

CRISTIN TIERNEY

In New York, a Mexican Artist Revisits the Creative Possibilities of the Carousel Slide Projector

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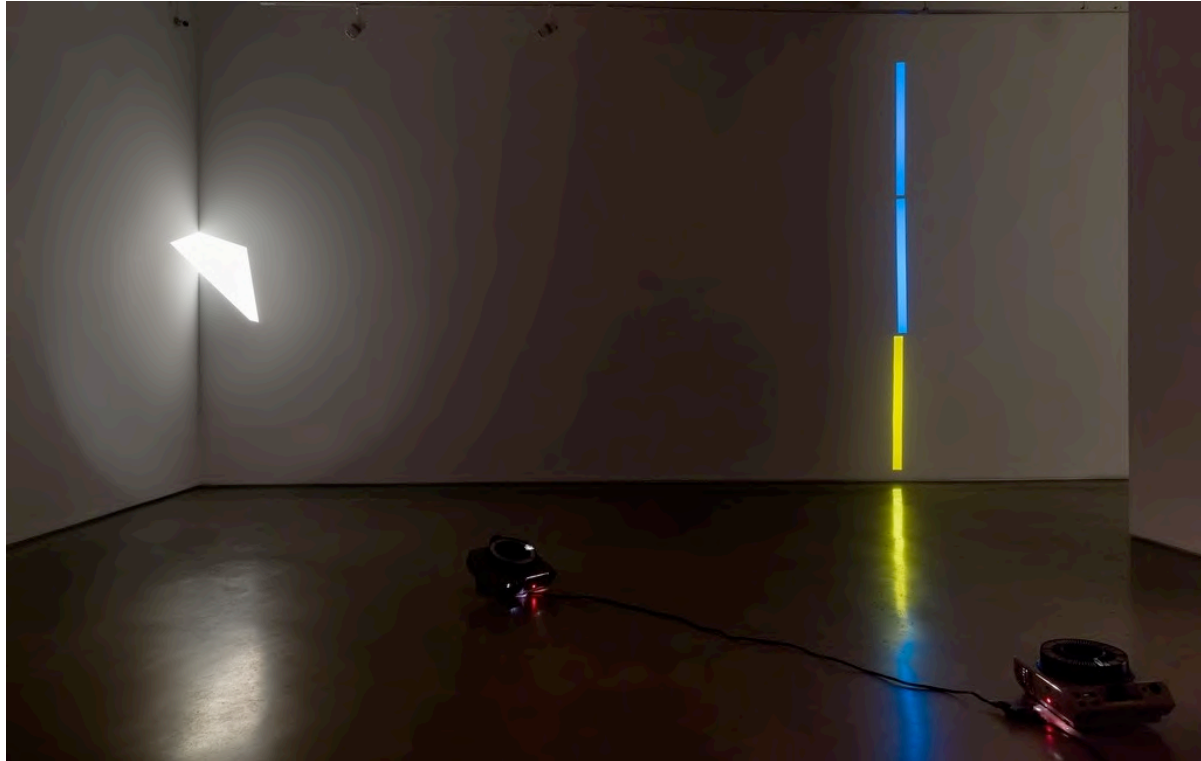


Image courtesy of Cristin Tierney Gallery. Photo by Etienne Frossard.

In the era of Instagram and iPhones, the carousel slide projector seems like a quaint relic. But the projector's design—developed by an Italian-American inventor and popularized by Kodak in the 1960s—was a striking technological advancement for its day.

In a new exhibition, the artist's first solo show in New York, Mexican artist Francisco Ugarte explores the creative possibilities for the simple yet elegant combination of transparent slides and projected light. "Slideshow," now on view at Cristin Tierney Gallery, features several projectors and hundreds of slides. But these slides aren't standard fare from a family vacation. Ugarte worked on each slide individually, altering the transparency by drawing on or taping over the slide.

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Francisco Ugarte *Exercises with Slides*, 2013 Cristin Tierney



Francisco Ugarte *Abstract Slide Photograph 4*, 2016 Cristin Tierney

The resulting series of images may be non-narrative, but the slides are nevertheless arranged in a certain order. Viewing the automated progression, which is projected onto

CRISTIN TIERNEY

the gallery's white walls, we can make out vaguely recognizable shapes and forms. In steady rhythm, the projectors click through pictograph-like symbols and strange scenes, some reminiscent of landscapes.

The abstraction allows the viewer to freely associate, to imagine a story, even if Ugarte didn't set out to tell one. Meanwhile, the projected light adds an ethereal quality. These illuminated scenes—unlike, say, snapshots captured on an iPhone—have a dreamy look that's hard to explain or define.



Image courtesy of Cristin Tierney Gallery. Photo by Etienne Frossard.

This is only the latest example of Ugarte's light explorations. Last year, in *Sunlight I* (2015), he constructed a site-specific sculpture of 11 wooden triangles that chart the movement of the sun like an ancient timepiece. By the same token, "Slideshow" calls upon a nearly obsolete technological tool. However, though the carousel slide projector may be outmoded, its artistic potential still blooms.

—Bridget Gleeson