

Performing and Perfuming on the Early Modern Stage: A Study of William Lower's *The Phaenix in Her Flames*

Colleen E. Kennedy

Abstract: This article attempts to do two things: first, to create a catalogue and vocabulary of the different types of odors encountered in the early modern theatre, as this type of taxonomical work is essential for a full and nuanced discussion of (im)material smells and their use as stage properties. Building upon studies of Renaissance material culture and sensory studies, this article creates a historical-phenomenological study of how scents were important to the early modern theatre. Secondly, by studying the use of incense as a stage property in the relatively neglected Caroline tragedy, William Lower's *The Phaenix in Her Flames* (1639), this article claims that Lower strategically and innovatively uses incense on the stage to not only create an exotic setting, but also to demonstrate characterization through somatic identification, and to even allude to contemporary church practices and political issues.



Incense, perfume, and other essential odors are frustratingly difficult for the researcher of early modern literature and culture to define, represent, or catalogue. Scents oscillate between material and immaterial realms in ways that few other items do. On the one hand, we still have material artifacts—thuribles, pomanders, and perfume bottles from this

period—but on the other hand, because smell is so ephemeral, we don't have many olfactory remains. Furthermore, scent, then as now, is connected with memory, passion, divinity, and other intangible states of being, rather than as a simple material commodity. There are no extant whiffs of the past, but we cannot deny that there were artifacts, bodies, and materials that emitted odors that created an effect on the early modern olfactory imagination.

This essay attempts to do two things: first, I will try to create a catalogue and vocabulary of the different types of odors encountered in the early modern theatre; this type of taxonomical work is essential for a full and nuanced discussion of (im)material smells and their use as stage properties. Secondly, I analyze the use of incense as a staged property in the relatively neglected Caroline tragedy, *the Phaenix in Her Flames*. This essay builds upon the intersection of Renaissance drama and material culture as found in the works of Peter Stallybrass, Jonathan Gil Harris, and Catherine Richardson, as well as the more recent interest in sensory studies and its implications for reading Renaissance drama.¹ I argue that the use of staged odors is complex and possibly overdetermined, because incense, unlike a prop bed or sword, has a world of olfactory significance that belies its simple categorization as another staged property. William Lower, author of *The Phaenix in Her Flames*, blends together in one sniff of frankincense contemporary church practices, ancient mythological beliefs, and innovative staging techniques.

Holly Dugan claims that “a sixteenth-century stage devoid of smell is anachronistic.”² In her article, “Scent of a Woman: Performing the Politics of Scent in Late Medieval and Early Modern England,” she discusses three effluvious plays, the fifteenth century miracle play, the Digby *Mary Magdelene*, alongside two more well-known plays, Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Twelfth Night*. Although her study begins with the use of actual aromatics employed for theatrical events and occasions—royal coronations and entries, the masques and revels of nobility, mayoral processions, and other large scale civic events—when she focuses on

Shakespeare's plays and their odoriferous female characters, she refers not to staged scents but rather metaphoric representations of odor.

In contrast to this tendency to represent odors metaphorically, Jonathan Gil Harris takes the opposite route in his chapter "The Smell of Gunpowder: *Macbeth* and the Palimpsests of Olfaction" from *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare*. Although Harris does consider some of Shakespeare's references to smells within *Macbeth*, Harris' argument pertains to expanding the considerations of early modern materiality beyond the physicality of objects and including the "equally material human sensuous activity."³ The stench of the squibs, concocted of explosives and dung, used for the staged storm scenes in *Macbeth* are conflated with the audiences' recent memories of the Gunpowder Plot and King James' nimble nose which allegedly smelt out the plot. At the same time, the squib's sulfurous smell reenacts a nostalgia for Catholic "Harrowing of Hell" style plays and the lack of "smells and bells" in the Anglican church. Harris claims that Shakespeare's staged scents subvert the inodorous Anglican Church by recreating the scents associated with Catholicism and rebellion.

In Dugan's essay, staged smells are tantalizingly mentioned in the redolent civic entertainments, but, excepting in characters' speeches, seem conspicuously absent from her bold claim that the early modern stage was odoriferous; in Harris' work, on the other hand, the socio-political, religious, temporal, and ethical significations of staged stench ignores the possibility that the reek is simply just the aftereffect of the thunderous audio effect of the squib. Somewhere in the middle, we can create an argument that marries together the representations of odor on the early modern stage in all of its symbolic and metaphoric capacities to a study of how scent was to be purposely utilized as a staged property to create an exotic and Oriental atmosphere, while also alluding to current and controversial church practices.

William Lower's tragedy *The Phaenix in Her Flames* (1639) is an ideal play to study in this dual context as the characters continuously speak of

smells even as the incense is burnt on the stage to create such odors, that is, perfumes are not only mentioned on the stage—what I call “represented odors”—but are actually performed as staged properties—what I refer to as “diegetic odors,” which are discussed in more detail in the next section. As the stage is perfumed and odors are performed, we can consider *The Phaenix*’s scents in both their “historical-phenomenological” and “symbolic” meanings, which in the case of this play encompass everything from geography to characters’ morality and humoral nature, and from ancient mythological and Biblical references to cotemporary political and religious issues.⁴

Cataloguing Smells in the Early Modern Theatre

Holly Dugan’s assertion that the early modern “stage devoid of smells is anachronistic” is completely true.⁵ Nevertheless, many scholars of early modern drama focus more on the visual and aural aspects so that the importance of the olfactory imagination on the early modern stage is still relegated to the sensuous periphery.⁶ The sense of smell is as Helen Keller claimed, the “fallen angel... neglected and disparaged”; Jim Drobnick notes that smell is “mired in paradox,” as it is both considered animalistic and yet divine. Diane Ackerman claims, “nothing is more memorable than a smell” and Rachel Herz declares that, “more than any other sensory experience, fragrances have the ability to trigger our emotions: to fill us with joy and rage, to bring us to tears and make our hearts ache, to incite us with terror, and to titillate our desires.”⁷ Scholars such as Alain Corbin and Mark Jenner claim that in the pre-deodorized Renaissance, smells were both more common and stronger but also more pertinent to daily life.⁸ Nevertheless, very few Renaissance scholars have really studied this essential and varied sense, or the materials that produced such odors.

The vocabulary for smells is lacking and calls for the creation of a system that defines early modern theatrical odors. The following is a catalogue of the types of smells encountered or represented on the early

modern stage.⁹ I have created this taxonomy to categorize different types of smells in Renaissance drama, and I have given specific examples for and elaborated on each category after the initial working definitions below:

1. *coincidental smells*, the unintended and non-theatrical environmental scents one could encounter at the theatre
2. *represented smells*, odors encountered and/or discussed by the characters in the fictive world but not smelt by the audience
3. *non-diegetic or coincidental smells that may become diegetic smells* IF specifically addressed by characters within the drama
4. *diegetic smells*, scents specifically used as stage properties, smelt by the actors and/or audience members, and mentioned in the drama itself. Because the vocabulary to describe and discuss odors is limited, however, I have borrowed some terms such as “diegetic” and “non-diegetic” from film studies which indicate the use of music that correlates to the fictive narrative – characters turning on a radio – (diegetic) or is outside of that narrative – the musical score (non-diegetic).

Coincidental Smells: First, we can begin by considering all of the coincidental smells of the early modern theatre: body odors, such as sweat and the musky civet perfumes favored at this time; the smells of certain trades that clung to clothing, such as the materials used for tanning and leather work; the aromatics of certain clothing, such as sewn-in sachets, orange and clove pomanders, spiced smell-traps, and flowers worn in hats and on shoes; tobacco; the smell of the refreshments sold in the theatres, such as apples, nuts, and ale; and the musty smell of wet straw underfoot mingled with stale urine.¹⁰ The intensity of and types of smells would vary from amphitheatre to hall playhouse. This, of course, is not a comprehensive list of the odors encountered but introduces the concept of coincidental odors within the theatre.

Represented Smells: Secondly, we can regard the represented smells of the early modern period, which can be further divided into three

subcategories: represented bodily/personal odors, stage properties' odors, and metaphoric odors. Many of these smells are the body odors or perfumes associated with specific characters, such as the smells of the female characters in Dugan's study: the contradictory "exotic, profane, and holy" aromatics associated with the promiscuous but redeemed Mary Magdalene; the unnamed but "swift, strong, and intoxicating" aromas of Cleopatra; and the "reeking" miasma of Olivia.¹¹ Characters comment on and are affected by the fragrances of these women, but the audience cannot smell the implied scent of the actors playing these odiferous parts. We might place King Lear whose hand "smells of mortality" or *The Merry Wives of Windsor's* Master Fenton who smells of "April and May" in this category of represented odors.¹² These represented odors allow the audience to make olfactory judgments about the characters based on generally accepted notions of how certain people should smell, but the actors themselves are not necessarily producing the same effluvia as the characters they portray. The function of most of these represented odors is to create an olfactory shorthand to identify a character quickly, based on presumptions of how a person smelled according to his or her class, gender, nationality, occupation, or moral character.¹³ While this type of olfactory imagery is not different than any other type of sensory imagery employed to complicate characters or plot, the importance in outlining this category is to differentiate it from odors actually employed upon stage as outlined in the sections below.

We can also place (possibly) inodorous stage properties that are represented as odorous in this same category. In *Much Ado About Nothing*, Hero receives a pair of scented gloves as a love-token. She sniffs them and enjoys the scent; her cousin, Beatrice has a cold and cannot (3.4.57-59).¹⁴ The audience can never tell whether the staged property is actually perfumed or not, but within the fictive world, the gloves are scented. Hero, the conventional romantic heroine is susceptible to romantic scents, while the more stubborn and independent Beatrice cannot be moved by the scent of love.

In another instance of a staged property represented as redolent, a disguised Barabas, from Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*, poisons his disloyal servant Ithamore, a courtesan, and her pimp with a noxious bouquet of posies. As the three villains sniff the bouquet and comment on its scent—which varies from Bellamira and Ithamore's approval ("How sweet, my Ithamore, the flowers smell!" and "Like thy breath sweetheart; no violet like 'em," respectively) to Pilla-Borza's complaint ("Foh! Methinks they stink like a hollyhock!")—Barabas laughs and tells his enemies, "So, now I am revenged upon 'em all. / The scent thereof was death; I poisoned it" (4.4.41-46).¹⁵ Again, the stage bouquet may consist of actual fragrant posies or inodorous silk flowers, but the characters within the world comment on the odors of the flowers imbibing them with symbolic intentionality; the fact that the flowers smell sweet to some and fetid to others may speak in general about the duplicitous nature of all the characters in this scene. Ithamore compares the aroma to the breath of a prostitute, possibly signaling that both are the sites of contagious disease.

Another type of represented odor is a mentioned odor that serves figurative, poetic, or dramatic function but is not associated with physical beings and objects on the stage. Juliet's claim, "What's in a name? That which we call a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet," creates a simile of smell (2.2.43-44).¹⁶ Juliet is not holding a flower as she states this line, but every audience member realizes that the quiddity of a rose is its fragrance and not its arbitrary name. The problems of *Hamlet* are concisely represented in Marcellus' mephitic declaration that, "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark" (1.4.90).¹⁷ Marcellus does not smell the putrid stench of the King's corpse nor the sexual reek of the incestuous pairing of Claudius and Gertrude; he simply uses the revolting simile to indicate that something has gone bad, and although the source has not yet been detected, the malodor allows others to realize that things are amiss.¹⁸ These types of smells are not associated with specific characters or stage objects necessarily, but rather are used to create a universal and visceral reaction in

the audience through their purely metaphoric representations; everyone knows that a rose smells sweet or that a hidden rotten thing reeks.

Coincidental or Non-Diegetic Smells That May Serve a Diegetic Purpose: Thirdly, we can consider coincidental smells that become diegetic smells.¹⁹ The primary use of squibs on the early modern stage would be to create the visual and auditory effect of thunder and lightning. The sulphurous stench, on the other hand, is a secondary aftereffect. When plays that use squibs or other explosives to create thunder and lightning or to recreate the sound of gunfire do not mention the aftereffects of stench, this sulfuric smell remains only a coincidental odor of the theatre. In the specific plays that Harris notes—Jonson’s *Cynthia’s Revels*, *Macbeth*, and many plays involving a devil, such as Marlowe’s *Dr. Faustus* and Barnabe Barnes’ *The Devil’s Charter*—these coincidental smells bleed over into diegetic smells as the stage directions (as in *The Devil’s Charter*) or the characters (as in *Macbeth* and *Cynthia’s Revels*) comment on the smell of sulfur.²⁰

Francis Beaumont’s experimental comedy, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, offers another example of how coincidental odors may become diegetic odors. Issues of metatheatricity are explored as the Citizen, his Wife, and their servant, Rafe—three characters of the “framework play” playing audience members—constantly intercede in the action of the play-within-the-play, critiquing the acting, rewriting scenes, and even becoming players. The Citizen’s Wife climbs onstage and addresses the seated gallants (paying customers of the play and not actors) to chide them for their smoking:

Fie, this stinking tobacco kills men! Would there none in England.
Now I pray, gentleman, what good does this stinking tobacco do
you? Nothing, I warrant. You make chimneys o’ your faces. (1.2.135-
139)²¹

In this example from *Burning Pestle*, the paying customers seated on the side of the stage smoke tobacco pipes smelt by other audience members

and the actors. These gallants become unwilling players as their habits are critiqued; even their smoky scents become olfactory players. Their tobacco, which would normally be only a coincidental smell of the theatre, becomes a diegetic odor as the actors acknowledge that they smell the smoke and openly comment on it.

Diegetic Smells: Finally, we have diegetic smells, odors where the source is part of the drama's narrative world and acknowledged on the stage by the characters. An obvious example would include Moll acknowledging the quality of the tobacco that the gallants (here these are actors playing gallants) smoke onstage at the tobacco shop in Middleton and Dekker's *The Roaring Girl* (2.1.178-210).²² As the characters within the play are actually smoking tobacco and not just speaking about it, the odorous property is represented verbally and staged. Audience members near the front of the stage may even be able to smell the smoke of the tobacco pipes at the very same time as Moll does.

In another example, at the end of Middleton's tragedy *Women Beware Women*, the treacherous characters decide to kill each other in decidedly Baroque over-the-top fashion during a wedding masque. The Duke is accidentally poisoned by a drink that an actor dressed as Ganymede, the cupbearer of the gods, hands to him; and his bride, Bianca, realizing she has killed her husband, drinks from the same cup. Isabella, an incestuous adulterous, is killed by melted gold thrown upon her during the masque by her aunt Livia. An innocent man, Guardiano, dies when the trapdoor intended for Hippolito, Isabella's uncle and lover, opens and he falls to his death. Hippolito succumbs to a poisoned arrow shot by a masquer dressed as Cupid. Isabella, dressed as a lovelorn nymph, lights incense to Juno, played by Livia, as part of the masque; unbeknownst to Livia, the incense has been poisoned by Isabella. It is this last poignant murder that is especially interesting for a consideration of staged smells as diegetic odors.²³

Isabella is dressed in "flowers and garlands" – possibly inodorous decorative cloth flowers – but she "bears a censor with a fire in it," an

obvious diegetic stage smell. She lights the incense to Juno, giving her prayer:

And after sighs, contrition's truest odors,
I offer to the powerful deity
this precious incense; may it ascend peacefully... (5.2.98-100)²⁴

In her entreaty, Isabella represents her breath as sacrificial odor. Even her state of "contrition," figuratively "crushed or broken in spirit," literally begins with the tactility of bruising or grinding aromatic spices.²⁵ Isabella's scented sighs are the aromas arising from her crushed heart; this is the "truest odor," and the diegetic odor of the incense is only a representation of her penitential essence.

What is particularly fascinating about this fragrant performance is that the incense is *represented* as poisoned, creating a potential threat to the audience. Even if the arrows, molten gold, and drinks were poisoned, the audience could not be affected unless these properties penetrated their bodies somehow; however, the incense would be inescapable. Diane Ackerman, in her *Natural History of the Senses*, notes that we cannot escape scent: "Cover your eyes and you will stop seeing, cover your ears and you will stop hearing, but if you cover your nose and try to stop smelling, you will die."²⁶ The scent of the incense if it *were* poisoned would kill the entire audience, as the audience cannot avoid smelling the fumes.²⁷ Richard Brathwayt, in his 1620 religious meditation, *Essaies Upon the Five Senses, with a Pithie One Upon Detraction*, relays a common belief in the early modern period concerning noxious miasmas: "Some are of the opinion, that this peculiar sense, is an occasion of more danger to the body than benefit, in that it receives crude and unwholesome vapors."²⁸

The Phaenix in Her Flames is an ideal play to study when discussing the vocabulary of early modern theatrical odors. Because represented odors and diegetic odors are the two most pertinent odor categories encountered in this particularly redolent play, in the essay that follows I focus on these

two uses of smell within specific scenes. In *The Phaenix in Her Flames*, incense is not only mentioned to make the audience think about the sensual aromas and perfumes associated with Arabia, but Lower seems to have intended to actually burn these fragrances to create diegetic odors. I will argue that Lower utilizes incense as a stage property to create an exotic and Oriental atmosphere, while also alluding to current and controversial church practices.

Performing Arabia's Aromas: Creating an Olfactory Atmosphere

The Phaenix is a middling play. The tragic plotline follows two sets of lovers who are all undone by their own triangulated desires and external treachery. It is a play largely ignored by critics and scholars, but when discussed the critics agree that it is a "competent but conventional tragic romance."²⁹ Adolphus William Ward notes that the play "possess[es] a certain dignity of style, to some extent justifying its lofty pretensions in scheme and nomenclature." Sidney Lee states that *Phaenix* contains a "few good lines" and notes that it is the "rarest and liveliest of Lower's works" (206, 205), and Felix E. Schelling claims that the play is at turns, both "crude" and "extravagant" (359, 358).³⁰

Perseus, Prince of Persia, goes on a Tamburlaine-esque rampage across Arabia when he believes that his betrothed, Lucinda the Princess of Egypt, is kidnapped by the Arabian royal court. She was kidnapped, but by a group of desert thieves and saved by the exiled Prince of Damascus, Amandus. Lucinda falls in love with Amandus who defeats Perseus and brings him as a prisoner of war to the King of Arabia. Amandus is delighted to be united with his love-object, and Perseus deserts Lucinda in favor of the same Princess of Arabia, Phaenicia. When Amandus and Perseus kill each other for her love, Phaenicia, who was in love with Amandus, commits suicide like her namesake the Phoenix, through an ostentatious and aromatic self-immolation.

Though the play seems to have never been performed, details indicate that it was intended to be performed and was not designed as a closet drama. For example, the stage directions and cues for entrances and exits are very consistent. The Prologue and Epilogue both evince the intended performance, especially the Epilogue insists that audience members tell their friends “who have not seen as yet our tragic end, / Come here and weep with you, until together, / You make up this a full-pressed theatre” (Epilogue 10-12). What is by far the most interesting aspect of this play is the intended use of incense and aromatics on the stage. This play revels in the creative staging and representations of odors.

There are several instances of incense and frankincense being performed in *The Phaenix*. First, the opening Prologue creates the olfactory atmosphere, as incense is lit and the Prologue describes the ambience created via perfumed air. Several characters describe the scented essence of Arabia Felix in contrast to the inodorous areas of Arabia Deserta and Arabia Petra. The antagonist Perseus is represented as a “fume” in contrast to the hero Amandus who emits the aroma of sanctity after his death. Finally, in her elaborate and aromatic suicide plan, the princess Phaenicia recalls the myth of the fragrant Phoenix.

The opening of the Prologue first announces this use of incense as a diegetic odor to move the audience into Arabia via the olfactory imagination. Fragrance becomes a way to create and define space, but as I will argue below the setting had to be Arabia for the olfactory performance to be successful. We can imagine that Lower expected the performance to occur in a hall playhouse instead of a larger open-roofed amphitheatre where the aroma would be lost in such a large space or drift straight out of the building. Smelling incense moves the audience from the real world of the London playhouse and into the fictive representation of Arabia:

This aire shall be perfum'd, and every sense
Delighted with sweet smelling frankincence
And aromatick fumes. For please you know,

Gentle Spectators, from our Sceane doth grow
 Abundance of such fragrant stuffe, you'll see
 A Play that breathes *Arabian* spicerie... (Prologue 1-6)³¹

As the Prologue informs the audience, the fragrances burnt upon the stage create a geographical and temporal shift. The smells of “aromatic fumes” cancel out or obscure the coincidental smells of the theatre and create a different olfactory space altogether, Arabia Felix. On the early modern stage, the use of lavish costumes would allow a spectator to identify that Lucinda is an Egyptian princess or Perseus is a Persian prince; even Perseus’ lofty ambitions, martial speeches, and choleric temperament would remind viewers of familiar Oriental characters and their histrionics, such as Marlowe’s Tamburlaine or the medieval depictions of Herod.³² Something very similar to this automatic identification of the Oriental either through stage costumes or by staged antics occurs by the simple act of staging incense. Arabia has always been the imagined “Land of the Spices” and was thought for centuries to be the “only country which yields frankincense, myrrh, cassia, cinnamon, and laudanum.”³³ Merely lighting the frankincense and announcing the name “Arabia” could ignite the olfactory imagination of the audience. Frankincense was a bouquet of complicated and conflicting meanings, both Biblical and pagan, celebrating life and love, and lamenting the dead, and William Lower creates a lush perfumed landscape by referring to and employing scents that transcend space, time, religion, and even death.

Beyond this initial Prologue and its staged incense, which literally perfumes the theatre and figuratively recreates the redolence of Arabia, the characters of the play constantly refer to and sniff out the Arabian aromas around them. The main characters, all foreigners to Arabia, navigate the geography of Arabia through sensory observations by referring to specific locales and the corresponding represented odors. Arabia is divided into three disparate parts: Arabia Felix (“Happy Arabia,” the site of the royal palace), Arabia Deserta (the relatively uninhabited wilderness that serves

as home for a band of thieves), and Arabia Petra (“Rocky Arabia”; the ancient city Petra is located in this region noted for its rock-cut architecture within the mountainside). Navigating Arabia depends on an understanding of the tripartite division of the land and the specific senses connected to each region. The Egyptian Ambassador uses his knowledge of Arabia’s geographic and sensory divisions when trying to learn the whereabouts of the captured princess Lucinda:

But you can tell me
 The nature of the place and Country, then
 I’le satisfie my selfe: was't sweet and lovely,
 Perfum’d with spices and rich Frankincense?
 Or was't a rocky soile, and mountainous?
 Wilde, unfrequented, full of caves and dennes,
 Of wood and desert, you can tell me this. (2.1.C4r.1-7.)

Arabia is geographically divided not just by mountains, deserts, and bodies of waters, but also by sensory delineations: Petra is a haptic site, rocky and mountainous; Felix is an olfactory paradise; and Deserta is devoid of sensations. Amandus, the fugitive prince of Damascus, and his tutor Consolario attempt to identify what part of Arabia to which they have fled by using their tactile, visual, and olfactory senses; since the area is not particularly rocky and it definitely lacks sweet scents, Consolario identifies the area as Arabia Deserta.

Amandus, seeking the safety of the Arabian King’s court and curious about “the sweet soyle so much commended for/ Her gummes and spices, odours, and perfumes,” asks his tutor to elaborate about Arabia Felix, their intended endpoint, and Consolario willingly obliges (2.1.D2v.29-30.):

... that is Felix,
 And rightly beares it that denomination;
 For 'tis a happy Country, no delight
 But flowes abundant there, embroydered fields,

Faire meadows, pleasant groves, cleare cristall brooks,
 Sweet lovely Cities, gardens diapred
 All o're with *Flora's* richest tapestry,
 Are seene there all the yeere, continuall spring
 Dwels in that coast, white hoary bearded *Hyems*,
 Ne're shakes his snowy tresses, nor his frost
 Nips the faire flowers that beautifie her breast,
 Nor boysterous *Boreas* with his winter blasts,
 Shakes her faire fruit, but delicate *Favonius*
 Creeps gently o're her fields with flowry breath
 Creating gummes and spices; sure it is
 The garden of the world; the *Phaenix* else
 Had never chose that place above all other
 To recreate her selfe in: your *Damascus*
 Is but a desart if compar'd unto it. (2.1.D2v.31-D2r.16)

In this extended description, Arabia Felix is represented as having all of the sensual delights of a prelapsarian terrestrial garden and all of the happiness of the Golden Age; the land is beautiful, fruitful, and fragrant, and it is perpetual spring. Consolario recreates the delights of Arabia Felix by referring to various sensual pleasures and the landscape is both uncanny in its exotic luxury but also made canny through allusions to more familiar Greco-Roman and Biblical paradises. Ancient Arabia Felix was an important geographic place for several Biblical characters. Felix was often cited as a potential site of Eden; associated with the progeny of Abraham or, more negatively, with Noah's cursed son Cham's descendants; and was the home of the Queen of Sheba, noted for her riches and aromatic spices.³⁴ Most of these works describe Felix as a terrestrial paradise, a fertile land with aromatic spices and natural opulence (as in Consolario's above description), and as a lucrative center for trade. Several of these same works, however, perpetuate Orientalizing stereotypes; for example, several sources recount stories of profligate polygyny and incest in the ancient

generations, but these negative depictions are better than those of the inhabitants of Petra—martial men without laws, clothing, or marriages—and Deserta—swarthy nomads with “feminine voices.”³⁵

Contemporary Arabia Felix was part of the Ottoman Empire and had an ambivalent relationship with early modern England. As Walter S. H. Lim states in *The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia*:

If various writings and literary representations tended to demonize Turks in the early modern period, this did not mean that very little contact took place between the Ottomans and England. Behind literary representations, therefore, may be found some of the concrete and actual realities of social, cultural, political, and economic interactions between East and West. These interactions are not always purely negative or antagonistic, a point that has been emphasized in recent literary and historical scholarship on the subject. It has been noted, for instance, that even though the Islamic Orient was viewed with distrust and loathing in that period, this did not prevent England for engaging in commercial, diplomatic, and social engagements with both Turks and Moors. Queen Elizabeth I had even considered the possibilities of an alliance with the Ottomans so as to place obstacles in the path of Spain’s imperial ambitions. Such engagements and contacts in fact contributed to the growth of knowledge about the culture, politics, and peoples of the Muslim world.³⁶

That is, Arabia has always been the “Land of the Spices,” the geographic Eden, home to Biblical outcasts and the luxurious Queen of Sheba, and yet, a place of racial, religious, and cultural others. It is foreign, glamorous, and dangerous, yet also the center of trade and of spices so popular in Renaissance England. All of this historical, Biblical, and geographic significance can be found in a wisp of frankincense. Even if the audience had become desensitized to the diegetic odor of frankincense or the incense had burnt itself out by the point Consolario has described Arabia Felix’s

aromatic bounty, this representation of the “garden of the world” through the use of conventional Edenic imagery, with its bountiful bouquets of aromatic delights of “gums and spices,” reminds the audience of the sanctity and rarity of the Arabian world they have been transported to through both the diegetic and represented odors of Arabia.

Perseus’ Fume and Amandus’ Fragrant Corpse: Representing Personal Aromas

In the long fourth act, both Amandus and Perseus fall in love with the Arabian princess Phaenicia. Unfortunately for both suitors, her cousin Alecto, a classic bad counselor figure, plans a treacherous plot to rule by himself: he will suggest a duel between the two suitors and then kill the victor. In the deathly duel between Amandus and Perseus, the language of burning and incense is repeated to remind the audience of life and death, possibly recalling the incense that lingers in the air and the general atmosphere of Arabia Felix. Perseus, the destructive choleric, is likened to a fume and the romantic hero, Amandus’ body, emits the odor of sanctity. Although no incense or other diegetic odors are mentioned in this scene, the represented odors create moral, humoral, and mortal significance for the two foes.

Amandus awaits the arrival of Perseus for their scheduled duel. As he lingers, he speaks of Perseus’ nature:

A furious challenge, and it speakes the man
All in a fire that sent it, but extreames
Are seldome permanent, I doubt ‘twill prove
But like a sudden flash that’s soone burnt out. (4.1.L2v.11-4)

Amandus’ speech describes Perseus as hot-tempered and choleric. In humoral theory, choler (yellow bile) was hot and dry, associated with the element fire and the planet/god Mars, the god of war. Perseus, like his dramatic antecedents Shakespeare’s *Hotspur* and Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine*,

is a typical choleric: “quick tempered, resentful, envious, and generally argumentative.”³⁷ Amandus hopes that Perseus’ hot temper will cool down but notes that wrath is self-consuming like a destructive fire that leaves only ashes.

When Perseus does arrive, Amandus asks him, “Is the fume vanish’d?” (4.1.L2r.6). “Fume” is a multifaceted term. Although Amandus uses *fume* in the figurative sense to ask, “Is your ‘fit of anger/irritable mood’ vanished?” (OED 7a), *fume*’s more common and literal denotations refer to both smoke and perfume. According to the OED, *fume*’s first definition is “the volatile matter produced by and usually accompanying combustion; smoke” (1a); following this are several definitions pertaining to odor: “odorous smoke” (1b), “something used or prepared for producing aromatic vapor” (1c), “odor or odorous exhalation (either fragrant or offensive) emitted from a substance, flower, etc.” (2), “vapor or steam given out by bodies when heated” (3), etc. Perseus, the man “all in a fire” in Amandus’ previous speech now becomes a wisp of aromatic smoke, or in another figurative sense of *fume*, “something... unsubstantial” (5). In this scene, Perseus is both the aromatic incense and the fire that burns the incense; and he embodies the two differing actions of *incense*: he is inflamed with anger (v² 3) and he may be perfuming the surrounding area with his fume (v¹).³⁸

Perseus, catching at least some of the fume puns, responds to Amandus’ question (“Is the fume vanished?”):

Thou shalt finde it burne
 Afresh to fierce flames, it was my goodnesse
 That rak’t it up in ashes, lest it should
 Consume thee... (4.1.I2r.6-9)

There are many olfactory/smoke puns occurring: Perseus is further incensed (angered) when his fume (wrath) is likened to either incense/fume (odorous smoke) or fume (something insubstantial).³⁹ The idea of Perseus burning away quickly without a trace contrasts him with

the diegetic slow-smoldering incense earlier in the play, and foreshadows Phaenicia's suicide, which will combine elements of both of her suitors.

Amandus is correct that a man "all of fire" is only a "sudden flash that's soon burnt out," as he defeats Perseus immediately after their heated exchange (4.1.L2v.12, 4.1.L2v.14). Perseus curses Alecto as he dies, and Amandus claims that, "I do smell a plot/ Laid for my life..." (4.1.L3v.10-11). Perseus' fume, with all of its smoky and odorous implications, is finally "vanished" and now replaced by this more ambiguous smell of a "plot." Danielle Nagler, in her comprehensive essay on the significance of smells in early modern literature, explains: "In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, smell literally meant perception, of a plot, as when Sir Toby Blech smells a device, or Emilia smells out Iago's villainy, or of the plotter since evil automatically stank."⁴⁰ Does Amandus actually smell something? And if so, what does he smell? Is Perseus' corpse emitting a smoky vapor smelling of sulfur and hell? Can he smell the approach of the underhanded Alecto who discharges some stench? Is the air and atmosphere of fragrant Arabia Felix, this terrestrial paradise, turned foul by crimes and treachery?

The question is never answered as Alecto's cronies stab Amandus and his aroma of sanctity replaces the smoky exhalations of Perseus' fume and the ambiguous scent of a plot. In life, Amandus and Perseus were foils, and in death their odors complement and contradict one another. Both were young princes of Near Eastern realms; Perseus tried to increase his land holdings even as Amandus was forced to flee his home. Perseus attempted to conquer and destroy Arabia through martial force, while Amandus rehabilitated Arabian thieves into honest citizens who would defend the king. If Perseus was like the militaristic and doomed Hotspur in his temperament, Amandus was the resourceful, crafty, and adaptable Prince Hal. They were rivals in love too, as twice Amandus was able to get the girl; first Lucinda fell in love with Amandus while betrothed to Perseus, and although Perseus won the blessing of Phaenicia's father she remained loyal to Amandus.

Perseus' fume is associated with the violence of immolation and maybe even hell in its diabolical smokiness. Amandus, on the other hand, emits the aroma of sanctity, the sweet scent associated with saints and martyrs. The Colonel, part of Amandus' loyal entourage, comments on Amandus' fragrance: "Come now your shoulders honor with his Corpse/ Sweeter than all the perfumes of the Realm" (4.1.L4v.28-9). Amandus' scent displaces and surpasses the wondrous bouquet of Arabia Felix with all of its redolence. Although the play is set in Arabia, the aroma of sanctity has a long tradition in Judeo-Christian, Muslim, and Near/Middle Eastern cultures as an olfactory form of communication between the mortal and divine realms. Amandus' body, like those of Christian martyrs, is not susceptible to the stench of decay, but rather the sweet aroma of sanctity. Although in the Anglican Church, the aroma of sanctity was more likely dismissed as a Popish superstition, Lower still utilizes this familiar olfactory trope to celebrate Amandus' virtuous life and his victory over Perseus by contrasting the qualities of their odor mortis.

The Phoenix in Her Fragrances: Performing an Aromatic Death

In the final act, the Arabian princess Phaenicia commits suicide. Using her namesake bird as her deathly inspiration, she creates a bed of perfumes and suffocates herself. Again, there would have been a utilization of diegetic odors, such as an actual use of perfumes and fragrant smokes to depict this death scene, and the aromas created would create a wealth of olfactory significance, but especially a conflation between Biblical and ancient ideas of smoky sacrifices and contemporary olfactory changes occurring within the Anglican Church.

Phaenicia learns of Amandus' death and decides that she must commit suicide. She asks her doctor for help:

Devise an easie way for me to die,
Not in a common ordinary roade,

Which many use by cutting of a vaine
 Or such like, to get passage to their bliss;
 I saw the *Phaenix* burning in her flames
 The other day, and was inamor'd off
 So sweet a death, I faine would die so too
 Your art can helpe me in the imitation. (4.1.M1r.19-26)

Phaenicia draws her deathly inspiration from, as stated earlier, the fuming death of Perseus and the fragrant demise of Amandus, but even more immediately she has been witness to an extremely rare mythological occurrence: the death of the Phoenix. The Phoenix is mentioned several times throughout the play as the bird associated with Arabia Felix, but Phaenicia's nonchalant mention of her sighting belies the singularity of this event. According to mythology, only one Phoenix existed at a time and it would live five-hundred or one thousand years (depending on the source). As the beautiful flame-colored bird's life drew to a close it would fly to a hot, arid region—Egypt, Arabia, or Heliopolis (depending on the source)—to create an aromatic eyrie of myrrh, frankincense, and other spices, where it would burst into flame. From the avian ashes of the unique bird's death, a new Phoenix would emerge and the cycle would continue.⁴¹

The bird, like Arabia Felix, is noted for its mythical beauty and its sweet aroma—spicy like Arabian frankincense, cinnamon, cassia, and other aromatic herbs and spices. In a further comparison, Phaenicia's role as marriageable daughter of the Arabian King equates her body with Arabia itself. The self-referential circularity of Phoenix-Phaenicia-Arabia Felix as aromatic, sensual, feminine, and erotic paradises that are simultaneously geographic locations and physical bodies continues the cycle of the Phoenix.

This conflation of the perfumed body and aromatic landscape is based on binary comparisons: the Biblical and secular, the sexual and the divine, desire and death that reiterates the earlier importance of Arabia Felix as scented setting. *The Song of Songs* establishes this contradictory

nature of the perfumed body as sacred and sexual site. The love-song of the Shulamite and her spouse is usually read as an allegory of the love between Yahweh and Israel, Christ and the church, or Christ and the soul. Nevertheless, the poem is highly erotic and strongly aromatic. The Shulamite is described by her groom as a fragrant garden, and the language of this passage with all of its sensuous delights recalls Consolario's earlier depiction of Arabia Felix:

You are a locked garden, my sister, my bride;
 you are an enclosed spring, a sealed-up fountain.
 Your shoots are a royal garden full of pomegranates
 with choice fruits:
 henna with nard,
 nard and saffron;
 calamus and cinnamon with every kind of spice,
 myrrh and aloes with all the finest spices.
 You are a garden spring,
 a well of fresh water flowing down from Lebanon. (Song of Songs
 4:12-15)

The catalogue of aromatics and perfumes should be the same that Phaenicia would be applying to herself if she were to wed Amandus, but instead she will call for similar "gums, drugs, and spices" in order to commit suicide; instead of an epithalamion, we are given a eulogy. The odors of Eros and Thanatos are confused and conflated, as Phaenicia demands amatory perfumes for her death. Suzanne Evans notes the highly erotic and aromatic depictions of martyrs' love for God, and Richard Stamelman describes the contradictory Eros/Thanatos nature of perfume as "not only a substance that establishes presence but as one that in the same act of creation initiates absence, disappearance, decompositions, effacement, and loss."⁴²

Phaenicia becomes resolute that the only way to be reunited with her love is to reduce herself to a fume, a wisp of smoke that can float to

Amandus' airy soul. Stamelman further writes of this contradictory nature of perfume as both defining and negating the female body as it is "at once a body and a soul, a presence and an absence."⁴³ That is exactly what Phaenicia desires, to be and not to be simultaneously. Waiting for the doctor to concoct his deathly perfume, she meditates on and romanticizes her death:

How sweetly I shall pass unto my friend,
And come unto him as in sacrifice,
Mine altar smoking incense and perfume. (4.1.M2v.17-9)

She becomes the sacrifice and the incense that appeases her lover's nostrils; her body and her bed become funeral pyre and "altar." Amandus becomes the god pleased with the sweet scent of sacrifice. Her body will not be reunited with Amandus, but her "essence," her "being" or "existence," as well as her "fragrant essence," or "scent" will waft up to his spirit.⁴⁴ The soul, for many early cultures, was retained in the breath, and "nose-kissing" in Egyptian love poetry involves smell over the taste of the beloved: "It is the breath of your nose that keeps me alive."⁴⁵ Phaenicia imagines a similar divine/erotic transcendental passage to the afterlife, where she is united with Amandus in some undisclosed state of absent (without a body) presence (inhaled into him).

The Phoenix, and its life/death/resurrection cycle, had been appropriated as a symbol of Christ centuries ago and as Susan Ashbrook Harvey explains in her *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination*, a major component of this allegorical relationship dealt with scents: "The crux of the story, of course, were the spices the Phoenix chose, for even in its shortest telling identified these as frankincense and myrrh ...," the same spices associated with the Magi.⁴⁶ The Phoenix was also a symbol appropriated by British royalty. Although Charles I, the monarch during the likely time of *Phaenix'* composition, was not explicitly connected to the Phoenix, his two predecessors were. Queen Elizabeth was famously painted in almost mirror images by Nicholas

Hilliard, in one wearing a Pelican pendant and in the other a Phoenix.⁴⁷ The Phoenix, therefore, reinforced Elizabeth's "uniqueness, oneness, and chastity" as well as "asserting the perpetuity of hereditary kingship."⁴⁸ In a performance of perfumes that links these multifaceted meanings of the Phoenix, Holly Dugan describes a fragrant fountain designed for King James' coronation pageant that symbolizes Arabia and the Phoenix in their olfactive importance.⁴⁹ The Phoenix was, therefore, a potpourri of aromatic mythological, Biblical, and monarchical meaning, but Phaenicia's spiced suicide is not only accomplished through represented odors, but again, as in the Prologue, the lines seem to indicate that incense was used as a diegetic odor.

The Phaenix also depicts the performance of incense as part of a polemical religious stance on the use of incense in the Anglican Church. The use of incense has contemporary resonance, just as Harris demonstrated that the squibs used in *Macbeth* recalled the recent Gunpowder Plot. In *Phaenix*, the religious use of incense demonstrates Lower's own political and religious leanings. During the reign of Charles I, there was a decided faction within the Anglican Church concerning the reincorporation of highly sensuous rituals. Charles I and his Archbishop Laud supported these beautification projects while ascetic Puritans found some of these ceremonies and niceties to be too idolatrous. Part of the Ceremonialists' re-beautification of the church involved the reintroduction of "smells and bells," sensual rituals that were previously deemed as pagan-cum-Catholic theatrics.⁵⁰

Lower was a loyal Royalist, and several of his works, including *Phaenix*, demonstrate an affinity toward the sensuous rituals associated with High Anglican church practices. Several years after the publication of *Phaenix*, he was captured by Parliament forces while fighting on the King's side, and while living in exile in Holland during the Interregnum he published favorable works about the exiled royal family.⁵¹ Lower's Royalist stance and his familial connections in Holland suggest that he would be appreciative of the beautification of the church and its restoration of certain

rituals, such as the use of incense. His translations of several French works on religious martyrs—*The Innocent Lady* (1654), *The Innocent Lord* (1655), and *The Triumphant Lady* (1656)—also demonstrate Catholic receptiveness, or after the beheading of Charles I, a strong empathy with Anglican martyrdom.⁵²

The Phaenix performs Phaenicia's scented suicide as just such a religious martyrdom. Although suicide was condemned by the Catholic Church and Phaenicia's resoluteness and rationality about her decision may recall worthy pagan Stoics, the language she uses is purely liturgical. She changes her physician's title from "Doctor" to "Sacred Priest" because he is "to sacrifice me to Amandus' shrine/ A spotless Virgin" (4.1.M2v.24-5). The secular becomes sacred and the importance of religious ritual is stressed. The Doctor/Sacred Priest suffocates Phaenicia to death on her bed in a fume of incense.

The idea for such a dramatic aromatic death may recall the poisoned incense from *Women Beware Women* but was just as likely to be inspired by the increased use of incense in High Church practices, which we can assume that Lower supported over Puritan asceticism. Lower perfumes his stage for the same reasons Michel de Montaigne believes the Catholic Church perfumes her naves: "That it was aimed at making us rejoice, exciting us, and purifying us so as to render us more capable of contemplation."⁵³ Creating sensory reactions, exciting audiences or parishioners, and creating an otherworldly atmosphere are goals for both playwrights and parsons. Both transcendental experiences are not only negotiated through spectacle and sound, as many critics have noted, but also through scent.

In Phaenicia's final words as she dies beneath a cloud of perfume, many of the meanings of staged incense are invoked:

I smell a heavenly vapor
Assaulting my weak breath, now Prince I come,

Beloved Prince thy dear Phaenicia comes,
 Be ready to receive her, for her spirit
 Ascends up in this smoky sacrifice. (4.1.M2v.31-M2r.4)

Her words denote both the Thanatos and Eros of her death, her self-identification with the Phoenix, the scented paradises both earthly and divine, the Biblical and Classical allusions to incense and sacrifice, the aroma of sanctity associated with Amandus and even Perseus' "smoky" fume. As Phaenicia says her final words, the smell of the incense lit a few lines earlier by the Doctor/Sacred Priest would be now entering the audience members' nostrils. They would recall the incense lit at the beginning of the play to create and define aromatic Arabia Felix.

Incense in this play is especially important because it is not just a represented odor but a diegetic one; the audience continuously smells the same odors that the actors do and would be more capable of appreciating the nuanced olfactory worlds alluded to in Lower's work. Contemporary church practices, ancient mythological beliefs, and early church rituals blend together in one whiff of frankincense. Studying works such as William Lower's *The Phaenix in her Flames* and its innovative use of incense and perfumes as represented and performed on the stage calls for further consideration of staging practices and staged properties, scented allusions, church rituals, and in general, the early modern olfactory imagination. As Lower demonstrates repeatedly in *Phaenix*, a simple scent, such as frankincense, may have a wealth of significance and meaning, and his olfactive sensitivity concerning metaphorical and diegetic odors insists upon more comprehensive historical-phenomenological studies of how early modern playwrights may have imagined particular odors as effective stage properties.

Colleen E. Kennedy is a PhD candidate in the English department at the Ohio State University. She has published articles in Appositions: Studies in the

Renaissance/Early Modern Literature and Culture *and* Forum: The University of Edinburgh's Postgraduate Journal of Culture and the Arts, *as well as several book reviews in Journal of British Studies, Theatre Journal, Seventeenth-Century News, Sixteenth Century Journal, Early Modern Literary Studies, and Pennsylvania Literary Journal. Her dissertation concerns the smells of the Renaissance – bodily effluvia, the miasma of the plague, perfumes and spices, churchly incense – and how those odors affect the early modern literary and cultural imaginations*

I would like to thank Holly Crawford Pickett of Washington and Lee University for kindly sharing an early draft of her essay "The Idolatrous Nose: Incense on the Early Modern Stage" with me.

¹ For a brief overview of Renaissance material culture, see Catherine Richardson's "Shakespeare and Material Culture," *Literature Compass* 7/6 (2010): 424-38. Also, Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass's *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Maureen Quilligan and Peter Stallybrass, eds. *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Jonathan Gil Harris and Natasha Korda, eds. *Staged Properties in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Catherine Richardson's *Domestic Life and Domestic Tragedy: The Material Life of the Household* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006); and Catherine Richardson and Tara Hamling's *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Culture and its Meanings* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2010).

² Holly Dugan, "Scent of a Woman: Performing the Politics of Smell in Late Medieval and Early Modern England," *Journal of Early Modern Studies* 38:2 (Spring 2008): 230.

³ Jonathan Gil Harris, *Untimely Matter in the Time of Shakespeare* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania P, 2009), 129.

⁴ Harris, *Staged Properties*, 122. Dugan, "Scent of a Woman," 231.

⁵ Dugan, "Scent of a Woman," 230.

⁶ There are already many works on vision and the gaze in the Renaissance: Alison Thorne's *Vision and Rhetoric in Shakespeare: Looking through Language* (London: Macmillan Press, 2000), Barbara Freedman's *Staging the Gaze: Postmodernism, Psychoanalysis, and Shakespearean Comedy* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1991), Stuart Clark's *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture* (Oxford: Oxford

University Press, 2007), and Michael O'Connell's *The Idolatrous Eye: Iconoclasm and Theatre in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). This is only a partial list of full-length works on ocularcentrism and does not even consider individual articles published in peer reviewed journals. Bruce R. Smith's *The Acoustical World of Shakespeare: Attending to the O-Factor* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003) deftly covers the auditory senses and Carla Mazzio's *The Inarticulate Renaissance: Language Trouble in an Age of Eloquence* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008) focuses on the problems of speech, hearing, and communication. *Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture* edited by Elizabeth D. Harvey (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002) and Laura Gowing's *Common Bodies: Women, Touch, and Power in Seventeenth-Century England* (Princeton: Yale University Press, 2003) cover tactility and the haptic. Recently there have been several strong studies about taste, including Ken Albalá's *Eating Right in the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), Robert Appelbaum's *Aguecheek's Beef, Belch's Hiccup, and Other Gastronomic Interjections: Literature, Culture, and Food Among the Early Moderns* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006) and in a more general tract, Bruce Thomas Boehrer's *The Fury of Men's Gullets: Ben Jonson & the Digestive Canal* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997). When it comes to the smell, however, there is still a dearth of critical literature. Recently Jonathan Gil Harris, Holly Dugan, and Holly Pickett Crawford have explored the significance of early modern staged smells but there is still a real scarcity of publications and studies on representations of early modern odors. The major study on early modern smells still remains Danielle Nagler's 1997 Master's thesis from Cambridge, "Towards the Smell of Mortality: Shakespeare and Ideas of Smell 1588-1625," *Cambridge Quarterly* 26.1 (1997). This autumn, however, Holly Dugan's monograph on Renaissance perfumes will be released: *Ephemeral History of Perfume: Scent and Sense in Early Modern England* [The Johns Hopkins University Press in November, 2011].

⁷ Helen Keller, "Sense and Sensibility," in *The Smell Culture Reader*, ed. Jim Drobnick (Oxford: Berg, 2006), 181. Jim Drobnick, "Introduction: Olfactocentrism," *The Smell Culture Reader*, ed. Jim Drobnick (Oxford: Berg, 2006), 1. Diane Ackerman, *A Natural History of the Senses* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 3. Rachel Herz *The Scent of Desire: Discovering Our Enigmatic Sense of Smell* (New York: William Morrow, 2007), 11.

⁸ Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odor and the French Social Imagination* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986). Mark Jenner, "Civilization and Deodorization? Smell in Early Modern English Culture," in P. Burke, B. Harrison & P.

Slack (eds.), *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁹ For a study of modern theatrical “olfactory events” via “the deliberate use of ‘aroma design’” see Sally Barnes’ essay “Olfactory Performances,” *TDR* 45.1 (Spring 2001): 68-76. Barnes has designated six categories of the purposeful use of ‘aroma design’ (or what I refer to as ‘diegetic odors’): 1. to illustrate words, characters, places, or actions; 2. To evoke a mood or ambience; 3. To complement or contrast with aural/visual signs; 4. To summon specific memories; 5. To frame the performance as a ritual; and 6. to serve as a distancing device.

¹⁰ Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare’s London*, especially “Physical Conditions” and “Social Composition” (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 13-79.

¹¹ Dugan, “Scent of a Woman,” 234, 240, 244.

¹² William Shakespeare, *King Lear*. Ed. Stephen Orgel. *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare. The New Pelican Text*. Gen. Eds. Stephen Orgel and A.R. Braunmuller (New York: Penguin, 2002). William Shakespeare, *Merry Wives of Windsor*. Ed. Russ McDonald. *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare. The New Pelican Text*. Gen. Eds. Stephen Orgel and A.R. Braunmuller (New York: Penguin, 2002).

¹³ For a general overview of how we make these olfactory presumptions see Gale Largey and Rod Watson’s “The Sociology of Odors” *American Journal of Sociology* 77 (1972): 1021-34.

¹⁴ William Shakespeare, *Much Ado About Nothing*. Ed. Peter Holland. *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare. The New Pelican Text*. Gen. Eds. Stephen Orgel and A.R. Braunmuller (New York: Penguin, 2002).

¹⁵ Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*. *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*. Ed. David Bevington, et al. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002).

¹⁶ William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*. Ed. Peter Holland, *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare. The New Pelican Text*. Gen. Eds. Stephen Orgel and A.R. Braunmuller (New York: Penguin, 2002).

¹⁷ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*. Ed. A. R. Braunmuller. *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare. The New Pelican Text*. Gen. Eds. Stephen Orgel and A.R. Braunmuller (New York: Penguin, 2002).

¹⁸ For a study of the metaphors of smell & rottenness in *Hamlet*, see Richard D. Altick’s “Hamlet and the Odor of Mortality.” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 5.2 (Spring 1954): 167-76.

¹⁹ The language of smells is very lacking as almost any scholar in the field can attest. I have borrowed the terms “diegetic” and “non-diegetic” from film studies. Diegetic sound, for example, occurs when a character turns on the radio to hear a song within the world of the film while non-diegetic sound would be the addition of the same song as the film’s score (heard by the audience, but not by the characters).

²⁰ Harris, *Staged Properties*, 126.

²¹ Francis Beaumont, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*, Ed. David Bevington, et al. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002).

²² Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker, *The Roaring Girl*. *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*. Ed. David Bevington, et al. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002).

²³ For a fascinating study on religious controversy over the use of the liturgical use of incense and the use of incense in Middleton’s play as well as in Ben Jonson’s *Sejanus*, see Holly Crawford Pickett’s “The Idolatrous Nose: Incense on the Early Modern Stage” in Jane Hwang Degenhardt and Elizabeth Williamson, eds. *Religion and Drama in Early Modern England: The Performance of Religion on the Renaissance Stage*. Surrey: Ashgate, 2011: 19-39.

²⁴ Thomas Middleton. *Women Beware Women*. *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*. Ed. David Bevington, et al. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002).

²⁵ “Contribution” (OED): [a. F. *contrit* (12th c.), ad. L. *contritus* bruised, crushed, pa. pple. of *conterre*, f. *con-* together + *terre* to rub, triturate, bray, grind.] **1. lit.** The action of rubbing things together, or against each other; grinding, pounding or bruising (so as to comminute or pulverize). *Obs.* **2. fig.** The condition of being bruised in heart; sorrow or affliction of mind for some fault or injury done; *spec.* penitence for sin. Many herbs become more aromatic as they are bruised or crushed as the long-suffering Antonio admits in Webster’s *The Duchess of Malfi*: “Man, like to cassia [a type of cinnamon], is proved best, being bruised” (3.5.76). John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi*. *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*, Ed. David Bevington, et al. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002).

²⁶ Ackerman, *A Natural History*, 6.

²⁷ See Crawford Pickett’s essay for her onstage incense-burning experiment at the American Shakespeare Center’s Fifth Blackriars Conference.

²⁸ Richard Braithwayt, *Essaies Upon the Five Senses, with a Pithie One Upon Detractions* (London: 1620), 58.

²⁹ Kathman, David. "Lower, Sir William (c.1610–1662)." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Online ed. Ed. Lawrence Goldman. Oxford: OUP, . 20 July 2010 <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/view/article/17094>.

³⁰ Adolphus William Ward. "Lower, Sir William." *A History of Dramatic English Literature*. Vol. 3. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 1875: 290. Felix E. Schelling. *Elizabethan Drama 1558-1642*. Vol. 2. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1908: 359. Stephens, Sir Leslie, and Sir Sidney Lee. "Lower, William." *Dictionary of National Biography*. Vol. 34. London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1893: 205.

³¹ Sir William Lower, *The Phaenix in Her Flames: A Tragedy* (London: Printed by Thomas Harper, for Michael Young, 1639).

³² Jonathan Gil Harris writes at length about the histrionics of early modern Orientalized characters and Shakespeare's intertheatrical supersession of such character types in his chapter, "Performing History: East-West Palimpsests in William Shakespeare's Second Henriad."

³³ Marcel Detienne, *The Gardens of Adonis: Spices in Greek Mythology*. Trans. Janet Lloyd. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 5-6.

³⁴ See 1 Kings 10:1-13 for the account of Sheba and Solomon's meeting and her gifts of luxurious goods. For an early modern accounting of the site of Eden see Pierre-Daniel Huet's *A treatise of the situation of Paradise written by P.D. Huet; to which is prefixed a map of the adjacent countries*, 1694.

³⁵ These depictions are pretty consistent in the travel narratives of the 16th and 17th centuries, see, for example, Randle Holme's *The academy of armory, or, A storehouse of armory and blazon containing the several variety of created beings, and how born in coats of arms, both foreign and domestick : with the instruments used in all trades and sciences, together with their their terms of art : also the etymologies, definitions, and historical observations on the same, explicated and explained according to our modern language : very usefel [sic] for all gentlemen, scholars, divines, and all such as desire any knowledge in arts and sciences*, 1688: 233-35.

³⁶ Lim, Walter S. H., "The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia—Framing the Issues," *The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia*. Eds. Debra Johanyak and Walter S.H. Lim (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 4.

³⁷ Noga Arika, *Passions and Tempers: A History of the Humours* (New York: Harper Collins, 2007), 10.

³⁸ When Alecto first suggests the duel to Perseus and reminds the Persian Prince that both of his loves, Lucinda and Phaenicia, prefer Amandus, Perseus admits that, "I am incensed/ Beyond all measure."

³⁹ All of this threatening talk of incendiary action may recall Perseus' original rash response when he discovered that Lucinda had been kidnapped: he decides to destroy all of Arabia until even the Phoenix flees:

The Phoenix shall no longer harbor there,
Or if she do, we will destroy the spices
Wherewith she always built her funeral pile
To burn herself to ashes and thereby
Hinder a second birth...(2.1.C4r.34-D1v.1).

⁴⁰ Danielle Nagler, "Towards the Smell of Mortality: Shakespeare and Ideas of Smell 1588-1625," *Cambridge Quarterly* 26.1 (1997): 43.

⁴¹ Detienne, 30-35.

⁴² Suzanne Evans, "The Scent of a Martyr," *Numen* 49.2 (2002): 203. Richard Stamelman, "The Eros—and Thanatos—of Scents." *The Smell Culture Reader*. Ed. Jim Drobnick. Oxford: Berg, 2006, 271.

⁴³ Stamelman, 263.

⁴⁴ "Essence" 1a. "Being, existence," 3a. "Specific being, manner of existing, 'what a thing is'; nature, character," 10. "*spec*. A fragrant essence; a perfume, scent. Somewhat *arch*." *OED*.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Evans, 202-3.

⁴⁶ Susan Ashbrook Harvey, *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 55.

⁴⁷ Roy Strong, *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Pimlico, 1987), 80-3. The Pelican was believed to pierce its own heart with her bill in order to feed her brood; this self-sacrificial nature and the drinking of lifeblood made this an obvious symbol of Christ.

⁴⁸ Strong, 82.

⁴⁹ Dugan, 232.

⁵⁰ See Holly Crawford Pickett, "The Idolotrous Nose: Incense on the Early Modern Stage," *Religion and Drama: Studies on the Materiality of Performance*, Eds. Jane

Degenhardt and Elizabeth Williamson. (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2011), 19-39. See also, Matthew Milner's *The Senses and the English Reformation* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2011).

⁵¹ David Kathman, "Lower, Sir William (c.1610-1662)." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. [database online], Ed. Lawrence Goldman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, [cited 20 July 2010]. David Cressy, "The Redeking of the Altars: Material Culture, Ceremonialist Style, and Parish Conflict in the Church of Charles I," (Presentation, The Ohio State University. December 2009), 7.

⁵² In "A Deepe Groane" by Henry King, a pro-Charles as Anglican martyr polemical tract, the "murthered" king emits an aroma of sanctity: "Thy [Charles I's] *Aromatick* Name shall feast our sense,/ 'Bove *balme Spiknard's* fragrant Redolence, /Whilst on thy loathsome Murderers shall dwell/ A plague-sore, blayne, and rotten ulcers smell." D.H.K., *A Deepe Groane fetch'd at the funeral of that incomparable and Glorious Monarch, Charles the First, King of great Britain, France, and Ireland, &c.* London: 1649.

⁵³ Michel de Montaigne, "On Smells," *The Complete Essays*. Trans. M. A. Screech, (New York: Penguin, 1991), 354.