

Jean-Baptiste Bernadet Vetiver (Shanghai)

Jan 15 — Mar 7, 2026 | Shanghai

Almine Rech Shanghai is pleased to present 'Vetiver (Shanghai)', Jean-Baptiste Bernadet's eighth solo exhibition with the gallery, on view from January 15 to March 7, 2026.

Jean-Baptiste Bernadet's paintings are often discussed through an equivalence with clouds. Like clouds, his all-over compositions sustain an equivocal relationship to abstraction, representation, and interiority. They blend the remnants of late modernism with a tinge of Baroque theatricality while feeding a postmodernist sensibility with the pixelated residues of Impressionism. These aggregates operate a subtle balancing act, resting on unresolved tensions, with every part equal, yet equally distinct.

In 'Vetiver (Shanghai)', his cloud-like formations take on a newly latent form akin to colored fumes. Diffused patches of pyrotechnic yellows burst through the canvas like smoke flowers in the midst of an auspicious firework. Meanwhile, darker shades of blue, purple, orange, and green linger, as if searching for a place to settle. From one canvas to the next, the observer is carried through vaporous movements—successive stages in an endless process of evaporation. What lies behind the painter's artificial sfumato remains unclear. At once phenomenological and allegorical, Bernadet's luminous smoke gets in your eyes—it is the kind of haze that makes lovers go blind.

But what the pictorial smokescreens laid down by the painter primarily conceal is his own labor. It takes hard work for the artist to fade into the background from which he orchestrates his prismatic maneuvers. While painting is often celebrated for its ability to embed value in muddy brushstrokes that signal mediated forms of authenticity, Bernadet's evanescent presence is both confident and unassuming. Indeed, there is something paradoxical about an artist disguising the labor involved in painting while foregrounding the medium's expressivity.

The quasi-photographic bokeh and chromatic vibrations in 'Vetiver (Shanghai)' also conjure the incidental afterimage left in the eyes of the spectators of a firework following the grand finale, or bouquet final. Like these fleeting harmonies of color, Bernadet's loose and radiant arrangements seem to glow from within. Just as they resist a clear form, his paintings avoid the cliché of formlessness typically associated with depictions of smoke. Here, smoke isn't depicted; it is neither symbolic nor realistic. Instead, it arises from the depth of the canvas as an optical experience whose purity flirts gracefully with the decorative pleasures of flatness.

— Emile Rubino

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阿尔敏·莱希 - 上海荣幸呈现让-巴蒂斯特·贝尔纳代于画廊的第八次个展「香根草（上海）」，于2026年1月15日开幕，并将展至3月7日。

让-巴蒂斯特·贝尔纳代的绘画常被置于现象学语境中讨论，尤以“云朵”作为类比。正如云朵般，其创作在抽象、再现与内心性之间保持着一种微妙而暧昧的关系。在他的作品中，晚期现代主义的余音与略带巴洛克戏剧性的情感交织，而印象派的碎片化余痕又为其注入了后现代式的敏锐，使这些绘画呈现出复杂而层叠的视觉效果。其画面没有固定的中心，而是以微妙的平衡铺展开来，每一部分既平等又彼此分明。这种平衡恰恰建立在持续未被化解的张力之上。

在展览「香根草（上海）」中，贝尔纳代笔下的云状形态像烟雾般柔和、流动。散射开的亮黄色如烟花般绽放，而蓝、紫、橙、绿等更深的色调则在画面中游移，仿佛在寻找落脚之处。整个系列的作品像一连串不断蒸发的过程，引导观者随着画面的流动而移动，仿佛经历着连续且无尽的转化。至于贝尔纳代以渐隐法^{sfumato}营造出的那层朦胧背后究竟是什么仍不得而知。既指向经验层面的感知，又隐约带着寓言的意味——那层如烟的光雾直扑眼前，仿佛一层让恋人也看不清彼此的迷雾。

然而，画家在画面中铺陈的这些“烟幕”，首先遮蔽的，其实是他自身的劳动。艺术家必须付出巨大的努力，才能退入背景之中，但即便如此，他仍在背后精心安排画面的层次与走向。绘画常被赞颂为：在那些浑浊的笔触中沉淀价值，从而呈现某种被媒介过滤过的真实；而在贝尔纳代这里，他若即若离的存在既自信又克制。悄然掩饰绘画的劳动，却反而更凸显了媒介本身的表现力——这种悖论本身也令人深思。

在「香根草（上海）」中，那种近乎摄影式的散景^{bokeh}与色彩的微妙震颤，唤起观者在欣赏烟火“压轴时刻”后，眼中残留的余像。正如这些转瞬即逝的色彩般和谐，贝尔纳代松散而明亮的画面结构仿佛自内而外地发光。它们既不凝固为清晰的形态，也不落入与“烟雾”相关的陈词滥调之中。在这里，烟雾并非被直接描绘，既非象征，也非写实。相反，它自画布深处升起，成为一种光学体验，其纯度在平面装饰性的愉悦与视觉流动之间，优雅而从容地游走。

文/Emile Rubino