

ARTnews

Jorge Macchi

Ruth Benzacar

Buenos Aires

This spellbinding show, "Crónicas eventuales" (an oxymoron that roughly translates to "Temporary Chronicles"), brought together video, installation, photography, and other mediums, all of which linked such themes as sinking, travel, chance, time, and music. The diverse works were less about technical precision than about creating a frail, almost ethereal network of relationships.

The video *The Matsuyama Ballad* (2010) provided the most coherent storyline, incorporating a text about a ship that sank on a coral reef in 1784, stranding 44 sailors on a Pacific island with no drinking water. As death approached, one crew member, Chunosuke Matsuyama, etched the tale of the wreck on a piece of



Jorge Macchi, *Extinction*, 2010, wood and mirror, 63" x 98½" x 51¼". Ruth Benzacar.

bark and placed it in a bottle, which turned up 150 years later on a beach in the town where Matsuyama was born. The five-and-a-half-minute video shows the words of this tale punched into a roll of paper scrolling by; the paper then enters a music-box mechanism where the holes in the paper generate the seemingly random soundtrack.

Nearby, Macchi's *Extinction* (2010) features an old, dark-wood wardrobe, bottom section removed, placed above a large oval mirror. The impression is of a frozen moment as the object descends into a glassy pit.

In the basement, Macchi installed *Umbria* (2010), a rough-hewn wood structure reminiscent of a decaying boat skeleton. A single lightbulb illuminated the space, casting a lattice of shadows and placing the visitor at the heart of yet another ghostly submersion. —Federico Monsalve