Calvin professor directs Star Wars via hologram

BY EMMA TROUBLE
Migrinie Editor

Production on "Star Wars XV: The Last Jedi (Of the 6th Trilogy)" Meets the Avengers is underway, according to Gary Schmidt, who is writing and directing this installment of the franchise.

"It just felt right," said Schmidt, "after I wrote the short story about Yoda and Leia in 2017, I was really interested in the Star Wars world. The story showed a really pivotal moment in the franchise, so I wasn't really surprised when I got the call to direct another big moment."

Schmidt declined to relocate to the principle shooting locations in Iceland or the studio space in London because, "You can't just leave the dogs. They're border collies and they need to be walked everyday."

To accommodate Schmidt's teaching schedule and dogs, a Holographic Transmission System has been set up in Schmidt's writing cabin, an outbuilding on his modest country estate.

Holographic technology is now in its developmental stages but the system is capable of sending a signal globally through a wire connection. Due to the distance the signal must travel in this case and the secluded "rustic" location it is set up in, however, the three-dimensional image has a somewhat grainy texture and a blue hue.

"Now that you mention it, it's kind of reminiscent of the technology in the early Star Wars movies," said junior Calvin Dutchsma, who works in CIT and helped set up the unit.

Though embracing the innovative technology, Schmidt has also refused to abandon his typewriter (a 20th century predecessor of the keyboard and word processor) and continues to make revisions to the script using the equipment he says would "survive a Death Star explosion."

Studio executives are worried about pages of the script being leaked, as Schmidt has been known to print student assignments received by email for revisions on the back of manuscript pages.

"You have to allow for some madness in the method," said studio executive Ben Rich when he visited campus to meet with Schmidt.

"I just hope there isn't a fire or something," he confided.

Students are inspired by Schmidt's involvement in the popular film series. Sparrow Maitcap, a senior studying film shared that she was, "so relieved to find out that people in Grand Rapids and Calvin can participate in things that are mainstream. There's a lot of emphasis on, like, artsy movies and 'Creation, Fall, Redemption,' and it's just nice to see something normal and fun."

Curious students have been known to try to discover spoilers by driving out to Schmidt's farm.

"It's a really important story and really expensive equipment. I hope fans respect that enough not to mess with the cabin too much," explained Rich.

"It would be more convenient to work in the studio," Rich continued, "It's a garden shed with a wood stove!"

For the sake of authenticity, Schmidt's hologram is projected in front of a wall of actual bookshelves.