

## GVSU, UM collaboration brings alternative energy-inspired arts performance to Muskegon



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An interdisciplinary performance in August will tell the story of Muskegon's transformation from a once-thriving manufacturing community to one that is working to regain economic prosperity by exploring alternative energy.

"Into the Wind" is a collaboration between Grand Valley State University and University of Michigan and will feature dance, music and poetry created to be performed by students, alumni and faculty from both universities. The performance will take place August 22 and 23 at 7 p.m., at MAREC, on the shores of Muskegon Lake. It is the site of the former Continental Motors factory and overlooks an aging power plant scheduled for decommissioning in 2016.

The event will include a piece choreographed by Grand Valley dance professor and U-M alumnus Shawn Bible and performed by Grand Valley students. Grand Valley music professor Nate Bliton will compose music for the piece, which will incorporate sounds of wind turbines.

The collaboration is led by University of Michigan dance professor Jessica Fogel, director of Dance Works, U-M's resident dance company. She was inspired to look into wind energy after hearing about the work Sara Adlerstein, associate research scientist and visual artist for U-M School of Natural Resources and Environment, was doing to measure the impact of wind turbines on the Saginaw Bay aquatic ecosystem. She said those who oppose the turbines believe they negatively impact fish and other wildlife, and therefore, food supplies. But her research shows otherwise.

"From the models I have been doing, the impact is next to nothing," Adlerstein said. "People opposed to them are doing so because they think turbines are ugly — not because they aren't good for the environment," she said. "I wanted to explore the question of beauty. How do you confront people with the idea of aesthetics?"

Fogel said when the Continental Motors factory closed, it was a real downfall for the Muskegon community. "In the music for the performance, not only are you hearing the factory workers' voices, but you are hearing a sonification of wind data collected by a buoy launched off of Lake Michigan, near the site," she said.

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A brief lecture, featuring art that inspired Into the Wind, will take place prior to the performance. The art display will include pieces by Adlerstein and pieces from the Muskegon Museum of Art collection.

T. Arnold (Arn) Boezaart, director of Grand Valley's Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center, said: "This project is not only a great way to link the performing arts with our renewable energy efforts at MAREC and in the region, but it's also a nice opportunity to link Grand Valley and University of Michigan in a collaboration that will allow students, faculty and the community to engage and learn from each other."

**Additional collaborators of the project:**

Muskegon Museum of Art; Erik Nordman, associate professor of natural resources management, Grand Valley; Sarah Mills, doctoral candidate, U-M Urban and Regional Planning Program; Keith Taylor, poet, coordinator of undergraduate creative writing in the U-M Department of English and director of the Bear River Writers Conference; Robert Alexander, NASA JFPF Fellow, sonification specialist and design science doctoral candidate at U-M; David Biedenbender, a former U-M instructor; and Sara Adlerstein, associate research scientist and visual artist, U-M School of Natural Resources and Environment.

The project is supported Grand Valley State University's Office of the President, Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center and Department of Music and Dance; Muskegon Museum of Art; and U-M's Third Century Initiative, Office of Research, School of Music, Theatre & Dance Faculty Research Fund, Gay Delanghe Endowment, Department of Dance and Office of the Vice President for Global Communications and Strategic Initiatives.

Visit [www.gvsu.edu/marec](http://www.gvsu.edu/marec) or [annarbordanceworks.com/2014-season-into-the-wind.html](http://annarbordanceworks.com/2014-season-into-the-wind.html) for more information.

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