



Image: Richard GRAYSON and Steven WIGG, *Triumph*, 1996, installation view, wet unfiltered terracotta clay on wooden armature, 4.5 x 4.5 x 1.7 m, courtesy Samstag Museum of Art

Media Release

Triumph

Richard Grayson and Steven Wigg

To mark UniSA's 21st anniversary, the Samstag Museum is revisiting its own history with *Triumph*, a re-mounting of the spectacular collaborative project by South Australian artist and UniSA alumnus Steven Wigg, and enigmatic artist, writer and curator Richard Grayson, now living and working in the UK.

Originally commissioned by the University of South Australia Art Museum in 1996, *Triumph* is a four-metre high re-creation of the Arc de Triomphe, Paris, the famed Napoleonic monument to war's victories and its honoured dead. Sixteen years later, the artists are reprising *Triumph* in a new site specific installation at the Samstag Museum of Art. *Triumph* will be built from 1.6 tonnes of wet unfiltered clay, layered over a wooden armature. During the period of exhibition, the clay will shrink as it dries and fall from the armature.

Triumph was inspired by an Arc de Triomphe paperweight brought back from holiday, the work is both an upscaled model and a downscaled model. Grayson says, 'By making our model a hundred times the size of the original we were making something monumental – something that was very nearly a building. And even at four metres high the clay version was still some twelve times smaller than the original of our original, the fifty metre high edifice in Paris. So our gigantic model of the paperweight was a miniature too'.

The use of clay is integral to the work. Grayson says that 'the sheer perversity of clay had its attractions. It was profoundly unfashionable, and the idea of all that labour to model something in an impermanent material was very attractive to those, like myself and Steve, who had spent much of their lives involved in the barking logics of performance art'.

Erica Green, Director of the Samstag Museum of Art said 'Celebrating UniSA's 21st anniversary is a fantastic opportunity to revisit the Museum's own history and reprise a truly powerful and imposing work of art that has stood the test of time'.

***Triumph* opens Friday 20 April and continues until Friday 1 June 2012.**

Opening hours are Tuesday to Friday 11–5pm, Saturday and Sunday 2–5pm (Closed ANZAC Day).

For further information contact Erica Green, Director, Samstag Museum of Art, T 08 8302 0872, M 0438 821 239 or visit unisa.edu.au/samstagmuseum