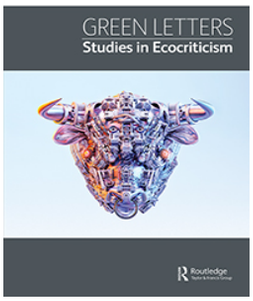

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Turbulent Ecodramaturgy: The Winds of *Pericles*

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ABSTRACT

In encountering *Pericles* as a written and performed text, we are struck immediately by the intricate currents that *wind* through the episodic narrative – currents of action and breath-guided dialogue mingling, twining through and above and under and about the fictive breezes of an imagined Mediterranean, as well perhaps as through and around the actual draughts of an open-air venue. We offer our ecodramaturgical reading of the winds of *Pericles* in the hope that it might likewise suggest the possibilities offered by an awareness of how a play's aerial currents can affect the liveness of audience experience, the nuances of reception, and the related apprehension of environment – even, or perhaps especially, when it comes to works that are difficult to encounter in performance.

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> Like a sailing boat that wants to go west, while the wind is blowing from the south and the currents are carrying it towards the east. The equilibrium between these tensions is the creative route.
>
> (Barba 2000, 59)

Eugenio Barba's figurative comparison between the turbulent processes of theatrical production and Mediterranean navigation invites us to understand performance in elemental terms. While Barba's attention to the directional pressures exerted by intentional, aeolian, and oceanic forces rethinks dramatic practice for the twenty-first century, the imagery evokes a long history of comparably inflected dramaturgical writing. Those who opposed the emerging professional English theatre of William Shakespeare's day even used comparable metaphors to discourage playgoing, with the former playwright Stephen Gosson warning that the manifold 'abuses of plaies' pass the 'reach of the Plummet', and that his own critique might 'runne a grounde in those Coasts which I never knewe' (1579, A6v, C5r). The expansive and multidirectional impulses that Gosson derides are valued by present-day theorists who associate theatre more with movement than mimesis, or who compare the phenomenological experience of attending a performance to that of watching a tree swaying in the wind (McAuley 1999, 92; Garner 2018, 123). Indeed, a recent *Performance Studies International* project on 'Fluid States: Performances of Unknowing' thought with the sea to develop radical, liquid

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dramaturgies, naming dramaturgical components after islands, vessels, docks, and logs (2015). Discussing dramatic practice in explicitly wind-blown ways, we propose, might further encompass performance's disruptive, often destructive impact: affects that Gosson's shipwreck allusion indirectly anticipates, and for which theatrical practitioners sometimes consciously strive. In revisiting Barba's formulation of dramaturgy as turbulence, then, we ask what could happen if we move from thinking about the solid fabric or texture of a dramatic text enacted in performance to the currents of the air that run through it.

To pursue this question, we wend our way between textual and performative analysis, attending to both historical and present-day experiences of wind-blown theatre. Our approach is indebted to Cathy Turner and Synne Behrndt's call for 'new dramaturgies' that discuss 'composition in terms of process and event, rather than the self-contained singular artwork' (Turner and Behrndt 2015, x). Turner and Behrndt seek to identify a mode of performance analysis that 'concerns attention to detail in relation to the wider whole [. . .] making connections, moving between elements, forming organic wholes which are continually in process' (x). Responses to this call have encompassed the architectural and the ecodramaturgical, as recent studies by Turner (2015) and Lisa Woynarski (2020) demonstrate. Turner's own work on dramaturgy and architecture is primarily concerned with solid entities, but her analysis of Henrick Ibsen's play *The Master Builder* concludes by gesturing towards conceivable twenty-first-century 'castles in the air', citing The Blur Building (2002) – an architectural sculpture made of cloud and fog for the Swiss Expo and affected by the wind – as one possible example (2015, 51). Woynarski expands upon the specific possibilities of *eco*dramaturgies: a term she elaborates from the work of theatre scholar Theresa J. May to infer 'a way of understanding how theatre and performance practices make ecological meaning and interact with the material more-than-human world, attendant to the different experiences, complexities and injustices that entails' (2020, 10). Our own interest in wind as a structuring force emerges in the context of these new, materially and conceptually expansive, dramaturgies, and under the eco-dramaturgical umbrella. Continuing the trajectory established by Turner, Behrndt, and Woynarski, we ask what if, instead of thinking of dramaturgy as constructed in architectural terms, of plots and plats that share earthy foundations, we conceive of atmospheric currents as compositional in and of themselves, and the wind as a force of creativity? In what ways might performance encourage audiences to perceive drama as suspended between gusts – unsteady, hovering and wavering, caught in a blustery equilibrium? Anthropocene-buffeted, we aspire to an ecodramaturgy of the wind that could prompt consciousness of air's unpredictable agency, and apprehension of the differentiated vulnerabilities of subjects caught living and creating within the moving air.

The wind, as air in motion, invites careful attention to the environmental and affective dimensions of theatrical experience. In *Heaven's Breath: A Natural History of the Wind* (1984), Lyall Watson characterises winds as 'the circulatory and nervous systems of the planet' (7), regulating temperatures and even reshaping the physical earth. The air currents that literally carve the mountains and valleys of geography find their literary counterparts in the winds that have long shaped the Mediterranean imaginary, buffeting characters from Odysseus to Pericles, Iphigenia to Marina. Histories of the wind attest both to its material effects, often in terms of destruction or loss, and to the different cultural, narrative, and discursive meanings that the wind

has held: for instance, Shigehisa Kuriyama has demonstrated the wind's slowly diverging significance in ancient Greek and Chinese medicine (Kuriyama 1999, 233–70), while Gwilym Jones and Jennifer Hamilton identify allusions to contradictory classical and sixteenth-century understandings of the wind and its causes in the plays of Shakespeare (Jones 2015, 79–85; Hamilton 2017, esp. 95). Today, the 'ethical sublime' presence of wind turbines where mills once operated, and of offshore wind farms that seek to further harness the wind's energy for electricity, visually declare our relationship to the wind to be very different, but, in many respects, no less contradictory, aspirational, or humbling than they have ever been (Morton 2010, 9). Rob Nixon has influentially argued that the ongoing environmental damage of the Anthropocene demands an 'apprehension' of 'slow violence' that 'draws together the domains of perception, emotion, and action' (Nixon 2011, 14). The incipiently violent impulses of 'apprehension', a term that can signify physical containment and dread (OED 2022, *n*. 1, 12), are especially resonant when it comes to the wind. Although its freshening effects can be welcome at times, to be apprehended by the wind frequently results in irreparable damages, stresses, and weathering: access to shelter and to wind-resistant architectures remain a key political question for humans on a wind-blown planet (Vanek 2018).

Such destructive-productive tensions can be understood in affective as well as material terms. For Tonino Griffero, the wind is a 'quasi-thing': at once an event and an atmosphere (Griffero 2017, 1–18). Like a theatrical event, the feeling of being in wind might prompt awareness of absence and presence, space and time. Poet Mei-mei Berssenbrugge describes wind as an expression of force that 'can be in the future, a direction, as if there were time, because it comes from somewhere. Because it draws you somewhere' (Berssenbrugge 1991, 43). Depending on the local air currents, that impression of directionality, of a spatial and temporal trajectory, can feel more or less pronounced; as Steve Mentz reminds us, the air's alterity often 'strains the limits of environmental and aesthetic awareness', with airy chronologies expanding, dissipating, gusting and vanishing (Mentz 2013, 2). Each individual gust further joins the global circulations and eddies of an element that is always in motion (37–9), sometimes to the uncertainty or alarm of human participants. Tim Ingold observes that while 'Wind and *wind* are of course the same word' (Ingold 2017, 431), the 'draft of the air' that is wind and the 'turning of the whirl' that *winds* have acquired different conceptual functions, one creative and one destructive; 'if the gyre of the *wind* gives rise to things, that of the wind can rip them asunder' (430–1).

This winding paper attends to theatrical events in relation to their windy theatre architectures, pausing to reflect on some resulting affects. The mode of our collaborative writing is inspired by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Lowell Duckert's expansive proposition for an ecology that 'veers', with the 'wind's swirling motion' aptly conveying the 'swift change[s] of subject or direction' that the verb 'to veer' implies (Cohen and Duckert 2017, 3). Accepting their challenge to keep our verb 'wind' alive, and to think of the noun in terms of movement, we seek to ride the currents of a windy ecodramaturgy that 'transport[s] toward the unexpected' rather than 'freezing' it into a 'concept' (6). Ours is not an attempt to schematise an ecodramaturgy of wind, but rather to identify the potential of such aerially attuned apprehension in relation to the creative route described by Barba, wherein equilibrium emerges amid and through arhythmic turbulence.

We begin our hypothetical ecodramaturgy of the wind with William Shakespeare and George Wilkins's *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (*c*. 2017).[1] Both the creative and destructive wind/*wind* that Ingold notes are simultaneously in play within *Pericles*: a maritime drama that wends towards its wind-blown conclusion in notoriously *windy* fashion, and never more so that when its airy conceits are embodied within the wind-infused spaces of the open-air theatre. The literary and theatrical text comes to us already bearing traces of violence, since to consider *Pericles* is to encounter serious ethical issues relating to its composition. It is likely that Shakespeare's co-author was the same George Wilkins who was later accused of 'abusinge one Randall Borkes and kikkinge a woman on the Belly which was then greate with childe' (quoted in Prior 1972, 144), as well as other instances of violence towards women (147, 150; Parr 2004). A 1611 legal proceeding against the London innkeeper and dramatist further hints that by this date he may have been keeping a brothel (Prior 1972, 138, 146–7). The recorded charges post-date Wilkins's involvement with *Pericles*, but such events have a troubling bearing on aspects of this co-authored play that, while consistent with prevalent early modern ideologies, often disturb present-day readers and audiences: specifically, the representation of the rape attempts against Marina and the double standard suggested by her paternally-arranged betrothal to Lysimachus (Gillen 2017, 61–2; Gossett 2017, 52; Helms 1990, 330–2). The play's difficult subject matter might in turn be inflected by and complicit in environmental violence. For instance, Marina's abduction is facilitated by a 'quick' and 'piercing' breeze that figures the prospect of both deadly assault and forced impregnation (Shakespeare and Wilkins 2017, 15.79–80), while the abusive brothel-owners implicitly contrast her 'wind-proof' virginity to the denigrated physicality of those previously enslaved: 'The stuff we have, a strong wind will blow it to pieces, they are so pitifully sodden' (16.17–8).

When *Pericles* is restaged, it is often declared 'relevant' because of its references to sex trafficking, Mediterranean crossings, refugees, displacement, and extreme weather. Aspects of *Pericles* that have historically attracted criticism, including its collaborative genesis and narrative 'excesses, redundancies, absences, and queer resistances', have been productively reassessed in recent years (see for instance Gossett 2006; O'Malley 2011, 267–8). Such critical interventions might also prompt a renewed attunement to the play's environmental possibilities. In his consideration of wind in *Pericles*, Jones for instance discovers that the play-text 'creates its own weather dynamic' (2015, 85): an insight that is crucial for our wind-centred reading. What might it mean, then, to approach *Pericles* with an aerially infused ecodramaturgical awareness – to think about this play as a *play* of airs, breaths, winds? Encountering this play as a written and performed text, we are struck immediately by the intricate currents that *wind* through the episodic narrative – currents of action and breath-guided dialogue mingling, twining through and above and under and about the fictive breezes of an imagined Mediterranean, as well perhaps as through and around the actual draughts of an open-air theatre. We offer our reading in the hope that it might likewise suggest the prospect of better apprehending the environment – even, or perhaps especially, when it comes to works that are difficult to encounter in performance.

Pericles is thought to have been performed for the first time in 1607, at the first Globe playhouse (Wiggins and Richardson 2020, 413). By this time, the King's Men had potentially established a reputation for meteorologically attentive drama, with the winds of *Pericles* preceded by the storms and tempests of *Othello* (*c*. 1604), *King Lear* (*c*. 1605), and

Antony and Cleopatra (*c*. 1606). Their playhouse would have been comparatively open to aerial currents, with an unroofed central yard, small unglazed windows, and gaps in the wattle-and-daub walls admitting draughts and gusts to stir the air. Such breezes may have brought welcome relief to those crammed inside, with one contemporary satirical author describing how London playgoers at smaller venues could find themselves 'glewed together in crowdes with. . . Steames of strong breath' (Dekker 1606, E2r) – although, as Bruce Smith has argued, the ratio of air to playgoers was probably more generous at the first Globe than it is at London's modern indoor theatres (Smith 1999, 211).

Today, *Pericles* remains associated with open-air as well as indoor performance. Prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which prompted significant reconsideration of the air's presence in theatrical and other contexts, 2019 saw two memorably wind-infused UK productions of Shakespeare and Wilkins's play: one directed by Brendan O'Hea for Shakespeare's Globe on Tour at the coastal Minack, and another directed by Sue Best and Ian Yeoman at the living Willow Globe. These amphitheatre venues, which partnered with us on the Arts and Humanities Research Council project through which we experienced the productions, *Atmospheric Theatre: Open Air Performance and the Environment* (2018–2021), have distinctive and striking aeolian profiles. The Willow Globe, for example, filters wind through leafy arches that move visibly as they give voice to the air. Here, the density of the leaves alters the sound of the wind in response to seasonal growth and changes in the weather. Unlike London's Wooden O, where encircling walls offer some shelter, the wind blows any which way at the Willow Globe; it catches inhabitants, tussling hair, nagging at the backs of coats and tickling feet and faces. In 2019, as we will discuss, one of the Willow Globe performances of *Pericles* we attended unfolded in stillness and another took place in windier conditions, while a further performance was abandoned for a tent when it started to rain before Pericles's first shipwreck. At the uninterrupted, uncovered performances, however, many audience members referred to the air as 'pleasant to breathe', suggesting a widely shared perception of this playhouse's relationship with the local environment.[2]

In the week immediately following the Willow Globe's production, we attended a blustery run of Shakespeare's Globe on Tour's *Pericles* at Minack. Minack's amphitheatre faces the Atlantic and is exposed to occasional onshore easterlies, which came in from the sea that week. The human backs of audience members limpeted to the stone seats, faces tenses and bodies braced, excepting the occasional efficient tightening of a hood or zipping up of a coat. The gales were so strong ahead of one performance that those with tickets in the higher terraces were offered refunds. In this instance, many theatregoers referred to a 'clean, sea air', frequently using the terms 'fresh' and 'bracing' knowingly alongside their comments on the wind's unavoidably blustery presence.

The dramatic text of *Pericles* seems to anticipate such weather-consciousness. Shakespeare and Wilkins's play is shaped by the imagined force of the fictive winds, which drive the narrative 'from coast to coast' and scene to scene (Shakespeare and Wilkins 2017, 2.0.34). Their gusting power pervades what Gower (a narrator who 'sing[s]' from beyond the grave) characterises as the 'gaps' between the 'stages of our story' (4.4.8–9), blowing strongly from and through choral passages that chart the protagonist's progress through the Mediterranean basin. Yet, in an implicit rebuttal of the cartographic orthodoxy that treated Mediterranean air currents as reliable (Brayton 2012, 176), these winds are not linear, or even perhaps

consistently cued by the authors, whose imaginations converge within the surviving play-text. Rather, they shift direction, pushing and pulling the play from the formal generic moorings of tragedy or comedy and into the expansive, eddying, currents of romance: a mode which – the Roman philosopher Plutarch had warned – might 'spred and swell unmeasurably' (1603, B4r). These winds hint at a drama that is not only concerned with words or actions presented onstage or in print, but which also attends to the aerial matter that we breathe in, breathe out, and absorb into our bodies and our minds.

Of course, dramatic texts spoken aloud by human actors translate breath to sound in an exchange of air, altering the material composition of that air with each utterance. During Shakespeare and Wilkins's lifetime, a still-influential humoral tradition emphasised the correspondence between 'inner' air, or breath, and the 'outer' winds that stirred the aerial environment (Kuriyama 1999, 246). Gina Bloom observes that the terms 'wind' and 'breath' could be used interchangeably (Bloom 2007, 87): her examples include a passage from Thomas Wright's *Passions of the Mind* (1604), in which Wright marvels that 'out of the same mouth should issue a cold wind to coole the hot pottage, and a hot breath to warme the cold hands' (M1v-M2r). As Bloom argues, Shakespeare's theatrical awareness of such discourses intersects with a keen attention to the production and transmission of spoken words, and to the circumstances (such as a windy day) in which verbal communication might be compromised: 'as is the case with wind, the qualities of breath that seem to compromise its power – unpredictable, fleeting, and ungovernable – are precisely the qualities that render it dangerous' (2007, 89). Modern playgoers also recognise the performative significance of this interplay between breath and air, even if we no longer search for humoral affinities. At the Willow Globe, the role of Gower was performed by an ensemble who delivered the text together, with passages occasionally broken up into individual lines and often performed in unison as song. Inside the theatre, the dispersed breath of this many-singing choral Gower altered the air as the ensemble moved between the audience and stage. Within the same production, the choreography of the Pentapolis-based dance involving the knights and Pericles further highlighted the relationship between the performers' breath and the moving air (see Kirwan 2019). Having beaten each of the knights in an individual duel, Pericles (Nathan Goode) again demonstrated his superior fitness in the dance: one by one, his knightly counterparts ran out of breath, dropping out or collapsing in exhaustion. The physical movements of the actors, as they performed this fast-paced dance, simultaneously stirred the air into which they expelled their breaths, reminding us that bodies moving through space also interfere with air currents, while audience whooping and applause for each of Pericles's successes further contributed to altering the material and affective atmosphere in the auditorium.

In the Shakespeare's Globe on Tour *Pericles*, Gower was conversely played by a single performer, Natasha Magigi, whose individual presence commanded focus and attention in the vast space of the Minack. Where the composition of the air was palpably altered by the performers inside the intimate Willow Globe, Magigi noted the size of the Minack stage and the opportunities it afforded to respond playfully to the performer's sense of smallness when confronted by strong winds:

> *Pericles* has a lot of references to sea travel as well as storms and winds and gales and whilst we were at the Minack we experienced all of them – [. . .] it was a very playful space for that

> show, so we were able to make reference to the things that we were talking about. (Sharp 2022)

Magigi also recalled the challenges involved in being heard during this unexpectedly windy run. While performing at Minack, she learned from experience how to interpret and respond to the different wind strengths and directions, developing her vocal technique and movements in relation to the floor microphones on the stage:

> [P]articularly on those windy days, the need to be heard was even greater, because you would, you would speak and have your voice thrown back at you or you'd hear your voice kind of fly past you. So thankfully the Minack is miked in certain spaces, so learning how that worked in relation to the direction the wind was blowing, it became a technical exercise as well as an actual performance. (Sharp 2022)

For Magigi, the experience of performing *Pericles* at Minack added 'an urgency and a reality… that didn't exist in other spaces because of the specific nature of the Minack and the particular weather experiences that we were having' (Sharp 2022).

Pericles is a play whose performance aesthetic is defined by what Jones, paraphrasing Marina, terms its conception of the world as a 'lasting storm' (2015, 124). The complex relationship between the words of the play-text and the winds the drama evokes is apparent within the storms that frame Pericles's introduction to and seeming loss of his wife, Thaisa. The first grows from Gower's announcement that 'now the wind begins to blow' (Shakespeare and Wilkins 2017, 2.0.29), and the second from his statement that '[t]he grizzled north/Disgorges such a tempest forth' (3.0.47–8); the 'bounteous winds' that will carry the king to Tarsus, and later drive him unwittingly to 'where his daughter dwells', likewise originate with Gower's words (4.4.17; 5.0.15). This shared choral genesis implies an analogical continuity between the fictive winds and the breath of those who evoke their presence, as Shakespeare and Wilkins's imagery elides the distinction between maritime and theatrical transportation. Repeated exhortations for the play's audiences and readers to let dramatic 'thought' 'pilot' their imaginations from 'bourn to bourn' reflect an early modern tradition that attributed human cognitive and emotive reactions to the internal operation of 'airy' pneumatic spirits (4.4.18; 4.4.3–4), while the fictional Gower's crediting of his drama's 'fast-growing scene[s]' to 'fancies' that fill both fictional 'sails' and the theatre stage registers breath's performative significance as the element through which the actors 'convey' the play's dialogue (4.0.5; 5.2.15–20; 4.0.49). At the same time, that connection between fictive winds and the actors' words destabilises the two airborne modes, introducing textual allusions to the possibility of impeded transmission, and of winds that faintly ebb away or whose crossing forces leave devastation in their wake.

At the Willow Globe, Pericles was cast into the first storm by the Gower ensemble, who waved squares of sea-coloured fabric up and down at increasing speed as they spoke and then encircled him, removing his stately clothing and revealing him in his undergarments, cold, shipwrecked and alone in Pentapolis, standing centre stage in a small pile of the discarded blue and green fabrics. As Goode spoke, his rigidly held upper body and breathy vocal intonation suggested the experience of a body in the immediate aftermath of a storm. We witnessed him speaking *during* the second storm, with Goode staggering back and forth between stage left and right – and calling to Lychorida and Thaisa offstage – as though the ship were tossing him violently from side to side. A lull enabled

him to stand still while Lychorida brought the new-born Marina and news of Thaisa's death, after which he continued to stagger across the imagined deck with the baby in his arms. At both 2019 performances, the real weather clashed to varying degrees with Goode's vocalised and embodied depiction of the storm. Yet, in alignment with Jones's observation that experiencing early modern texts in open-air performance stratifies the weather 'beyond a real/theatrical binary' (2015, 9–13), theatregoers nevertheless commented on how 'fitting', 'appropriate', and 'evocative' the weather had been for the storm scenes, regardless of the wind's local force or direction. The real wind in the theatre gestured towards *Pericles*'s fictive winds as well as suggesting the historical winds invoked by the play's imagined real-world context. The partial representation of the dramatic storms, more movement than mimesis, signalled creative life unfolding in the equilibrium of the 'real' wind. Furthermore, because this real wind *could* theoretically perform the power of the fictive winds in the play on another occasion, it pointed out what winds *can* do.

It was a similar story at Minack, where theatregoers commented on the appropriateness of encountering *Pericles*'s subject matter at the sea-facing theatre. In O'Hea's production, during the second storm Pericles (Colin Campbell) and Lychorida (Evelyn Miller) clutched the pillars and walls of the stage. The former punctuated his speech with coordinated moments of falling, grabbing onto the floor of the stage in response to the fictive storm. Miller dramatically clung onto the ship, using extraordinary physical exertion to keep hold of the new-born Marina. Campbell and Miller moved in counterpoint with the real – and also rough – winds on the stage in that moment. Many audience members picked up on the layering of fictive wind over the real one, observing the performers' attempts to find an equilibrium within which they could persist with the story. Some commented on the tenacity of the performers, with one individual inferring that the blustery conditions injected more 'life' into the performance: 'I think it's a miracle they're doing it in this wind [. . .] I think it [the wind] brought it more alive really'. Others noted a comedic aspect to witnessing the performers' attempts to sustain the fiction of the storms while negotiating the real-life conditions. One individual remarked that '[the wind] was blowing over the props and stuff which was fun', and another commented that 'the fact the play had so many references to the wind was quite funny [. . .] very amusing'. That humour bubbled up as a response to observing the theatrical experience come into being via struggles with the weather is clearly, at least in part, testament to the relative safety of the performance event for all involved, but it also suggests the capacity of the performers to use the play to highlight their own plight, as well as that of the characters depicted at sea. In connecting their necessary adaptations to the fiction of the storms in which Pericles is caught, the experience of this performance drew attention to the potential to pursue a creative route through turbulent gusts, while apprehended by the wind. As another theatregoer summarised: '*Pericles* is all about the storms and the weather and being out at sea and with the scenery and the sea behind, the wind coming in and all the jokes they made meant they could adapt it to work'.

During the breezier Willow Globe performance, the impact of the wind's presence was also felt at the moment of Thaisa's recovery, with gusts of wind entering the auditorium from the tiring house behind the stage just as this character (played by Aimee Corbett) was revived by Cerimon (Carole Walsh). For some playgoers, the perceptible presence of this breeze may even have suggested a freshened post-storm atmosphere, with Cerimon's

scripted lines drawing a close association between the play's fictive air and good health. While his servants work to open the salvaged chest that holds Thaisa, the fictional physician notes how 'sweetly' it 'smells' and reports that Thaisa's body is '[b]almed and entreasured with full bags of spices' (Shakespeare and Wilkins 2017, 3.2.59–60, 3.2.64). For early modern audiences, this 'delicate odour' might have at once evoked the threat of contagion and its cure (3.2.61); although numerous contemporary physicians prescribed perfume as a remedy for airborne diseases, especially the plague, Holly Dugan has shown that the masking effect of such sweet scents could in turn become a threat (Bullein 1579, Ccc6r; Lodge 1603, C4r; Dugan 2011, 102). As the scene continues, the doubled sensory effect intensifies. Cerimon's call for fire to revive Thaisa implies the onstage use of incense (Shakespeare and Wilkins 2017, 3.2.89, 3.2.96), suggesting that early audiences would have been perceptibly immersed in the fumes that facilitate Thaisa's fictional resurrection.[3] Such effects are common in present-day productions, with the drifting smoke hinting at an implicit narrative continuity between the winds that carry Thaisa to shore and her quasi-magical restoration. Yet Shakespeare and Wilkins seemingly anticipated that these fumes, whether staged or imagined, would disperse swiftly (or be fanned away by the company's players), with only four lines of dialogue separating the reported arrival of the 'fire' from Cerimon's instruction that those gathered around Thaisa should 'give her air' (3.2.90). In early performances, this dialogue prompt could have acknowledged prospective ambivalence about the use of a practice historically associated with Roman Catholic liturgy (Harris 2007, esp. 482–4), as well as the potentially crowded and smoky atmosphere of the actual playhouse. Whereas confessional debates around the use of incense are likely to have less collective weight today, present-day audiences can experience a similar tension between the stage use of incense and a restorative faith in 'fresh' theatrical air: during one 2019 Willow Globe performance, for instance, a playgoer coughing in the incense fumes that wafted from the stage met Cerimon's request for air with a muttered 'Give *me* air'.

Those experiencing this episode in equally windy conditions at Minack suggested that the resulting gusts of air had disrupted their response to the onstage use of incense. The visually-cued scent dispersed quickly within the large open space, leading a young adult playgoer who discussed the 2019 production with our project's education consultant, Sarah Sharp, to conclude that '[t]hey woke her [Thaisa] up because of the smell but we couldn't actually smell it'. Another member of this group suggested that the ambient smellscape had overwhelmed the staged effect: 'loads of people had curries so you could smell that, and now all I can smell is chocolate and tea'. Such responses reflect the complex relationship that can emerge between fictive and playhouse environments, as well as the potential dissonances. At times, the pronouncedly windy conditions at the Minack unsettled the perceived connection between air-freshening incursions and Thaisa's recovery by forecasting continued aeolian violence: during one performance, the wind snapped the lid of the coffin shut with a bang shortly after Thaisa (Mogali Masuku) stepped out of it, and the lid proceeded to flap open and shut audibly until the performers could carry it off stage. Yet those experiencing another windy *Pericles* at Minack spoke frequently of beneficial 'fresh air', eliding distinctions between fictive and actual atmospheres as they contemplated the wind's doubled capacity to refresh playgoers and performance. *Pericles* director Sue Best reflected, with reference to the pre-pandemic Willow Globe production, that

being packed into a crowded playhouse – 'too many people breathing it [air] in all around you – breathing contaminated air OUT' – might further attune audience members to the fictive experience of the prematurely entombed Thaisa: 'so closely "caulked and bitumed" there was just enough air inside and over and around her still to sustain her', until she was 'borne by the waves and wind to Ephesus' to 'find life and air again'. In this interpretation, 'the inrush of fresh air when that [coffin] lid was lifted' at once overwhelms and refreshes the playhouse atmosphere, with Best observing that the performance conditions – 'the whisper of the willows, the rain when it filled the air' – converged with the 'wild wind' and 'driven sea' of *Pericles* to catch and hold the audience in an 'all pervasive' 'cradle of air'.

This image of the amphitheatre as a 'cradle of air', in which turbulent winds and moments of equilibrium co-exist, also suggestively aligns the audience's experience with that of the fictional Marina. 'Born in a tempest' and named for the sea, Pericles's and Thaisa's daughter epitomises this play's fascination with a windy, winding dramaturgy that fluctuates between threat and salvation (Shakespeare and Wilkins 2017, 4.1.17). As noted above, Marina perceives the aeolian forces that accompany her birth (and her mother's presumed death) as an impediment, likening her life to a 'lasting storm/Whirring me from my friends' (4.1.18–9). That perception is reinforced when the pirates who abduct her from the shores of Tarsus sell her to a brothel-owner in Mytilene; as Jones observes, this episode extends a connection between sexual violation and storms that was hinted at in the play's opening scenes (Jones 2015, 112). Yet Marina's ability to deflect her would-be rapists with cunning eloquence simultaneously suggests an indirect channelling of the play's pneumatic forces. Even her abduction serves the paradoxically beneficial purpose of forestalling Leonine's assassination attempt and removing her from the murderous Queen Dionyza's sphere of influence. The scene's aeolian imagery reinforces this duality by first raising and then deflecting the threat of airborne contagion. After the deceitful queen sends her to walk the sea-margent with Leonine, Marina demonstrates her discursive ability to fashion a fictive breeze, bringing the refreshing wind into imaginative presence as she demands of her companion: 'Is this wind westerly that blows?' (Shakespeare and Wilkins 2017, 4.1.49). Leonine's response that it comes from the '[s]outh-west' would have been a foreboding clarification for *Pericles*'s original audiences (4.1.49), anticipating both his planned treachery and the imminent assault on Marina. By introducing the spectre of the southerly wind that 'passeth by the sea Mediterrane' and was historically considered a 'putrifactive' carrier of plague (Lowe 1597, E1r), Shakespeare and Wilkins pre-emptively evoke the 'rotten' atmosphere of the brothel to which Marina is forcibly transported (4.2.8). This ominous change in the imagined aerial environment probably resonated strongly with early audiences, since contemporary moralists denounced the brothels and playhouses of London's South Bank as a nexus of spiritual and medical contagion (Gosson 1579, B6v-B7r; Stubbes 1583, L8r-L8v). Shakespeare and Wilkins even characterise breath-fashioned words as a prospectively polluting force within their dialogue: Marina rebukes Bolt, the brothel's porter, for exposing his ears to 'the choleric fisting', belching, and 'infected lungs' of 'every rogue' (Shakespeare and Wilkins 2017, 4.3.170–2). While such imagery recalls her father's prior gibes about Rumour's dust-generating 'breath' (1.1.98), Marina herself becomes a purifying force whose 'piercing' words translate the freshening power of the meteorological wind into discursive power (4.2.27). Thus for Marina, as for Thaisa, the windy forces of *Pericles* are at

once threatening and a prospective source of dramatic agency, as these characters find moments of equilibrium within atmospheric turbulence.

Where Gower is the first character to associate theatrical and pneumatic power and Pericles is the most physically exposed to the fictive wind, Thaisa and Marina's experience and negotiation of its pervasive, dangerous influence deepens Shakespeare and Wilkins's proto-ecodramaturgical attention to the moving air. The narrative significance of their play's frequently troubled atmosphere, and the multivalent resonances that can emerge in present-day performance, suggest that these implicitly providential winds cannot be dismissed as merely the environmental backdrop to a human drama.[4] Rather, the play's characters are required to recognise the theatrical air's disruptive presence, just as their presenters and audiences might be blown by ambient breezes, gusts, and gales. These forces are ostensibly calmed in the play's closing moments, when the musical airs sung by Marina give way to 'heavenly music' that prompts Pericles to dream of Diana and Thaisa (Shakespeare and Wilkins 2017, 5.1.220). Although the characters' divergent perceptions of the latter music can be used in performance to cast doubt on Pericles's interpretation, the dialogic implication that Diana shares Gower's powers of dramatic transportation invites recognition of this dream's transformative effect: Pericles wakes talking of the already 'blown sails' that will bear him to Ephesus (5.1.242), and he enjoys an unprecedentedly direct voyage to his destination and his reunion with Thaisa. Thus, as 'the selfe same winde and fortune/That parted them … bring them altogether' (Heywood 1632, C1r), Shakespeare and Wilkins conclude their drama by stressing the wind's rejuvenating force, with threatening storms clearing in the quickened air – and the freshening breeze of audience applause correcting the earlier tempest's '[w]hirring impact' (Shakespeare and Wilkins 2017, 15.72). Yet this conclusion relies on Pericles and Marina surrendering their own agency to that of the air currents that direct their ship and might be further complicated by audience perceptions of the weather conditions in which the performers and playgoers are still immersed. Moreover, the embedded promise of aeolian redemption relies upon anticipated – not secured – applause. At the Willow Globe, the revelations and reunions in Ephesus unfolded as the summer-grown willow rods bounced and swayed over the top of the tiring house, their full-green leaves voicing an energised and foreboding susurrus that segued into the claps of the audience members: there was a sense that life goes on, in windy weather. At the same time, *Pericles*'s open ending can anticipate interpretative tensions that linger in its aftermath. One disconcerted theatregoer at Minack, carefully ascending the treacherous cliffside steps back to her car, remarked breathlessly that 'He [Pericles] spent more time asking her [Marina] to prove herself than hugging her'. To *wind*, it seems, is to embrace the possibility of theatrical disaster – to accept a displacement of responsibility, of experience, onto those who breathe forth this co-conceived play or are battered by the fictive and actual gusts and draughts of performance.

In her feminist rebuke to the earth-bound phenomenology of Martin Heidegger, Luce Irigaray ventures that 'Since air never takes place in the mode of an "entry into presence" – except in wind? – the philosopher can think that there is nothing but absence there, for in air he does not come up against a being or a thing' (1999, 9). Irigaray's parenthetical question '—except in wind? —' remains just that: parenthesis. Yet if, as she proposes, air doesn't take place in the mode of an entry into presence (perhaps because wind is already presence), if wind enters presence as air, then there is space to consider whether wind

might consequently push an ecodramaturgy that turns perceptibility to the perception and even the *apprehension* of a collision between the fictitious and the actual. The wind's status as air in motion is especially suggestive, gesturing to possible aeolian intrusions and upheavals; even a gentle breeze makes its presence known through tactile, gustatory, olfactory, and auditory impressions, or the visual cue of objects blowing in its wake (Griffero 2017, 9). We return again to the wind's capacity to trouble spatial and temporal trajectories, at once exposing fictional and actual subjects to the immediate violence of its gusts and prospectively evoking the 'slow violence' of environmental degeneration through our apprehension of its long-running, unpredictably paced, and often disorientating influence within and beyond the world of the play (Nixon 2011, 14).

This is not to propose that *Pericles* is an exemplar for an ecodramaturgy of the wind – as though the historical text puffs into the unprecedented present – but rather an invitation to apprehend and be apprehended by the moving air. Nor are we suggesting that only the indicative *open-air* performance spaces we discuss make apparent the prevailing possibilities for a windy ecodramaturgy, or that they always do so. Francis Bacon – an unlikely advocate for wind as creative inspiration – fancied that the winds 'perform dances', adding that 'it would be delightful to know the steps' (2007, 27). Yet even as Bacon anthropomorphises the wind as a dancer, he declares its choreography unknown. Western anthropocene society is widely regarded as out of sync with the wind, having never really learnt the steps.

The Francis more commonly associated with the wind is of course the Irish hydrographer and British Navy Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort, who introduced his 'Beaufort Scale' in 1805 to enable sailors to make visual assessments of wind force. The Beaufort scale, ranging from a 'calm and still' reading at 1 to 'hurricane' at 12, is still widely used for weather reporting; in many respects, Beaufort's desire to apply order to disorderly forces accords with an ongoing human desire to manage the uncontrollable weather. We sidestep any attempt to classify an ecodramaturgy of the wind along similar lines to Beaufort and instead alight upon a more improvisational suspension, mid-turbulence: a dropping and rising equilibrium within which 'vortexes that upset that current of narrative action' are not only necessary for creative production (Barba 2000, 62), but also possible. An ecodramaturgy of the wind acknowledges that we are dancing, storm-chasing, grasping for the assemblage of the historical text, its fictitious winds, the architecture and aerial environments of the spaces in which we encounter the play today, and audience experiences of the theatrical event. A windy ecodramaturgy might ultimately connect dramatic structure with such modes of encounter, demonstrating the creative potential of an equilibrium that cannot be recovered by human design or intent, but only lived in – for better or worse, to greater and lesser extents – and haphazardly felt.

Notes

1. See (Gossett 2017), 55–70, on the case for Wilkins as co-author.
2. The method for gathering audience feedback at these events was ethnographic. The quotations from audience members in this paper are drawn from a combination of recorded semi-structured interval and post-performance interviews, a post-performance online survey, and visual observations. We conducted this research between 2018 and 2021 as part of the AHRC-funded project, *Atmospheric Theatre: Open-Air Performance and the Environment*. All participants have provided informed consent for their opinions to be quoted within this publication, either anonymously or by name, in line with the project ethics policy that was approved

by the University of Exeter's College of Humanities Ethics Board and declared to the AHRC. We are grateful to those who shared their reflections on open-air performance with us, as well as to the AHRC for funding our research.

3. Cerimon initially calls for fire to be kindled 'within' (3.2.79), but his subsequent acknowledgement of 'fire and cloths' (3.2.86) and onstage revival of Thaisa suggest a perceptible effect. Several near-contemporary plays associated with the King's Men feature comparable effects: cf. Jonson, *Sejanus* (2014), 5.1.183 SD.
4. For a more detailed discussion of the potential religious significance of winds in *Pericles*, see (Jones 2015), esp. 108–24.

Data availability statement

The main research data supporting this publication are provided within this paper. Complementary research data that are alluded to but not quoted in this publication are not publicly available due to ethical considerations.

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