

# PIPELINE

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SPECIAL ISSUE

# asthma and other wicked catalysts



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By Cristina Sanchez Kozyreva

French novelist Marcel Proust (1871 – 1922) suffered from severe asthma attacks since childhood. His oeuvre is one of the most illustrious examples of how a disease can be at the heart of someone's creative stimulation. He structured his intricate phrases to the rhythm of his infirm and dramatic breathing. He also used his illness as an excuse to avoid the *salons* after the death of his mother and remain in his sickroom – increasingly worried about running out of time to finish his writing – as his condition declined over the years. He died at age 52 from a burst abscess in his lung, leaving his literary masterpieces behind him.

When calling for contributions for this issue, participants were presented with the theme as: *making artworks, follow-up a creative process and accomplish pieces - under restrictions.*

*Constraints can be political, family, gender, and money related; based on nationality, geography, race, or mental state (depression, illness, etc.). They are understood as any forms of limitations - a construction of the mind that forces the artist to bend / invent / create / compromise / and perhaps, explore, inquire, question, do his work anew.*

We asked if artists felt that some of their art works resonated with the theme, that perhaps there was a particular time when they went through, or witnessed, a bending of the creative process due to some lack of control over their circumstances; and came out at the other end with changed ways, new observations, deeper insights into their practice or a lighter sense of meaning.

Some of them were interviewed, while some of them wanted to write their own contributions. There was some exciting drama with admitted misdemeanours, such as artist **Joris Van de Moortel's** recollection of setting fire to his architectural piece in response to institutional righteousness (p.32).

There was some action initiated – see **Isaac Muñoz's** breaking into someone's office to photograph his own censored work to be shared in this issue (p.30).

Some constraints were more difficult to share, especially those concerning censorship and political restrictions. **Tiffany Chung** remembered about an older work for which she concealed part of her intellectual process, in order for it to be allowed by the censors (p.28).

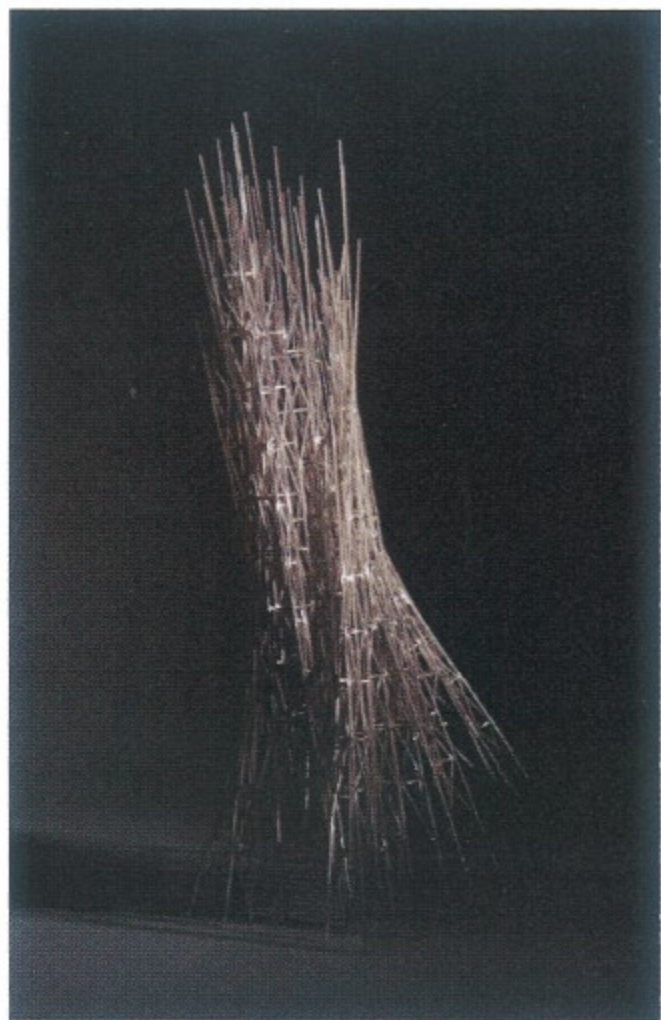
For this introduction we talked to the **Gao Brothers**, since a major part of their works is forbidden in Mainland China, for their critical use of Mao's images, such as their internationally exhibited sculpture *Mao's Guilt* (2009). The political theme is recurrent in their work, often explained by the traumatic and unjust loss of their father during the Cultural Revolution. The brothers, who currently reside in Beijing, say that there are still many ideas that they are unable to complete, and many works that they have not shown because of political restrictions. They mention feeling "angry and absurd" when the police forbid them from showing or when they confiscate their works. ▶



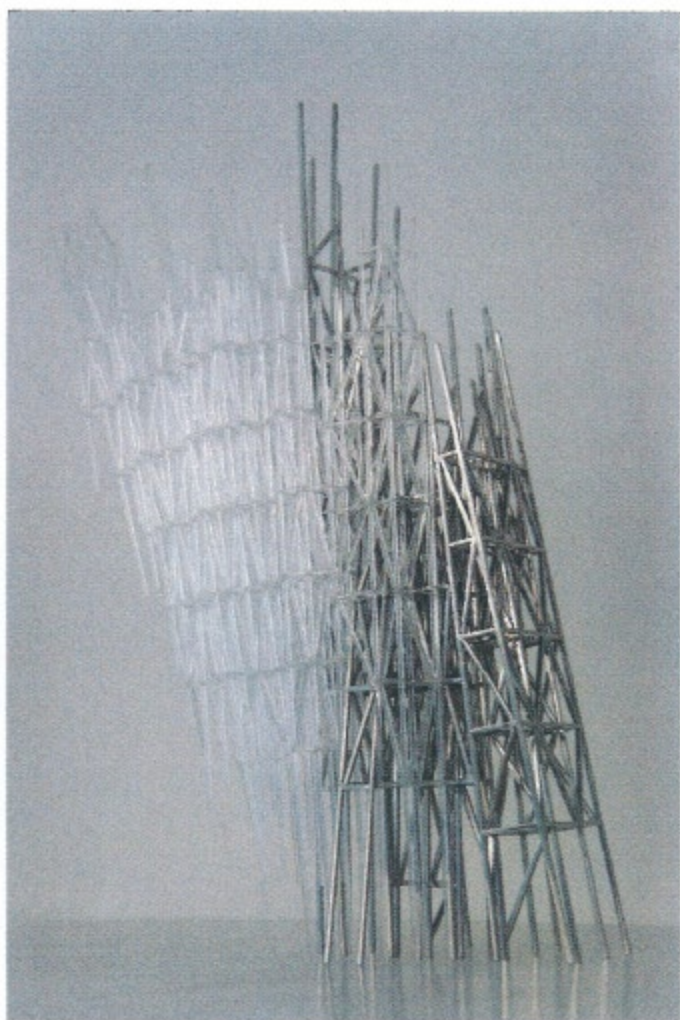
# lighter scheme

By Kirsteen Pieterse

Prior to my first pregnancy in 2009 I made all of my own sculptures, from start to finish. I was working a lot in stainless steel and the welding process became an important and integral part of the work. The physicality involved in handling, cutting, welding and grinding the steel, coupled with the balancing of the sculpture itself, became the focus of my practice. The work came to be about making a heavy and industrial sculpture stand lightly on the ground; see *Subsist*, (2009). With a young baby and a toddler I now work quite differently. I use a fabricator for all my steel work [who makes a replica from the artist's balsawood model] and have been using acrylic rod a lot more than before; see *Cloud study* (2011). Long studio hours are not viable at the moment and my studio day revolves around the babies' schedules. Consequently most of my thinking time is now spent away from the studio. However, I am now far more productive with my studio time and my work has changed in tandem with my life. The emphasis has moved away from concentrating on the physical 'balance' of the sculptures, towards making work which combines materials to create more ephemeral visual effects.



*Subsist* by Kirsteen Pieterse, Stainless steel, 196 x 66 x 80cm, 2009. Courtesy the artist.



*Cloud study* by Kirsteen Pieterse, Mirror stainless steel and acrylic rod, 77 x 56 x 19cm, 2011. Courtesy the artist.