# Breathe for Ella: artivism, intersectionality and sensing air pollution

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## Recommended citation

## Abstract

This paper responds to *Breathe:2022*, a multi-sited public artwork across London and the UK by mixed media artist Dryden Goodwin. Read as artivism, I argue that *Breathe:2022* demarginalizes existing discourse on air pollution by intervening in public space and framing air pollution as an embodied and intersectional experience. This paper contextualizes *Breathe:2022* in relation to a contemporary politics of atmospheric governance following the tragic case of Ella Kissi-Debrah. I hold that Goodwin's artistic portrayal of breathing shows a processual condition of exposure that resituates knowledge of air in the breathing body. In doing so, the work suggests a possible paradigm shift in narratives of air pollution whereby phenomenological understandings of breathing and breathlessness might enhance, corroborate, put into perspective or hold to account scientific measurements of air quality. To orientate this approach, I put forward the notion of "breathing interfaces" as material and affective zones (buildings, bodies and digital media) where qualities of air become palpable and where bodies and worlds become together. Circling back to Breathe for Ella in the conclusion, I reflect forces of hope and uncertainty regarding the legacy of Goodwin's artivism and its related campaigns.

## Keywords

*Breathe for Ella: artivismo, interseccionalidad y detección de la contaminación del aire*

### Resumen

*Este artículo responde a* Breathe:2022*, una obra de arte pública multisitio situada en Londres y el Reino Unido del artista de técnica mixta Dryden Goodwin. Si se lee como artivismo, argumento que* Breathe:2022 *desmarginaliza el discurso existente sobre la contaminación del aire interviniendo en el espacio público y enmarcando la contaminación del aire como una experiencia encarnada e interseccional. Este documento contextualiza* Breathe:2022 *en relación con una política contemporánea de gobernanza atmosférica tras el trágico caso de Ella Kissi-Debrah. Sostengo que el retrato artístico de Goodwin de la respiración muestra una condición procesal de exposición que resitúa el conocimiento del aire en el cuerpo que respira. Al hacerlo, el trabajo sugiere un posible cambio de paradigma en las narrativas de la contaminación del aire, mediante el cual los conocimientos fenomenológicos de la respiración y la disnea podrían mejorar, corroborar, poner en perspectiva o tener en cuenta las mediciones científicas de la calidad del aire. Para orientar este enfoque, presento la noción de* interfaces respiratorias *como zonas materiales y afectivas (edificios, cuerpos y medios digitales) donde las cualidades del aire se hacen palpables y donde los cuerpos y los mundos se unen. Volviendo a Breathe for Ella, en la conclusión, hago patente las fuerzas de esperanza e incertidumbre respecto al legado del artivismo de Goodwin y sus campañas relacionadas.*

### Palabras clave

*detección de contaminación del aire; artivismo;* Breathe:2022*, Ley de Ella; feminismo interseccional; interfaces respiratorias; derecho universal a respirar*

## Introduction

South Bank, London, February 15th, 2023. A digitized stop-motion sequence is projected onto the concrete façade of Rambert, 99 Upper Ground. As grey pencil lines dart across whitespace, a procession of bodies gradually emerges, depicted from the waist up. A woman, a boy and others, their torsos centre framed. The ephemeral markings diffuse and expand across the moving image, oscillating between bodily figure and abstract blur. With the existence of each portrait predicated on this fluctuating movement, the artwork appears to be breathing and, as the animated anatomy flickers, one might discern infinitesimal stoppages in the perceived continuity between mid-breath and each influx or outpouring of breath, just enough to suggest that breathing may not always be fluid and effortless.

This public artwork by Dryden Goodwin formed part of a multi-sited project and events programme commissioned by the environmental arts organization Invisible Dust (Figure 1). Comprising 1,300 individual drawings, *Breathe:2022* appeared throughout 2022 and into 2023 across London's transport infrastructure and beyond, as sequences of printed posters on walls and bridges or zoetropic reels displayed via digitized billboards and large-scale projections. Over three nights in February 2023, a moving image iteration of *Breathe:2022* served as a backdrop and beacon for an event taking place in the street below: Breathe for Ella marked a decade since nine-year-old Ella Kissi-Debrah (2004-2013) "Died of asthma contributed to by excessive exposure

to air pollution" (Barlow 2021), becoming the first person to have air pollution listed as a cause of death on their death certificate.
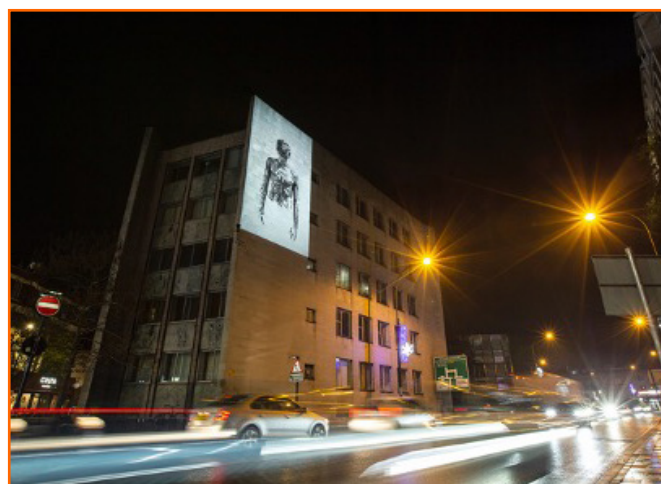


Figure 1. *Breathe:2022* projected onto Lewisham Old Town Hall
Source: Dryden Goodwin, 2022

Campaigners, policy leaders, scientists and performers addressed the crowds at Breathe for Ella from a small stage. Meanwhile, the six individuals depicted in *Breathe:2022* – including members of the local activist groups Mums for Lungs, Clean Air for Catford, Choked Up and Ella's mother Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah – bore "witness to the impacts of air pollution – and the power of activism" (Goodwin 2022b,

Figure 2). For the Breathe for Ella event was strategically staged to coincide with campaigns for a new Clean Air (Human Rights) Bill in the UK, commonly known as Ella's Law, which would enforce air quality standards set by the World Health Organisation, initiate a Citizen's Commission for Clean Air (CCCA) and establish the right to breathe "clean" air as a human right.

Reflecting on the ethical and epistemological paradigm shifts that underly proposed changes to environmental regulations, this paper reads Breathe:2022 as a series of visual, site-specific narratives of air pollution. I first discuss the involvement of Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah in the project and how her public campaigns bring forth an intersectional feminist politics of air and breathing (Górska 2016, 2018). I then explore how the public artworks intervene in politically charged spaces, suggesting a subversion of the dominant discourse on air pollution. This leads to a call for phenomenological accounts of sensing air pollution, which I link with a media geography of "breathing interfaces" – buildings, digital media and bodies. I posit breathing interfaces as dynamic zones where breath palpably makes and remakes conditions of life, breathing worlds into being. Circling back to Breathe for Ella in the conclusion, I lastly speculate about the importance of hope for more breathable futures, concluding with an open question as to the processual nature of converting a "universal right to breathe" (Mbembe 2021) into an ongoing present.
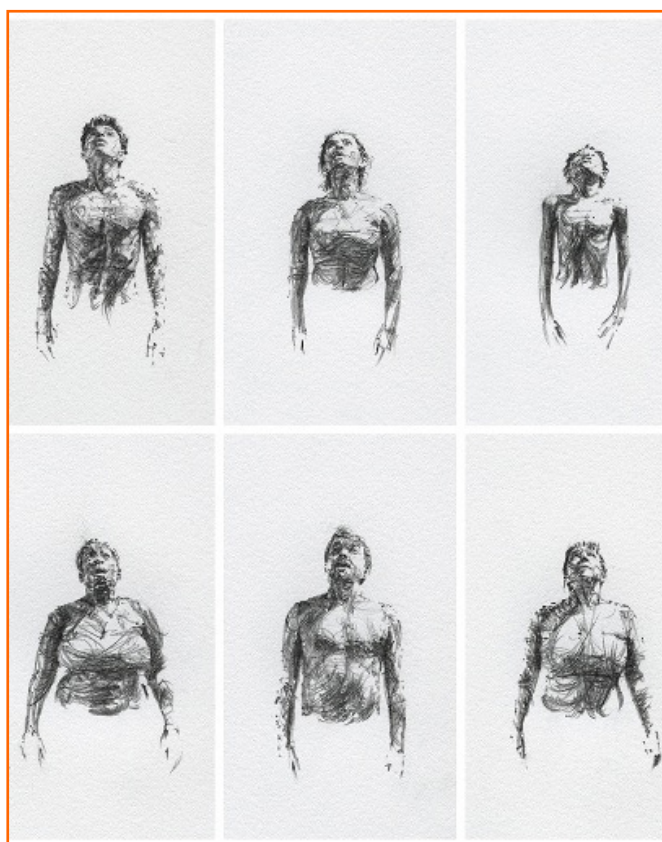


Figure 2. Six drawings from *Breathe:2022*
Source: courtesy of the artist Dryden Goodwin

## 1. Demarginalizing air pollution discourse

Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah is an important public face of *Breathe:2022*, both as one of the depicted subjects and in terms of publicly articulating the artwork's significance. Adoo-Kissi-Debrah is known for launching two inquests into the circumstances of her daughter Ella's death, one in 2014, the results of which were purely medical, and another in 2020, which cited air pollution from traffic emissions as a cause, leading to a Prevention of Future Deaths Report that made global news (Barlow 2021). Ella Kissi-Debrah grew up near the South Circular Road in Lewisham, Southeast London where pollution levels routinely reach unlawful levels. On learning the fatal impacts that this air pollution had had on her daughter's health, Adoo-Kissi-Debrah started campaigning to raise awareness about asthma and air pollution while partnering with policymakers.

Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah's voice as a mother and activist is essential to interpreting *Breathe:2022*. For example, when some of Goodwin's original sketches were displayed in a vitrine at the Wellcome Collection exhibition *In the Air* (19 May 2022 - 16 October 2022), she was quoted in the exhibition guide: "We definitely don't all breathe the same air, it's a myth. Lung disease is a poor person's disease". Adoo-Kissi-Debrah was drawing attention to a harsh, urgent reality: the impacts of air pollution, like other forms of toxicity, are unevenly distributed across society. Young people are particularly vulnerable to the negative impacts of air pollution (Gustafson 2021), as are those with underlying health conditions (Kenner 2018; Rose 2019). Toxic air also tends to accumulate within contexts of historical injustices such as structural racism (Gilderbloom, Squires & Meares 2020).

Given the potential of such factors to exacerbate one another (Rose 2019), the "invisible suffering" (Carel 2018) of breathlessness is a political and intersectional problem (Górska 2016). The logic and lived experience of intersectionality being that multiple vectors of discrimination can intersect, causing entrenched yet less visible instances of marginalization (Crenshaw 1989, 1991). Intersectionality is an anti-racist, anti-discrimination imperative that became especially urgent in times of Covid-19 when physical and social instances of suffocation revealed "many histories, many bodies, many politics" (Chen 2021; also Mukhtar 2021; Sasser *et al.* 2021). As Alison Kenner puts it, "specific violence to unbreathable spaces accumulate if you are a woman, black, poor, under the age of eighteen, or are living in dilapidated housing or a neighbourhood with poor air quality – and all the more so if you take on several of these markers" (2021, 1125).

The campaigning of Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah dovetails with an intersectional feminist politics. Adoo-Kissi-Debrah recognizes the necessity to talk about air pollution in terms of situations and societal structures, rather than as a general, statistical problem "out there". There is an affective side to this labour: intersectional feminism manifests here as a practice of care, solidarity and of what might be called *making (air) breathable*. The singular story of Ella Kissi-Debrah, her idiosyncrasies in life and the mother-daughter relationship compel a

caring response. By this example, addressing the problem of air pollution requires more than setting new air quality targets; there is also a need to de-marginalize the discourse on air pollution with relational narratives that encourage breadth and depth of community participation. Making breathable in this sense might adopt an anti-racist feminist approach that expresses the "stories, perspectives, voices and support of people of color in communities to entail a solidarity initiative" (Mukhtar 2021, 258).

Artivism, a compositing of art and activism, is one such way to express solidarity with intersectional stories and situations of air pollution. In this case study, artivism is perhaps a means to break the mould of top-down, technoscientific discourse on air pollution that might overlook the political fact that "we don't all breathe the same air". The term *artivism* qualifies art "in public-accessible sites which […] address/redress social marginalisation" (Zebracki 2020, 133). Through close association with Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah and her commitment to publicly confirming the systemic injustices of air pollution, *Breathe:2022* addresses and, perhaps to some extent, redresses the social marginalization of breathlessness due to disproportionate exposures. In the next part, I explore how the geography and timescales of the art project speak to power relations of atmospheric governance.

## 2. Breathing in public spaces

Air management, often framed as an administrative or scientific question, is inextricable from politics and power relations (Barry 2001, 172; Calvillo 2018; Pigott, Jones & Parry 2023, 2-3). Being in and transforming politically significant public spaces at a critical juncture in time has allowed *Breathe:2022* to extend to questions of power, specifically the biopower to regulate atmospheric emissions as a means of governing breathing bodies (Whitehead 2009, 20-23). For instance, the finale of *Breathe:2022* featured a large-scale projection on Lewisham's Old Town Hall, symbolically overlooking the notorious South Circular Road. In such a context, *Breathe:2022* drew attention to the emplaced act of inhaling traffic emissions. Even for onlookers unfamiliar with the story behind the artwork, a palpable connection could be made with their own experiences of breathing in such toxic situations.

Similarly, an earlier version of *Breathe:2022*, also commissioned and produced by Invisible Dust for a programme of art-science collaborations in 2012, featured a moving image portrait of Goodwin's young son projected onto the façade of St Thomas' Hospital, overlooking Westminster bridge and the Houses of Parliament (Figure 3). This situatedness of *Breathe* (2012) mobilized a reckoning of medical and political sites of importance, perhaps conveying how government (in)action is imbricated in the hospitalization of young people due to air pollution. *Breathe* (2012) ensued from Goodwin's collaborative research with Frank Kelly at Imperial College London whose laboratory investigates lung biology and was subsequently involved in the recent inquest into the death of Ella Kissi-Debrah. Kelly, Stephen Holgate and

co-authors have since reported a "striking association" between Ella Kissi-Debrah's 27 hospital admissions over her last three years and the levels of pollution near her home (Russell-Jones *et al*., 4).



Figure 3. A precursor to *Breathe:2022*, *Breathe* (2012) was projected on top of St Thomas' Hospital opposite to the Houses of Parliament
Source: Thierry Bal

As Ella Kissi-Debrah's quick succession of hospital visits demonstrate, the imperative to breathe occupies a different timeline to the political objective to reduce air pollution. *Breathe:2022* appears to breathe in real time, reminding viewers what is continuously at stake and just how vulnerable bodies are, bringing newfound urgency to narratives of air pollution. Breaths cannot literally be captured, but the image-making process in *Breathe:2022* traces human breath as a marker and maker of time, as a "timescape" (Kenner 2018, 56). Lines are constantly moving, undoing, unending. The sketched style of the *Breathe* series is expressive, sometimes abstract, hinting at the non-representational complexity of breathing. Scale is key. The image appears especially

open to the elements because it is so vast, sometimes stretching across the façade of a large building. Expanding and contracting, a "holey" body blurs with its environment (Nieuwenhuis 2019). Watchers are drawn in and then out again like air into the subject of our gaze who, in turn, bear witness to air pollution. At the same time, the rhythm of our own breathing becomes more apparent.

## 3. Reimagining air quality

Geographer Sasha Engelmann has previously argued that the sequencing and holey composition of sketches in *Breathe* (2012) conveys "the porosity of breathing bodies", suggesting "what a collective sensing of atmosphere might look and feel like" (2015, 432). I echo this sentiment that Goodwin's public artworks suggest a recentring of sensing and knowing atmospheric conditions via the breathing body in addition to remote sensing via technoscientific devices. Such a framing runs counter to dominant narratives of air pollution, perhaps resonating with what has been called a "queering of breath" in the sense of the verb to *queer* (meaning to disrupt, trouble or undo) but also to an uncertain extent perhaps questioning fixed categories of body, air, self and other so that "ways of inhabiting the world" may be more readily perceived as "issues of intersectional social justice" (Górska 2021, 109-110; see also Cipolla *et al.* 2017, 18-19; Calvillo 2023).

In my doctoral research, I have questioned air pollution narratives by engaging with the concept of air quality. Air quality is one of the main constructs that renders air pollution comparable over space and time (Choy 2011, 158). According to the logic of air quality indices (AQIs), air's toxicity can be measured objectively by sampling particle counts and gaseous concentrations, translating air into circulating references (Latour 1999, 39; Choy 2011, 163). As such, a measure of air quality can be produced based on material properties and a fixed index without specifying a dynamic relationship with a particular body over a lifetime (Figure 4). Air quality networks are a core part of environmental regulation in the UK and elsewhere. Works like *Breathe:2022* invite us to consider how such understandings of air and its qualities might be expanded upon via qualitative and creative approaches that interrogate specific relations between bodies and atmospheres.

Ultimately, air quality does not inhere in the air as an abstract property, but rather designates relations between bodies and atmospheres, people and the state (Barry 2001, 172). Yet, AQIs are concerned with abstraction rather than relations and situations. AQIs do not represent the effects of accumulative exposures or differences in vulnerability among breathers. To determine the extent of air's breathability, AQIs posit an average (read: ableist) body that can withstand the same threshold level of contamination, as if this hypothetical body were somehow enclosed

from its environment (see Roberts 2017 on the "constant self"). Each breather is affected by toxicity in a singular and ongoing way. As Seth Gustafson (2021) puts it, children breathe and metabolize "their own air", yet are expected to share air quality standards with adults in most cases.[1] AQIs are not calibrated to the bodies of children, or the bodies of children with asthma whose experiences of breathing the "same air" each day get progressively worse.



Figure 4. London Air Quality Network (LAQN) roadside monitoring station at Camden - Euston Road
Source: London Air (n.d.).

While numerical models of air quality assume an enclosed model of exposure, *Breathe:2022* seems to portray breathing as a condition of constant transformation through processual and "dependent" exposures (McCormack 2018, 31). The large-scale projection of a breathing body beside a road where onlookers themselves might experience exposure to air pollution thus subverts the abstract and impersonal discourse around air quality along with the assumed constancy of the breathing body or homogeneity of the atmosphere. Rather than re-presenting scientific data on air quality, the art project might conceivably catalyze a paradigm shift whereby notions of air quality are expanded and recalibrated to reflect differences in experience among breathers. Everybody breathes, but not in the same way and not the same air.

Responding to Ella Kissi-Debrah's case, healthcare researchers Diana Greenfield and Veronica Swallow advocate phenomenology in addition to quantitative approaches when it comes to sensing air pollution and integrating planetary health in nursing contexts (2021). There were multiple instances in Kissi-Debrah's final years when her breathing became laboured, some occasions warranted hospital visits, while others

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1. An exception is the Kids Air Quality Index, San Joaquin Valley. See https://www.valleyair.org/kids/kidsaqi.htm.

fell into the background of everyday life. The processual response of her body to a world that became less and less breathable affirms the importance of a post-phenomenology of breathing and breathlessness (Carel 2018) or what Nerea Calvillo (2018) has described as an "attuned sensing" of air pollution. Asthmatics tend to develop their own methods of "atmospheric attunement" (Stewart 2011); symptoms of asthma vary from person to person and appear episodically. Alison Kenner describes how asthmatics direct "sentient attention to the matter of everyday life as it emerges" (Kenner 2018, 34). The act of attuned sensing or sampling is embodied and itinerant (in contrast with remote sensing) with the potential to emphasize what is at stake while demarginalizing the invisible/intersectional suffering of breathlessness. Drawing on Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception, this approach consists "in treating sense-data as mutually representative, and also collectively representative […] in giving a meaning to these data, in breathing a spirit into them" (2005, 139).

## 4. Breathing interfaces/worlds (zones for collective sensing and generating hope)

A phenomenology of breathing and breathlessness for sensing air pollution would attend not only to breath and air itself but also to the metanarratives and media that shape prehensions and perceptions of breath. In other words, how breathing comes to the "surface" (Engelmann 2015) of experience. Mark Jackson and Maria Fannin argue that researchers must consider not only the materiality of atmospheres, but also how "oceanic and aerial media" work to "predicate our worlds as worlds and as thinkable" (Jackson & Fannin 2011, 436; also, McCormack 2018, 124). It is worth deconstructing what is meant by "aerial media" here. As well as news media, it has been argued that we might also speak of bodily media and ecological media including the atmospheric variety (Durham Peters 2015). All these forms of media have material and informational flows that make possible experiences and exchanges, creating and mediating conditions for sensing, knowing and living.

A concept from media theory and practice that may be particularly apt here is that of the interface. The interface might be theorized as a zone where environmental qualities become perceptible to subjects (McCormack & Sabin 2021). Interface designates a "boundary condition" in fluid dynamics whereby entities become together (Maxwell in Hookway 2014, 66). An ontology of becoming together across an interface debunks the myth of enclosed exposures and the "constant self" (Roberts 2017). Subject-object binaries are replaced with emergent, queering continua of "air-and-breathing-bodies" (Allen 2020). Subjects continuously emerge from post-human assemblages: body-world, self-world, body-with-world (Merleau-Ponty 2005, 56; Morley 2001, 75; Martin 2011). There are multiple layers of interfaces that constitute the liminal blurring together of these assemblages as affective,

emergent envelopes of atmospheric flows. Following the example of *Breathe:2022*, I outline three "breathing interfaces" below and suggest how, at these sites of amplification, historical events, social struggles and embodied experiences come to the fore.

First, there are the material interfaces of the built environment. *Breathe* (2012) and *Breathe:2022* transformed the external surfaces of multiple buildings into interfaces through projected light and large-scale posters. In doing so, the public artwork evoked the becoming together of air-and-breathing-bodies among politically significant urban architecture and infrastructure, including the South Circular Road. Elsewhere, it has been argued that if buildings breathe (Ingold 2020, 162), perhaps in the sense of shaping airflows and off-gassing, then the materiality of a building can itself become a source of toxicity (Murphy 2006; Shapiro 2015; Garnett 2020). I am reminded of the everted, tarred texture of the burnt cladding in the art film *Grenfell* which equally bears witness to the human cost of uneven toxic exposures (McQueen 2023). Volatile interfaces of the built environment are zones where, as Kenner states, "specific vulnerabilities to unbreathable spaces accumulate" (2021, 1125). As a site-specific intervention that converted the built environment into politicized artistic media, *Breathe:2022* drew attention to such structures as atmospheric interfaces.

Further attention was brought to the project through its digital production and dissemination, which brings me to the second set of breathing interfaces. The communications media surrounding *Breathe:2022*, with the project hashtag #breathe2022, produced emergent envelopes of affective experience (Ash 2016) that connected with contemporary political imaginaries of breathing and breathlessness through intertextual association. The digitized projection of *Breathe:2022* in public spaces also correlates to themes of breathing in cyberspace and, by extension, the viral hashtag #icantbreathe shared globally in response to the Black Lives Matter movement in recent years, building on accounts of racism as physical and social forms of suffocation (Apata 2020; Górska 2021, 116). The digital interface has become a zone where communities call out systemic breathlessness as an abuse of biopower (whether through state violence or uneven toxic exposures) and participate in a hoped-for sea change. Making breathable becomes an act of demarginalization (Crenshaw 1989), recruiting communications media to generate polyvocal storytelling and collective concern.

Third, the portrayal of a breathing body is a reminder of a kind of interface breathers always already have in common. *Breathe:2022* serves as a reminder that breathers become together with atmospheres via the interfacial surfaces of the lungs, which draw air into the body, conducting perpetual material and informational exchanges across every cell. One might invoke a biological "media of breathing" (Durham Peters 2018). The rapid marks made by Goodwin in his sketches suggest the centripetal and centrifugal movement of the musculoskeletal system mobilizing the lungs with lateral marks perhaps emphasizing the pumping of a ribcage. Lungs are not hermetically sealed in the body but necessarily act as a porous site of filtration and exchange. Ella Kissi-Debrah's lungs thus became a forensic "material witness"

(Schuppli 1994) to the government's failure to reduce traffic emissions on the South Circular. *Breathe:2022* brought together breathing interfaces of the built environment, communications media and bodies, suggesting zones for collective sensing of air pollution, where conditions of breathing continuously surface.

## 5. Hope

The above media geography of *Breathe:2022* allowed breath to rise to the surface of air pollution discourse at a critical moment. For *Breathe:2022* coincides with campaigning for Ella's Law. The proposed Clean Air (Human Rights) Bill (CAHR) would establish the "right to breathe clean air as a basic human right".[2] Achille Mbembe has speculated about a "universal right to breathe" arguing that breath must be conceived "beyond its purely biological aspect […] as that which we hold in common, that which, by definition, eludes all calculation" (2021, S61). A universal right to breathe is not an enclosed model of exposure, nor is it an attempt to put measurements of air on a linear scale from less to more breathable, but rather a field of concern within which qualities of air may be brought into relation with the sacrosanct. If breath is thought in terms of irreducible situations of becoming together rather than an isolated act, then conditions such as asthma might be understood as a "site for collective action" (Rose 2019, 483; also Kenner 2018, 8).

*Breathe:2022* demonstrates that some forms of artivism have the potential to not only critique the status quo and raise awareness of social and environmental issues but also to redistribute agency, help enact affirmative change and generate hope. By repeatedly placing and emplacing emphasis on the vital process of breathing through the mobilization of multiple interfaces, *Breathe:2022* has created affective atmospheres of collective witnessing, redistributed expertise and potential responsivity. *Breathe:2022* took place on streets where breathers become together with air pollution, where breathing is an involuntary yet persistent condition of exposure (Sloterdijk 2009, 45). Audiences were not only passive bystanders; they were also engaged as atmospheric subjects: breathers, parents, passers-by, drivers, schoolchildren, vendors, commuters, consumers, passengers, allies and campaigners. *Breathe:2022* invited audience members to pause and breathe with one another, to reify breath while perhaps contemplating what "we" have in common, but also how emergent breathing worlds vary (Choy 2016).

Noticing and cultivating breath is an ongoing practice of care in times of climate change and ubiquitous pollution (Górska 2018; Irigaray 2021, 23-26; Mukhtar 2021; Verlie & Neimanis 2023). To keep breathing, to aspire, is to breathe towards a future (Sharpe 2016, 108-109)

despite disproportionate exposures to toxic conditions (Jokela-Pansini *et al*. 2022). Goodwin's *Breathe:2022* showed breathing as a condition of vulnerability while simultaneously conveying how enchanting this process can be. Breathing itself is the fundamental practise from which all subsequent performances and artistic projects proceed. Breath is life and it is voice. In 2012, Goodwin clarified "I wanted to create a moving image that reflects not only on the direct environmental challenges, but […] also […] the universal hope and aspiration embedded in the preservation of life" (Goodwin 2016). The hope and aspiration to which Goodwin refers is not a form of escapism but a strategy. Enchantment with breathing, even during times of difficulty, is a means of sustaining hope (Woodyer & Geoghegan 2012, 220). It is a catalyst for imagining other possibilities, such as more breathable futures.

## Conclusion

When Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah spoke at the Breathe for Ella event, her words touched upon the title of the event: an imperative. The call to "Breathe for Ella" was an insistence upon memory and collective responsibility. Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, also spoke about ongoing measures to reduce road traffic emissions in the capital. Young poets and musicians, including Ella Kissi-Debrah's siblings, performed for the street crowd, their breaths contributing to the clarion call. Interpreted through the lens of artivism, this artistic programming of *Breathe:2022* engages audiences with the topic of air pollution as a realm of community knowledge and action. The project foregrounds breathers' individual experiences within systemic inequities and collective struggles, inviting audiences to pay heed to singular stories, thus populating an imaginary of subjects whose experiences collectively determine the meaning of air quality.

Through its dispersed and fleeting yet profound transformations of public spaces, *Breathe:2022* participates in a contemporary, intersectional politics of breathing in urban environments. More than making breath visible, *Breathe:2022* has helped to make this subject political and participatory by "humanizing breath" (Irigaray 2021, 23-26). *Breathe:2022* recruits the technique of drawing and animating breath to make perceptible the material and affective flows of air, wind, breath and atmospheres. The medium of a looping moving image with porous or blurry outlines evokes an imaginary of breathing as a constant condition of exposure and site of exchange between bodies and environments. Goodwin's work resituates discourse on air pollution within breathing bodies rather than abstract indices, with the leitmotif of breath itself prefiguring voice, powering protest and inspiring hope for more breathable futures.

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2. As a short-term goal, the Bill, if passed, would require local authorities to implement World Health Organization standards for air quality within five years, while a Citizen's Commission for Clean Air (CCCA) would review progress annually and oversee future adaptations. At the time of writing, an early day motion has been signed by MPs. See https://ellaslaw.uk/what-would-ellas-law-do/. [Accessed: 15 June 2023].

Ella Kissi-Debrah's legacy is still unfolding, and it is too soon to know the longer-term impacts of *Breathe:2022* in London, the UK, and beyond. The question of how to ensure that everybody gets to breathe "clean" air, and as a "human" or "universal right" remains paramount and conspicuously unanswered by the speculative final sections of this paper. It is perhaps the case that the paradigm shift required is not guaranteed by an isolated event or promise but may instead stem from a qualitative, collaborative and caring commitment to making air breathable with inquiries and processes that continue to sound out intersectional experiences of atmospheric conditions.

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## CV

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