



SUSAN GEVIRTZ

**HYPERBOREA**  
OR  
*BERMUDA TRIANGLES I HAVE KNOWN*

Susan Gevirtz's books of poetry include *Aerodrome Orion & Starry Messenger* (Kelsey Street, 2010); *Thrall* (Post-Apollo, 2007); *Hourglass Transcripts* (Burning Deck, 2001); *Black Box Cutaway* (Kelsey Street, 1999); *PROSTHESIS : : CAESAREA* (Potes and Poets, 1994; reissue Little Red Leaves, 2009); *Taken Place* (Reality Street 1993); and *Linen minus* (Avenue B, 1992). Her critical writing includes *COMING EVENTS (Collected Writings)*, (Nightboat Books, 2013) and *Narrative's Journey: The Fiction and Film Writing of Dorothy Richardson* (Peter Lang, 1996). She teaches at California College of the Arts and lives in San Francisco.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE EXHIBITION  
JASMIN LIM AND GENEVIEVE QUICK: I WANT TO STEP ACROSS  
ON VIEW 12 OCTOBER TO 13 NOVEMBER 2013  
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—For Genevieve Quick and Jasmin Lim

A procession of the damned.  
By the damned, I mean the excluded. We shall have a procession of data that  
Science has excluded.

—*The Book of the Damned*, Charles Fort

In the Field of Anomalistics they reside.

Addressing them as sympathetic readers Nietzsche said:  
“Let us look each other in the face. We are Hyperboreans—we know well enough how remote  
our place is.” He quotes Pindar, “Beyond the North, beyond the ice, beyond death—our life, our  
happiness.”

—*The Antichrist*

Dear Parasymphetic readers,

I am learning to breathe underwater. Finally.  
And to see through ice.  
Everything I say is true.  
But when I talk down here you may not be able to tell.

Ancient astronauts taught me to speak in the gravityless chamber. You may think what I say is true,  
and it will be, but my voice will sound like hers.  
Less is more. Less is what we have.  
The aquanauts and extreme divers taught me how to access “documents of the unperceived”  
(Jasmin Lim) —to hold my breath for fifteen minutes in order to harvest coral reefs and rings of  
Saturn. I come up panting. I come back ripping off my heavy space suit and holding out a tray  
of excluded data for you to choose from like chocolates.

Let's go. But first a spell for insurance fraud. If it works it will protect us from the bad luck of the ship *Mary Celeste*.

Why did the crew leave the *Mary Celeste*?

The *Mary Celeste*, with a history of misfortune, was said to be “cursed” even before discovered derelict, tables set for dinner, with no apparent explanation. A classic ghost ship, drifting.

In 1885, the *Mary Celeste* was destroyed when her last owner intentionally wrecked her off the coast of Haiti in an attempt to commit insurance fraud.

“Anything we measure doesn't correspond...”

So: “documents of the unperceived” — Jasmin Lim

Give me your microwaves, radio waves, sine waves  
and I will surf them

“From the transmitter, to the receiver.

Across the ether, out of your speaker” —OMD

Or:

Never the Muse is absent  
from their ways: lyres clash and flutes cry

and everywhere maiden choruses whirling.  
Neither disease nor bitter old age is mixed  
in their sacred blood; far from labor and battle they live.

neither by ship nor on foot would you find  
the marvellous road to the assembly of the Hyperboreans.

—Pindar, *Tenth Pythian Ode*

But the marvelous road calls to us anyway. Landing gear at-the-ready. On touchdown the craft is swallowed-up. Carnivorous desert. This the Super-Sargasso Sea into which all lost things go. A stationary body of water where the gone rises and rains back down on earth. A sea that takes prisoners like most seas.

They are training me to collect falling things like cisterns collect rainwater. Get out your speakers. Sometimes you can hear falling.

Collection includes navigating the dangers of the hunt. The outside of your body is negative space forcing pressure on the skin which makes skin able to hold the inside of your body inside. If you stop collecting the pressure abates and skin will not adhere. So collecting is their breathing.

If the spell holds we continue our journey—another circling attempt to land. Tighten the straps. Ride above the phenomena St. Fort was the first to name: spontaneous fires; levitation; ball lightning; unidentified flying objects; unexplained disappearances; giant wheels of light in the oceans; animals found outside their normal ranges. Reports of out-of-place artifacts (OOP Arts), strange human appearances and disappearances by alien abduction, strange falls, strange lights or objects sighted in the skies that might be alien spacecraft. . . .

So now you have met our patron Saint Fort: collector of “damned” data.

Who is not a collector of proofless evidence?

Hagiography tells of his marvel on discovering that seemingly unrelated bits of information were, in fact, related. He went back again and again for more data and took more notes. He kept them on cards and scraps of paper in shoeboxes. He wrote in a cramped shorthand of his own invention.

So goes the liturgy. That was a little distraction for those of you who aren't accustomed to heights and depths. Throw that carabineer into the south gust. Get blown off track but stay on the scent. That's the hunt code. Pull your furs tighter. The spell holds. These Icarian gliders aren't what they use to be. Lean pole-ward. Rotate your mirrors.

Charroux first related the Hyperboreans to an ancient astronaut race of “reputedly very large, very white people” who had chosen “the least warm area on the earth because it corresponded more closely to their own climate on the planet from which they originated.

Are the poles white? So white that we travel through white to the other side of brightness. Lo! The new Jim Crow. Again we are blinded to the vast prismatic spectrum that prevails there. Borea and Abaris, feasting on gold, show us how to see in the bright.

First they purify themselves by rubbing their skin with oil of ice. Then they collect plankton, mineral crumbs, bird saliva, parachute debris, used acupuncture needles, essence of map, poisonous mushrooms, wings from downed planes, celluloid film scrap, parakeet feed, anything with which to make more Rovers and T2 Landers, and anything that falls from the sky and can be retrieved from a thousand fathoms below.

St. Fort said, “People with a psychological need to *believe* in marvels are no more prejudiced and gullible than people with a psychological need *not* to believe in marvels.” What does belief look like? How do you advise the parents of a pyrokinetically gifted child to read Fort's *Wild Talents* rather than the works of baby doctor Benjamin Spock? For this, and all maladies of explanation they imbibe plankton tea. Plankton is *to wander, drift, drive astray*. It is the only life form in the so far north. They serve this tea under the shadow cast by the one annual sunset.

Fire on the moon, underwater military bases, number stations, unmanned nuclear lighthouses, thunderstones, fairies, devil's footprints, giants, evidence for occult criminology

000000000000 zero zero zero: the sign-off for number stations

In the stars we are dust but in the dust we are hyperstars visited by the child who has lost her mother. Our aim is to help her make many return visits to the sky. So we build ships and document the sun splash crawl space through which she may climb

Never the muse is absent  
when maiden choruses whirl  
And dervishes lend their spin to  
this paper airplane

Let us look each other in the face parasympathetics. Let us take their cue and wipe off our faces

Tossed the notes to the north wind

Take it. Fold it. Hold it high. Mutter the sound of Ezekiel's sandals walking across the valley of dry bones. Take his hand. Launch it

Fort: “I believe nothing of my own that I have ever written.”