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workmanship is superb.

Theatre makes a big splash

THEATRE

By BERWYN LEWIS

George Gittoes and Gabrielle Dalton believe the role of the artist in the 1980s is to relate to people and the community.

"Only a relatively small group of people ever see inside a gallery," says George, who is now involved in taking art to the people and involving them in it.

In the late 1960s George was responsible, with Martin Sharp, in setting up The Yellow House, a multi-arts centre at Kings Cross where every room was converted into art-in-the-round.

Here George first established himself as a painter and fine art photographer and then gradually moved on to film, becoming the first Australian to work in the field of holography.

In 1977, he began working with Gabrielle Dalton in what they saw as a new kind of visual theatre

which was determined to break through the limitations and conformity of traditional theatre.

They searched for unusual locations making cliffs, rocks, swimming pools and the bush their stage and incorporating underwater locations as part of their theatrical sets.

In 1978 they brought together the nucleus of a creative team, Martin Wesley-Smith, composer, from the NSW Conservatorium of Music, and dancer-choreographer Ronaldo Cameron. They were to become T.R.E.E. (Theatre Reaching Environments Everywhere) based at Wattamolla in The Royal National Park at Sutherland. In 1979 they presented their first production.

This year, their sixth production, a team of 150 including 30 dancers, 20 divers, 30 children and the bush fire brigade will present a visual and musical spectacle, The Unfound Land at Wattamolla.

"Wattamolla has become like our own Opera House," says Gabrielle.

Some of the complicated scenarios to be seen during the 90-minute show tonight and tomorrow night include underwater formations involving divers with glowing lights strapped to their bodies, dancers performing on cliff faces, in ankle deep water and suspended in mid air, over the lagoon at Wattamolla.

With a little help from the local Bundeena Volunteer Bush fire brigade, a special hydro sculpture will be staged.

A group of teenagers has created a huge sculpture based on their performance, which centres around the Apollo astronauts.

"Because of the huge team required to bring all this together and the expense which has to be undertaken by the participants these events are quite rare," says Gabrielle.

This weekend they anticipate an audience of several thousand. The show begins at 8.30 p.m. It's bring your own seating, rugs, torches and snacks and it's on the beach at Wattamolla.