

Introducing the FUUSE LADDER

This three-in-one apparatus is an affordable way to enhance mat classes.

MARISKA BRELAND, OWNER OF FUUSE PILATES IN WASHINGTON, DC, HAS DESIGNED A NEW PIECE OF EQUIPMENT THAT'S "ESSENTIALLY THREE PILATES APPARATUS IN ONE"—Swedish bars, Tower and Ped-o-Pull, she explains. Dubbed the Fuse Ladder, "it is tremendously versatile, costs roughly the same as a Wall Tower with 10-plus times the number of potential exercises, and clients of any ability level, from wheelchair users to Olympians, can use it."

After experimenting with several iterations, Breland settled on a design with "springs like arm springs, leg springs of two resistances and a roll-down bar"; she then teamed up with local artisans to build it.

The Fuse Ladder can be used for almost all the matwork, for instance, you can slide your feet in between the rungs for Side Kicks or hold onto it during Rollover. The top

bar is designed to be used as a Ped-o-Pull (sans the pole). "It also allows teachers to get creative—one of the studio owners brought the Chair against the Fuse Ladder to create his own High Chair," she reports.

But according to Breland, one of its most innovative uses is that it allows "endless variations of standing and balance exercises, which I personally feel is lacking in a lot of Pilates. We also bring in the ability to climb and hang, which are fundamental movements that very few people actually do.

"I also almost exclusively use the Fuse Ladder with my special-needs private clients. Wheelchair users can stand up by using the multiple spring attachments to create a sling of support, and they can hold on to the rungs. If they can't stand for long, they can sit directly under the top bar to do arm exercises or do seated



leg exercises." (See the amazingly creative ways teachers around the world are using it on Fuse Ladder's Instagram page, @fuseladder).

"I truly had a great time working with the Fuse Ladder," says Gregory Louis, New York-based instructor, creator of GL Contrology and July/August 2018 *Pilates Style* cover model. "In many ways, it felt like someone had taken a Reformer and stood it up against the wall. And if you think of

the Pilates practice as a progression of movements leading the body toward standing upright, then this is a great apparatus for getting us there. I found that it also really turned up the focus on balance and coordination."

The Fuse Ladder has a very small footprint—the top rung goes out about 18 inches and can be used to hang Bodhi or TRX suspension systems (\$1,699 [group discount available], fuseladder.com). —A.M.O.

