FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Intangible Space
Miguel Chevalier and Laurent Martin “Lo”
12.05 – 30.06

(Hong Kong, 28 April 2016) Puerta Roja is pleased to present for the first time in Asia the works of bamboo sculptor, Laurent Martin “Lo” and the return of renowned digital artist Miguel Chevalier in it’s upcoming exhibition “Intangible Space”, opening on 12 May 2016 as part of Le French May’s 2016 programme.

The exhibition searches for an in-depth dialogue between virtual and physical territories, natural and artificial constructions; it explores the ways in which different artistic mediums: virtual projections, 2D and 3D digital prints and sculptures create new incorporeal spaces and challenge our perception of what is tangible and real.

The three-dimensionality in Lo’s gravity-defying bamboo sculptures re-define our understanding of the space and the reality within. The structures swing in the air, drawing curves of harmony like the gracious strokes of Chinese calligraphy. His creations immerse the viewer in the physical and sensorial virtues of the bamboo. Closely bound to the forces of nature, Lo starts shaping each sculpture manipulating living bamboo. Following the knots and fibres of the plant, the sculptures’ structure is shaped using tension and fishing rods. The bamboo is then dried for months, exposed to the strong Mediterranean elements. This intervention is the basis for the final pieces which are constructed with the organic material, fishing lines and metal and ceramic weights. Like Calder’s mobiles, the sculptures follow strict mathematical laws of movement and balance. His manipulation of the bamboo plants from solid canes to thin and articulating contours, creates mobile sculptures where the artwork consists of not only the bamboo itself, but also the intangible hollow space within and the shadows and silhouettes they project. A fragile harmony is achieved through opposites: flexibility and strength, fullness and void, light and shadow, movement and quietness.

In the case of Miguel Chevalier, his virtual works also relate back to the essence of the natural world and the life cycle. The movement in the generative digital works derives from the DNA of constantly changing and evolving flowers. Whilst most of the artist’s works are often large-scale, the exhibition will present more intimate observations transposed within a digital universe. The process of developing computer-created coloured plant forms is in fact directed by software conceived specifically by the artist. Miguel Chevalier creates “virtual seeds”, allowing them to grow, come to fruition, die, and be reborn – giving birth to an infinite variety of forms and landscapes in a generative virtual reality. Beyond their aesthetic and playful qualities, the works question both the status of the work of art in the digital era and the stakes involved with genetic manipulation. Nothing can predict what these “fractal flowers” might produce, free as they are to infinitely cross and reproduce, constantly transforming, never repeating. The idea of intangibility is questioned not only in light of their virtual nature, but also as the images flourish for the first and last time, never to reappear in the physical world.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exhibition</th>
<th>Intangible Space</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening Night</td>
<td>6-9pm: Thursday, May 12th with the Laurent Martin “Lo” present</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exhibition Date</td>
<td>12 May – 30 June 2016</td>
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| Location         | Puerta Roja  
|                  | 1/F SOHO 189 Art Lane, 
|                  | 189 Queen’s Road West, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong |
| Media            | For more information, please contact info@puerta-roja.com |
| Contacts         | (+852) 2803 0332 |
about Miguel Chevalier (b. 1959, Mexico City, Mexico)

Miguel Chevalier’s fantastic digital works are pure “transformational” art that is in constant metamorphosis. They are generated in and through time and occupy from the smallest to the vastest spaces inviting the public to interact with them. Virtual flowers evolve with the cycle of seasons never repeating themselves. Unusual shapes, amazing colours, other artificial paradises are created. Massive walls projected with imagery, responding to the audience through motion-detectors disrupting and altering almost psychedelic visual elements.

Miguel Chevalier is a pioneer of virtual and digital art, having focused exclusively on computers as an artistic means of expression since 1978 – before the personal computer became widely used by the public. He has produced dozens of exhibitions and installations for galleries, museums and public spaces around the world. His recent projects include iconic digital installations projected on the King’s Chapel in Cambridge, the façade of the Grand Palais during Paris Art Fair, the former Sacré Coeur church in Morocco and the Castel del Monte in Italy. His work, The Origin of the World, an immersive virtual reality installation, was one of the featured pieces at Metamorphosis of the Virtual 5 + 5, a group exhibition at the chi K11 Art Museum in Shanghai.

Miguel Chevalier was born in Mexico City in 1959 and moved to Paris to pursue his artist career. He graduated from the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts in Paris in 1980 and went on to École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs. He was awarded the Lavoisier scholarship by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and studied at the Pratt Institute, New York. In 1994, he served as artist in residence at the Kujoyama Villa, Kyoto, Japan. Miguel Chevalier is represented by Puerta Roja since 2014.

about Laurent Martin “Lo” (b. 1955, Paris, France)

Born in France, Lo trained as a visual artist at the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, and for many years worked as a creative director in advertising and fashion. Lo’s first encounter with bamboo was completely circumstantial, but as he recalls “it was love at first sight”. Bamboo became his obsession, a passion so strong that drove him to set out on a journey of discovery which he refers to as his Bamboo Routes.

In 2004 he set out for Southeast Asia, attending the World Bamboo Congress in Delhi. From there he travelled to remote areas in Thailand, Vietnam and Laos, learning old techniques from the communities for whom bamboo is an essential resource. Beyond craftsmanship, Lo learned the strong spiritual and emotional charge within bamboo. In 2011, with the support of the World Bamboo Organisation, he began his second journey to Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. He studied the spatial properties of bamboo and met well-known members of an international community using contemporary techniques to build bamboo structures, including Architect Martín Coto and Engineer Mercedes Rodriguez. His final trip was to Indonesia in 2012, where he discovered the work of John Hardy in Bali. Hardy would invite Lo to give lessons in “bamboo art” at his Green School and Green Village and to develop a project during bamboo’s growing season. Through his travels, Lo developed deep insight and knowledge into bamboo’s properties as well as traditional and contemporary techniques to grow and work with the material. Beyond its physical characteristics such as flexibility, resistance, density and lightness; it was the spiritual properties of bamboo that would captivate him and become the soul of his poetic creations.

Laurent Martin “Lo” is member of the Royal British Society of Sculptors and currently lives and works in Spain. He is represented by Puerta Roja in Asia since 2015.
about le french may

Established in 1993, Le French May is one of the largest cultural events in Asia. With more than 120 programmes presented across two months, it has become an iconic part of Hong Kong’s cultural scene that reach out over 1 million visitors each year. The objectives of Le French May are to touch everything, to be everywhere and for everyone.

To touch everything by showcasing the most diversified art forms: from heritage and contemporary arts, paintings and design, to classical music and hip-hop dance, cinema and circus. To be everywhere by bringing performances to various venues and districts, including the unusual and unexpected: from cultural centres and shopping malls, to public spaces, the racecourse and Victoria Harbour.

For everyone because the Festival aims to reach out to the entire community by developing educational programmes, talks, guided tours, workshops and masterclasses, including those that directly benefit the young and less-privileged. For 24 years, Le French May has been both truly international and distinctly local and wishes to contribute to the unique appeal of Asia’s World City.

Le French May received the “Gold Award for Arts Promotion 2008” from the Hong Kong Arts Development Council.

about Puerta Roja

Since its foundation in 2010 by Adriana Alvarez-Nichol, Puerta Roja has pioneered the promotion of established and emerging contemporary artists as the only gallery to specialise in Latin American and Spanish art in the region. Located in Hong Kong’s most up and coming art enclave, SOHO 189 Art Lane, Puerta Roja prides itself on having both a strong influence in the development of the local contemporary art scene as well as a growing footprint across Asia-Pacific.

Adriana Alvarez-Nichol is the first art dealer in Hong Kong dedicated to Latin American art in Asia Pacific and Vice-President to the Board of the Hong Kong Art Gallery Association. Born in Mexico, but having spent her working life in London and around the world, Adriana has always been passionate about the artists of her homeland. As both new and established collectors look for higher quality art and greater diversification, Adriana is opening the door to Latin American and Spanish art in Asia Pacific.

Under her guidance, Puerta Roja collaborates with a wide network of renowned galleries and art organizations from Latin America, Asia and Europe, and participates in the top international art fairs in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Taiwan, Sydney and Korea. The gallery invests in the primary market, arranges for commissions, sources specific mandates and intermediates in the secondary market, primarily between Asian and Latin American private collectors.

Prior to becoming an art dealer, Adriana’s long career in investment and private banking took her to Europe, Asia Pacific, USA, Africa and the Middle East. Adriana is an Economist from ITAM and holds an MBA from the London Business School. She was also a recipient of the prestigious British Chevening Scholarship and named as one of the “Top Ten Most Powerful Mexican Women Abroad” by CNN.