

# UNLEASHING INNOVATION

## METL Media + Emerging Technology Lab

To dream in polygons and clay.

1993 - the air crackled with possibility. In theaters, dinosaurs roared to life in Jurassic Park, a technological marvel that ignited the flames of the digital revolution. Across the land, in Winston-Salem, another revolution was brewing as a nascent UNCSA School of Filmmaking was blooming. A conservatory where raw talent collided with seasoned experts, where imaginations sparked like lightning, and where stories, vibrant and alive, were forged in the fires of collaboration.

Today this journey is not a solitary digital stroll. Our Visual Effects discipline is woven from threads as diverse as the artists themselves. It's a global village, buzzing with the energy of model makers, sculpting handmade worlds from clay. It's the whisper of animatronic engineers, breathing life into puppets, but hulks of metal and rubber. And it's the home of digital dreamers, their fingers a blur across keyboards, conjuring landscapes from the ether.

Let us raise our glass [or tablet, if you prefer] to the legacy we carry, to the pioneers who dared to dream in polygons and clay. With respect for the old and the embrace of the new, let us celebrate the present, where imagination and innovation dance a delicate waltz. And let us forge the future, where stories yet untold wait to be whispered into existence, dancing with brushstrokes, dinosaurs and dreams, forever intertwined.

The canvas awaits. Tonight let us show you how some of the magic is made.

Robert Keen  
METL Creative Director  
Chair of Immersive Media and Visual Effects, UNCSA School of Filmmaking

**UNCSA School of Filmmaking launched METL in 2017 as a training ground for the innovative creators of tomorrow.**



**New technologies democratize the visual possibilities, letting voices from every corner join the symphony. This collaborative spirit, this shared thirst for the "wow" moment where the heart is still at the center of every story - this is the fuel that propels us forward.**



Using the creative power of advanced technologies, METL is an incubator for innovative storytelling of all kinds. METL's production space is the 3600sqft Cube located in the Center for Design Innovation [CDI].



## **METL Tour**

The tour will touch on film & TV production in the 21st century through glimpses into pre-production, production and post-production.



## **Pre-Production**

From detailed hand drawings and hand-crafted set models to autoCAD software, explore how the world of pre-production design [also called pre-vis] has radically changed over the years as technology has evolved.



## Production

These days equipment can be more nimble, flexible and less costly. The creation of digital production and astounding visual effects lets the creator's imagination rule not necessarily the budget. In the Cube, our Virtual Production facilities include a 16' x 25' LED video screen, Unreal Engine software, and motion-capture capability.



## Post-Production

From film sequences shot in miniature to animatronics for practical effects to 3-D, the world of Post Production is staggeringly varied and creative. Look for a bit of history on what inspired some of these effects.

## Student Work

Students create practical effects through make-up, props and animatronics to be used in production.



## METL YouTube Channel

Zeke Brown, a 3rd-year film student, created the METL YouTube channel featuring behind-the-scenes content from the School of Filmmaking – as well as projects across campus. Officially launching this spring, enjoy Zeke's curated footage.





*Photo by Richard Phillips*

## **The Future**

The Cube will be the home of the School of Filmmaking's new program called *Story Art Studio [SAS]*, a dedicated space where disciplines converge giving birth to different forms of narrative and artistic expressions ranging from Mixed Media, Digital Production, Projection Mapping, and other tools. Fostering a sense of community and collaboration, SAS will be a story and art incubator.



Launching in Fall 2024, stay tuned for more on *Story Art Studio*



## Partners

METL creates projects with UNCSA students and faculty, visiting artists and community partners. This includes PBS-NC, Winston-Salem State University, MUSE Museum, Winston-Salem African American Archive, and The Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts. METL has received funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, Epic Games MEGAGrants, South Arts, and the SBTDC.



## The Team

Deborah LaVine, Dean, School of Filmmaking  
Bob Keen, METL Creative Director  
Stacy Payne, METL Producing Director  
Dante Armstrong, METL Technician  
Asa Gordon, METL Technician

**Center for Design Innovation [CDI] is shared by UNCSA and Winston-Salem State University for classes, meetings and special events.**

*Unless noted, all photos by Allison Lee Isley.*