

The Boston Globe

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Weekend

Critic's Picks

Kevin Zucker:

Reduced Circumstances

At: Mario Diacono Gallery at Ars Libri,
500 Harrison Ave., through Nov. 2.
617-560-1608.

Brush with wit

Longtime gallerist Mario Diacono has opened a new space at Ars Libri, the art-book library on Harrison Avenue, which is fast becoming gallery row. Diacono has one large wall looking out the picture window onto the street, and upon it he has hung one large painting by Kevin Zucker, "Reduced Circumstances" (closing tomorrow). It's a deeply witty and subtle commentary on presence and absence, packed with art-historical references but crafted in the simplest of lines and palest of colors. Zucker depicts an empty room, with two sheet-draped chairs (lifted from Magritte) and a large window looking out to a seascape (borrowed from Canaletto). He combines his images on a computer, from which he ultimately creates an oversize carbon transfer that he applies to a canvas. He paints over it, accenting lines and adding colors, but it remains a ghostly scene. For all its informational, historical, and technical detail, "Reduced Circumstances" aches with loss.