

**marguo**

Press Release

## Laurent Pernot and Patrick Kim-Gustafson *down to earth*

23 January - 22 March 2025  
Galerie Marguo, 4 rue des Minimes, 75003 Paris



Galerie Marguo is pleased to present *down to earth*, a duo exhibition by French artist Laurent Pernot and Korean-Swedish designer Patrick Kim-Gustafson.

The show's title evokes ideas of immanence and the allegorical powers of matter, but also a return to nature which resonates with our current environmental concerns. Following a successful presentation of both artists at Art Paris 2024, this exhibition extends their dialogue further, reflecting on the artists' shared use of organic elements—notably wood and fire—as simultaneously destructive, transformational, and preserving forces. Drawing on their respective relationships to the land—Pernot's rooted in a farming heritage and Kim-Gustafson's shaped by a life immersed in woodworking—their works offer a reflection on the cycles of nature, material, and time.

A trained industrial designer, Patrick Kim-Gustafson approaches woodworking as a tactile and intuitive process. Beginning with reclaimed oak beams, some over a century old, he crafts pieces that blur the line between sculpture and furniture, muddling the distinction between form and function with humor. Inspired by his upbringing in the Swedish landscape, Kim-Gustafson presents a series of wooden stools imbued with a certain animism reminiscent of the local folklore surrounding forests and trees: woodlands as a mystical, breathing ecosystem for human and non-human life alike, as evoked by the 19th century painter John Bauer's illustrations of trolls, fairies, and gnomes. Employing techniques like the Japanese *yakisugi*, which preserves the wood through a process of charring, the stools are clustered, like a quorum, evoking their ancestral forms and the knowledge and history that courses through them.

Pernot, for his part, exhibits works from his series *Les rêves noirs*, landscapes composed of inlays of burnt and painted wood, marble fragments, and gold leaf. The temporal contrasts inherent in these materials, as well as the scenes they depict—such as the fire poppies (a species endemic to California) that only germinate following forest fires—seem to render tangible the otherwise imperceptible scale of geological time. They continually evoke, both through the material and the subjects represented, the episodic phenomena of destruction and rebirth intrinsic to nature.

In parallel, Laurent Pernot presents two previously unseen videos. The first, *Burning the Sky*, shows a royal condor gliding in the sky, engulfed in flames. The endangered bird symbolizes the wildlife affected by fires—whether natural or human-caused—and recalls the question of survival inherent to all species in the Anthropocene era. At the same time, it also invokes the phoenix, mythology, past civilizations, and the sacred, representing power, immortality, and a connection between the sky and the earth, between humanity and the cosmos.

In *Les joies invaincues*, the artist invites us to the meditative contemplation of collective celebrations captured in archival amateur films, with piano music performed by Vanessa Wagner. Through the luminous projection of these images onto swirls of smoke, as evanescent as they are fleeting, the work questions our relationship to time, memory, and disappearance, while also highlighting the persistence of joy and love as foundational, enlightening, and timeless forces of our existence.

## About the artists

### Laurent Pernot

After studying photography at the University of Paris VIII and video at Le Fresnoy Studio National des Arts Contemporains in Tourcoing, Laurent Pernot has been developing a polymorphous body of work over the past fifteen years. His artistic practice today encompasses a wide variety of media, including video, photography, painting, installation, sculpture, and new technologies. Pernot's work explores themes of time, memory, and disappearance, with a poetic and existential dimension. Particularly interested in questions of impermanence, the fragility of existence, and the relationship between man and nature, his visual language often revolves around references to literature, poetry, and philosophy, sometimes resonating with places, objects, or historical figures.

Laurent Pernot has notably been exhibited at the Miro Foundation in Barcelona, the Sketch Gallery in London, the Long Museum in Shanghai, MMOMA in Moscow, the Alvar Aalto Museum in Finland, the French Embassy in New Delhi, MUBE in São Paulo, the Espace Culturel Louis Vuitton in France, Palais de Tokyo, Maison Rouge, Centre Georges Pompidou, Musée Delacroix, MAC-VAL, Domaine Pommery, Voyage à Nantes, ICA Villeurbanne, LaM Villeneuve-d'Ascq, Château Toulouse-Lautrec, Domaine National de Saint-Cloud, and Saint Laurent Rive Droite in Paris and Los Angeles.

### Patrick Kim-Gustafson

Patrick Kim-Gustafson, a Swedish designer and artist of Korean and Swedish heritage, lives and works in Paris. After earning degrees in Industrial Design from Lund University and working with Philippe Starck, his career shifted in 2020 when he founded Ateljé Loupchat in southwestern France. With its core beliefs dedicated to exploring the evolution from tree to object, nature to worked sculpture, the studio serves as a space where Kim-Gustafson transforms wood into hybrid creations that blur the lines between functionality and artistry. His subtractive techniques result in striking pieces like massive benches, organic lamps, and monumental vases that challenge traditional boundaries of design and sculpture.

#### Press Inquiries

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Laurent Pernot  
*Les rêves noirs - Fire poppies*, 2025  
Burnt wood and painting  
102 x 142 x 4.5 cm (40 ¼ x 55 ⅞ x 1 ¾ in)

Patrick Kim-Gustafson  
Six stool sculptures, 2024  
French oak treated with linseed oil and French oak, burnt, brushed, ebonised and burnished  
Dimensions for each piece range 26 x 28.5 x 27 cm (10 ¼ x 11 ⅜ x 10 ¼ in) - 38 x 42 x 29 cm (15 x 16 ½ x 11 ⅜ in)  
All images courtesy of the artist and Galerie Marguo