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Installation view of **DANIELE GENADRY**'s "Slow Light" at the Beirut Art Center, 2018. Photo by Baris Dogrusöz. Courtesy the artist and the Beirut Art Center.

SLOW LIGHT **DANIELE GENADRY**

[WEB REVIEW](#) BY GOKCAN DEMIRKAZIK
BEIRUT ART CENTER

LEBANON

Daniele Genadry's paintings are not made of light. But they do glow and shimmer, if not in the very first moment that you lay eyes on them then after you have established a familiarity with their pastel color palettes and visual rhythms formed by their jagged topographic silhouettes. Taking in the light that Genadry's pale pinks, purples and oranges reflect from the surface of her paintings, however, is but an illusion of having looked at the work. In fact, just like the tide, this feeling of having a grip on the composition begins to retreat as soon as it arrives; for the threshold of visibility and intelligibility remains ambivalent and ambulatory, as shapes emerge from and recede into the nebulous swaths of light.



Installation view of **DANIELE GENADRY**'s Untitled drawings, 2013–, pencil on mylar and paper, dimensions variable, at "Slow Light," Beirut Art Center, 2018. Photo by Baris Dogrusöz. Courtesy the artist and the Beirut Art Center.

Though the Lebanese-American artist's second institutional solo exhibition in Beirut, "Slow Light," was focused on her investigations of the age-old questions central to the medium of painting, and presented a cross-section of her engagement with these topics via (mostly non-specific) landscapes, the paintings themselves were tucked away in the innermost room of the exhibition space. Upon entering Beirut Art Center, viewers were instead confronted with one of the earliest works in the show: a screen print with hand-painted acrylic marks, titled *Between Saida and Sur* (2010–18), as well as a dark corridor, and a generous selection of preparatory drawings. With interventions such as color filters, establishments of a frame within a frame and the insertion of geometric shapes disrupting the presupposed fictional self-containment of the picture plane—in this case, a reproduced photograph—*Between Saida and Sur* gestures at how Genadry's practice developed over eight years: towards a simultaneously analytical and boundary-defying deconstruction of her own tools.



Installation view of **DANIELE GENADRY**'s *Décalage* (train), 2010–18, video: 3 min 44 sec (looped), and *Peripheral Vision I*, 2018, lightbox, 94 × 66 × 15 cm, at "Slow Light," Beirut Art Center, 2018. Photo by Baris Dogrusöz. Courtesy the artist and the Beirut Art Center.



DANIELE GENADRY, *Light Fall*, 2017, acrylic and oil on canvas, 211 × 286 cm. Courtesy the artist; Sharjah Art Foundation; Beirut Art Center; and Saleh Barakat Gallery, Beirut.

Two light boxes from 2018 and the video *Décalage (train)* (2010–18), featuring a succession of manipulated views from a train window, sparsely inhabited the dim, narrow space next to *Between Saida and Sur*. Although these works and *Between Saida and Sur* are years apart in their initiation, they all share a particular rawness stemming from the conspicuous dichotomy between the traces that belong to the source-image and those of the authorial interventions within each of the respective images. In Genadry’s paintings, however, these interventions are more likely to come across as integrated “gestures”—no matter how starkly conceptual—that do not appear extraneous to the recipient image. For instance, in *Light Fall* (2017), the artist blocked out the entire course of a waterfall over its precipice with white, giving a sense of the water’s omnidirectional motion only through a slight lightening of the immediately adjoining, purple-peach topography. A brief look at the various preparatory drawings for this painting reveals that Genadry indeed sees the whole scene as being caught in a collective (yet still non-uniform) motion: the rocky formations surrounding the waterfalls are articulated in the sketches as vertical streaks of stippling and cross-hatching, shaping and being shaped by the water’s course at the same time.

“Slow Light” embodied Genadry’s approach to the timeworn yet unresolved debate around what constitutes (or should constitute) the rightful base of painting since the Renaissance: *disegno* [drawing] or *colore* [color]? The artist does not readily opt for either, and appears to root for light as an alternative by conceptualizing representation as a vector of desire to compensate for the vacuum left behind by the intensity and speed of light. In *The Glow* from 2014, a landscape “emanates” from the light at the center of the painting, becoming clearer and more saturated in vertical strips away from this core. Even though the artist handles paint in a roughly divisionist style, thus foregrounding *colore*, *disegno* is not diminished at all thanks to this segmentation by line, which structures the painting and connotes the traveling of light. In a way, color falls in line with drawing in deference to the equalizing force of an untamable, ungraspable element: *viva luce!*

Daniele Genadry’s “[Slow Light](#)” is on view at Beirut Art Center until October 7, 2018.

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