

CRISTIN TIERNEY

ARTFORUM

Francisco Ugarte

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540 West 28th Street

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Slow, accident-prone, temperamental, occasionally indistinct—the slide projector is an endearing thing, as it mimics a range of clunky human idiosyncrasies familiar to us all. It is evocative, nostalgia inducing. It takes us through the rabbit hole of dreary art-history surveys in overwarm auditoriums, or the dusty rec rooms of distant relatives, where we vicariously relive their vacations, birthdays, barbecues, and graduations. When a projected image hits a taut surface, we can't help but fall into the rhythms of narrative, picture after picture after picture.

It's not that Francisco Ugarte's "Slideshow" is haunted, but the absence of representational imagery from the four projector works in the dimly lit gallery, indeed, unsettles. Words cannot make sense of the projectors' incessant chatter. Nonetheless, Ugarte's strange environment allows us to witness the malleability of light and color through hundreds of manipulated slides. In *Untitled (Light and Corner)*, 2008, the slides are printed with geometric shapes that get flashed into the corner of a wall. The Kodak Ektagraphic's lens finds no focal point on the slide's glassy center, but it never stops attempting to locate one, so the light gently pulses on the wall with every successive image-form. For *Untitled (Primary Colors)*, 2015, three projectors offer up abstract, modernist compositions made from the titular hues—so scintillating, so seductive. A plinth near the exhibition's entrance holds a light box where rows of Ugarte's altered slides can be viewed (*Untitled [Light Box II]*), 2016. It's here that the secrets of the artist's compositions reveal themselves very quietly by the illuminated traces of tiny cuts and humble bits of tape.



View of "Francisco Ugarte," 2016.

— Kaitlyn A. Kramer