

# out there

**2006 NEW JERSEY FINE ARTS ANNUAL**

July 12 – October 22, 2006



80 GALLERIES OF INSPIRATION & EXPLORATION

THE NEWARK MUSEUM

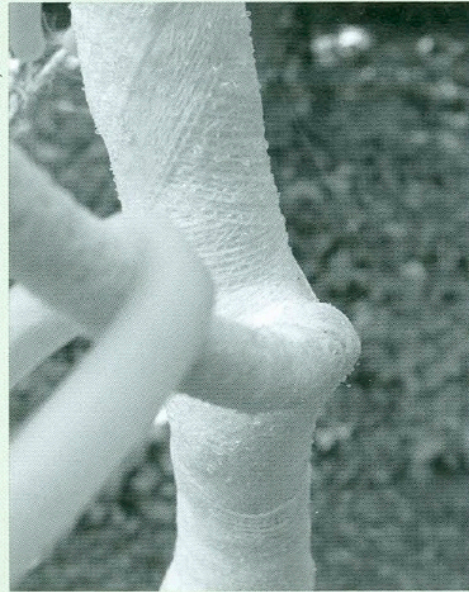
# Joseph Gerard Sabatino

## *Tug of War*, 2006

Fig tree, gauze, burlap, jute twine, steel wire  
9' x 10' x 9'

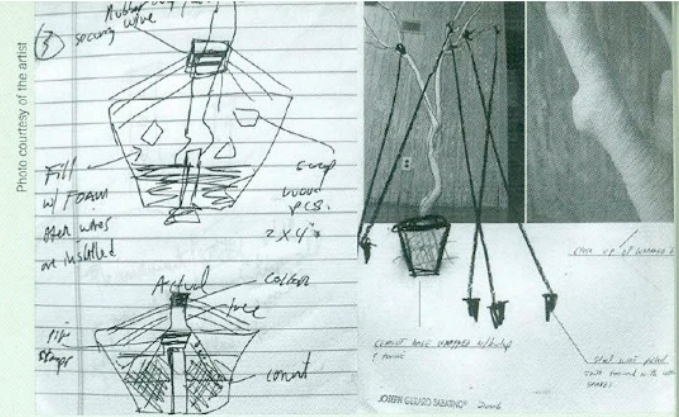
Courtesy of the artist

Joseph Sabatino's *Tug of War* is an eerily quiet work of art. Sitting in a clearing in the Garden, it appears like the ghostly apparition of a tree. Toward the end of the day, when struck by the late-day sun, it glows. Sabatino first encountered this fig tree when, because it was dead, it stood out in his father's otherwise lush garden. Removing the tree from its natural setting, the artist then carefully wrapped the trunk and branches in



gauze and the root ball in burlap. Upon bringing it to the Museum's Garden, he "planted" it on a mound of dirt and tethered it to the earth. It is at the same time a mummified remain

Installation in progress



above: Artist's preliminary studies  
left: Detail of *Tug of War*

and a vision of reincarnation. Among the lush riches of the Garden in peak season, *Tug of War* provides a stark contrast.

But rather than evoking death, Sabatino seeks to create something fantastical. He questions preconceived notions about our surroundings. His works are pure and unadorned. He strives to see things in an uncomplicated way, "like a child who crawls, walks, or simply stares while ingesting his or her everyday surroundings, my interest is similarly fueled by this effortless act of acknowledgment, observing the obscurities of daily occurrences."

Joseph Gerard Sabatino  
2006

