counting down our last 15 seconds of plank and I collapsed into a puddle of sweat.

The sweat was a surprise to me. I do hot yoga and have a really high heat tolerance (for example, I don't think this summer is *that* bad) so when sweat started dripping off my face I knew my body was in overdrive in a very short amount of time. And that, I guess, is what appeals to me so much about this workout: it's quick and efficient but

still challenging, and, based on my perceived level of exertion in my first try, it has to be effective at toning, tightening and strengthening the body.



HSM Core is not fitness for the masses. It's a specialty workout packaged as a luxury brand. Class size is of course limited to the 11 Megaformer machines available and at [\\$31 per class](#), it's certainly not accessible to everyone's budget. (Not to mention each Lagree Fitness Megaformer M3S model used at HSM Core probably [sells for around \\$7,000](#).) But then again, Clary explained to me it's not necessarily an everyday workout. She said they're coaching their existing Hilliard Studio Method clients to layer it on top of their existing HSM workout 3-4 times a week. Oh, and the highlight of the day for me was seeing this print version of our first story on HSM Core printed and framed in the bathroom. Love it.



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