

The Boston Globe

April 29, 2009



BILL JACOBSON: Some Planes
At: Robert Klein Gallery,
38 Newbury St., through May 9.
617-267-7997,
www.robertkleingallery.com

Bill Jacobson's photograph "A Series of Human Decisions" at the Robert Klein Gallery.

In focus

Photographer Bill Jacobson used to make images that were wildly out of focus. Because they were hard but not impossible to read, they sparked longing and nostalgia. Lately, as his show at Robert Klein demonstrates (which includes a handful of older shots), everything is in focus.

In "A Series of Human Decisions," he examines architectural spaces such as therapists' offices and artists' studios. Jacobson attends to the forms of these rooms, and how they guide the eye. "A Series of Human Deci-

sions (1941)" shows a small black metal desk and chair set at a diagonal to walls of cherry cabinets and bookcases. There's a precision to the angles and planes of this scene. They feel empty, calculated.

Then he set out for the desert to study the horizon line. The astonishing second group, "Some Planes," features bleached tones and grand expanses; they're almost abstract, and recall the meditative clarity and horizontality of paintings by Agnes Martin.

Some, such as "Some Planes (204)" are almost without texture, just a curtain of pale, pale blue over a sea of beige. Then there's "Some Planes (436)," in which the eternal white sky looms over a field lumpy with hummocks striated in blue-gray and mauve. These are gorgeous works, crisp and unearthly.