

A woman with dark hair, wearing a beige ribbed sweater, is smiling and looking to her right. She is holding several books. The background is a bookshelf filled with various books. The sweater has text printed on it.

BOOK EXPO
2013 CHICAGO

JANET KUYPERS READINGS
FROM SCARS PUBLICATIONS BOOKS
AT THE CHICAGO BOOK EXPO 11/24/13

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THESE POEMS WERE PERFORMED TO PEOPLE ATTENDING THE 2013 CHICAGO BOOK EXPO 11/24/13, BECAUSE JANET KUYPERS WORKED AT THE "SALOON POETRY" TABLE (AS A MEMBER OF THE "NEW GENERATION OF SALOON POETS"). SHE SOLD COPIES OF OLDER SCARS PUBLICATIONS BOOKS, AND READ EACH POEM FROM A DIFFERENT SCARS PUBLICATIONS BOOK.

BIO Janet Kuypers is a professional performance artist, a writer, photographer, and a literary magazine editor, while running Scars Publications, which hosts two literary magazines, publishes books and releases CDs. She has had over 70 books published (as of 11/13, of poetry, prose, novels and art), has sung in 3 acoustic bands, and worked with 8 music groups (combining her poetry with music). In 2010 she began hosting a the Chicago open mic *the Café Gallery*, which also releases weekly video podcasts. Her CD releases (over 40 in 2013) appear at iTunes and other online vendors; she produced an Internet radio station (2005-2009), and all of her work can be found on line through <http://scars.tv> or <http://www.janetkuypers.com>.

CAST IN STONE

I've searched a millenia for you
and my love for you
 will survive through the ages
And if they cast us in stone
it will only cement my love for you
for all to see and admire
because even if the elements
 chip away our outer façades
the marble will smooth in time
and my soul will still flourish
being frozen by your side.

READ FROM THE BOOK
"TAKING POETRY TO THE STREETS"



I'M NOT SICK BUT I'M NOT WELL

I'm not sick but I'm not well
and I'm sure there's something I can do about this
I've popped the aspirin
the tylenol
the ibuprofen
the codine
the prozac
the sleeping pills
and that thermometer is down my throat
and I'm gagging

I'm not sick but I'm not well
the doctors find nothing wrong with me
and believe me, they've taken the x-rays
they've striped me down
and made me wear one of those awful paper robes
and they've felt me up
and checked me out
and found what they were looking for
but didn't find anything I was looking for

I'm not sick but I'm not well
and I can't help but think
that everything I'm doing to make things better
might only be making things worse
so I don't want to listen to what
you have to say anymore
and I want this IV out of my arm
and I want this oxygen tube out from my nose
and I want this suppository out of my ass
and I want you to get that scalpel away from me
because I want everything I've got

I'm not sick but I'm not well
and they want me if they can keep me in line
and they want me if they can cut me open
 and take out my insides
 and suck out the fat
 and suck out the life
 and make me generic
 and make me dependent
 make me unreal
 make me not whole
and i've walked that line with all you doctors
and I want all my parts back
and I want to be healthy

no, I'm not sick and maybe I'm not well
but you're only making me worse
I don't have the answers but neither do you
so instead of tearing me apart
 and dissecting me
 and studying the bones
let me just stay together for a while
until I figure it all out

READ FROM THE BOOK "FRAGMENTS"

CHILDREN, CHURCHES, AND DADDIES

And the little girl said to me,
“I thought only daddies drank
beer.” And I found myself

trying to make excuses for the can
in my hand. I remember being
in the church, a guest at a

wedding of two people
I didn't know. My date pointed
out two little boys

walking to their seats in
front of us. In little suits and
cowboy boots, this is what

is central Illinois. And my date
said he was sure those boys
would grow up to be gay. And

the worst part was their father
was the coach of the high school
football team. I think I

laughed, but I hesitated.
I remember being in the
church, it was Christmas

Eve, my date's family went up
for communion, and all I could think
was that singing the hymns was

hard enough, I don't know the
words, what am I doing here,
what am I supposed to do? And I

stayed seated, and everyone else
slowly walked to the front of the
church. Little soldiers in a

little line, the little children
in their little dresses walking
behind their mommies and

daddies. And the little girl
said, "I thought only daddies
drank beer." And I found myself

trying to make excuses.

IN BOOKS "LIFE ON THE EDGE", "IT ALL COMES DOWN",
"HOPE CHEST IN THE ATTIC", "OEUVRE", OR
"JANET AND JEAN TOGETHER"

DEATH

when he was a child, a little boy, he
would walk through the living room

over and over again
he would see the book on the shelf

a science book, a volume
from a set: a book about

how the world works

once he looked though the pages
found a drawing about the life

of planet earth, how it was
formed, how eventually the

temperature would rise, all life
on earth would eventually die

and reading that it was
millions of years away didn't help

with the fear, the instant panic:
so he took the book, hid the

one volume from the rest,
so he wouldn't have to see it

when he walked through his
own living room

READ FROM THE BOOK "FINALLY, LITERATURE
FOR THE SNOTTY AND ELITE"

I'M THINKING ABOUT MYSELF TOO MUCH

all of my life it
has all been about you
what do you need
what do you want
how can i help you
what can i do for you
and now for once
i start to live
and now you tell me
that i'm thinking about
myself too much
and i think back to
all the time i've
spent with you
and all the care
i've given you
and now you tell me
that i'm thinking about
myself too much
and i've cooked for
you and i've cleaned
for you and i've made
sure everything in
your world made sense
and now you tell me
that i'm thinking about
myself too much
and all i can think
is that you're only angry
because i'm thinking
about me at all

READ FROM THE BOOK "THE STORIES OF WOMEN"

WRITING YOUR NAME

I sat there
in the shade
I took
a stick
I wrote
your name
in the ground
preacher says
the number one
sin is lust
then I am
condemned
to Hell
for
I
want
you
and I
don't care
what
preacher says
for if
the elements
wash away
your name tonight
I will
be back
tomorrow
to write it
again.

READ FROM THE BOOK "IT ALL COMES DOWN"

BUILD YOUR OWN CROSS

why be a carpenter
and build your own cross
when Walmart
can do it for you

selling mass produced
2' tall
wooden crosses
with glued plastic flowers
to hammer into dirt
at roadsides
for accident victims

why be a carpenter

why build your own cross

when Walmart can do it for you

READ FROM THE BOOK "SHE'S AN OPEN BOOK"

VERSE 6 OF
RIGHT THERE, BY YOUR HEART

i don't know how many times the idea of seeing him went through my mind. at least once a week i'd imagine a scene where he'd confront me, and i'd somehow be able to fight him back, to show him that he didn't bother me any more, to show him that the rock wasn't there any more. to somehow be able to prove that i wasn't a victim any more. i was a survivor. that's what they call it now, you see, survivor, because victim sounds too trying for someone who has been raped. so i keep saying i'm over it but i keep imagining mark all over again, not raping me, but following me on the street, coming to my door with flowers, or sending me a valentine. but once, when i saw him walking out of a record store as i was walking in, the rock fell so hard that i thought i was going to be sick right there by the cash register, right there by those metal things at the doorway that beep when you try to take merchandise out of the store, you know what those things are, i just can't think of what they're called. but if i did that, then he'd know he was still winning, to this day. how many years has it been? how many years since he did that to me? how many years since i've been wanting to fight him, since i've been feeling that rock in my god-damned stomach? i managed to hide my face from him in the store so he didn't see me as he walked out. when i saw he was gone, i wondered why i still felt the pressure in my chest. i thought the pressure was going to turn my body inside-out. i reached for my heart, grabbed at my shirt. maybe the pain was always there, right there, by my heart, but i try not to think of it until i go through times like those.

READ FROM THE BOOK "PROMINENT TONGUE"

NEW TO CHICAGO

I'm still new to this city
I know, I know, I've been here for years
but I haven't gone to the Sears Tower Observatory
since my Junior Prom

but when I walk by the First Chicago building
the beams along the north side
sloping up, parabolic pillars curving up to the sky

when I walk by the First Chicago building
I walk up along the side
and lean up against one of the sloping pillars
press my body against the cold concrete
feel the cold against my chin, my breasts, by thighs

and look up along the curve, stretching up towards the sky

you know, these pillars look like race tracks
and I could see something come rushing down that curve
a matchbox car, a race car
a marble, a bowling ball
a two-ton weight

I see the speed, the power, and it
almost makes me afraid to look up

and every time I walk by the First Chicago building
I do the same thing, I do this little ritual
and it feels like the first time

READ FROM THE BOOK "CHAOTIC ELEMENTS"

THE BURNING

I take the final swig of vodka
feel it burn it's way down my throat
hiss at it scorching my tongue
and reach for the bottle to pour myself another.
I think of how my tonsils scream
every time I let the alcohol rape me.
Then I look down at my hands --
shaking -- holding the glass of poison --
and think of how these were the hands
that should have pushed you away from me.
But didn't. And I keep wondering
why I took your hell, took your poison.
I remember how you burned your way
through me. You corrupted me
from the inside out, and I kept coming back.
I let you infect me, and now you've
burned a hole through me. I hated it.
Now I have to rid myself of you,
and my escape is flowing between the
ice cubes in the glass nestled in my palm.
But I have to drink more. The burning
doesn't last as long as you do.

READ FROM THE BOOK "POEM"

RUSSIANS AT A GARAGE SALE

at our annual garage sale this year
all these old couples came walking by

they were from the russian neighborhood
they could barely speak english

they would pick up an iron. "how much?"
"four dollars." "fifty cents?" "no."

it was a warm indian summer day
we were all clad in shorts and sunglasses

they would point at the iron, a toaster,
a blender. "all for a dollar?" "no."

and all the old couples wore raincoats
and scarves wrapped around their heads

they would pick up a wine glass. "how much?"
"twenty-five cents." "how about ten?"

FROM FROM THE BOOK "BLISTER & BURN"

LAST BEFORE EXTINCTION

Now he has so many opportunities.
He has nothing to lose. Why not
come out of the wilderness, attack
everything it sees. Kill something.
Suck the blood out, make him feel
alive for once more. Let them try
to restrain him. He has nothing to lose.

And for now it can fly to the highest
redwood, look out over the world.
Despise the world, the world that made
him be alone, leaving him alone. Who
will carry his name? Who will care
for him when he is old? Who can he
read bed time stories to?

Now it can feel death creeping upon
him, closer and closer. He wants to
scream. He calls upon nature; the
tides rise, earthquakes shatter homes.
He does not feel vindicated. He has lost.

And for now she can swim to the deepest
darkest cave in the Pacific, hide from
the solitude, swim lower and lower;
can she find where all of the other
animals of dying species hide, can she
find them. There must be others. They
can understand, they can live together,
at the bottom of the earth. Could they
show their pain for their species, share
what is left of their love, create a new race?

Soon they will be no more
and we will be taking their bones,
reassembling them, studying their
form, rebuilding their lives, revering
them more than we ever did
in life. This is what it all becomes.
This is what it all boils down to.
Study the bones. Study the mistakes.
Study the bones.

READ FROM THE BOOK "LIVING IN A BIG WORLD"

BEING GOD

I'm tired of dying for your sins
over and over again and why is it that
I am the one that's doing the dying
when you are the one that's doing the sinning
I don't think you're learning your lesson

I'm tired of taking this knife to my hands
over and over again giving myself the stigmata
the blood gets all over my clothes
and I can never get the stains out
and for what, for you to see how I suffer

I'm tired of being humble when I'm
supposed to be the one with the power
over and over again I become your servant
and never are you bowing to me
I don't even get a thank you

I'm tired of preaching to the converted
when the converted aren't even really listening
they're snoring in the back rows while I
deliver my sermon and there's not even air
conditioning in here and I'm sweating

I'm tired of coming to you and healing the sick
taking away the problems, over and over again
giving you something to look forward to
and all I have is an eternity of waiting for
someone to take my place and tend to my wounds

I'm tired of giving the earth up to you
watching the devil's work be done, and you know,
he's just sitting down there looking at me
and laughing, over and over again because it's
so easy for him when he doesn't have to work

I'm tired of being your salvation
over and over again you turn to me
and I have no one to turn to but myself
it's a bitch, you know, being your own god
since no one can save me from me

I'm tired of being your teacher, handing you
what you need on a silver platter and waiting
for that damn collection plate and someone
is always stealing out of it from the back row
I know who you are, you who leave me nothing

I'm tired of wearing this crown of thorns
over and over again the needles prick my skin
and even gods bleed, at least this one does
and when I ask you to wipe the blood
out of my eyes, well, I can't see you anywhere

I'm tired of being something for everybody
when everyone is nothing for me
maybe the devil has the right idea, you know
maybe I'll sit back and wait for you miss me
as you wonder who's your messiah now

READ FROM THE BOOK "GET YOUR BUZZ ON"

BOOK EXPO 2013 CHICAGO

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Compact Discs: *Men's Favorite Nise the demo tapes, Kuypers the final (MP3 inclusive), Woods and Flowers the beauty & the desolation, The Second Axis Something is Swallowing, The Second Axis Live in Alaska, Paths & Kuypers Live at Cafe Aloha, Pointless Orchestra Rough Mixes, Kuypers Seeing Things Differently, SD/SD Tick Tock, Kuypers Change Rearrange, Order From Chaos The Entropy Project, Kuypers Six One One, Kuypers Stop, Kuypers Masterful Performances mp3 CD, Kuypers Death Comes in Threes, Kuypers Changing Gears, Kuypers Dreams, Kuypers How Do I Get There?, Kuypers Content+Control+Control, the DMU Art Connection the DMU Art Connection, Kuypers Questions in a World Without Answers, Kuypers SA, Kuypers W2D Radio (2 CD set), Men's Favorite Nise The Second Axis These Truths, assorted artists Spring Theory, Oh (audio CD), Life in the Cafe (3 CD set), the DMU Art Connection Inlet Plan, the DMU Art Connection Music Depression in Something, Classic Radio Classic Radio Work #1, Classic Radio Classic Radio Work #2, Classic Radio Classic Radio Work #3, Classic Radio Classic Radio Work #4, Classic Radio Classic Radio Work #5, Classic Radio Classic Radio Collection Collection #01-05 (5 CD set), audio CD, 2 CD set, Classic Elements (2 CD set), Close in Motion (4 CD set), SD/SD Something to a Half (EP), PBR&J Two for the Price of One (EP), B&J, John and Hypnotic, An American Portrait, Kuypers the Boston Tea Party Biker the Johnson Powders, Tino Fusico (4 CD set), podcasts the Evolution of Performance Art (13 CD set), Kuypers Live (14 CD set), the DMU Art Connection the Things They Did to You (2 CD set), Kuypers Seeing a Psychiatrist (3 CD set), Kuypers St. Paul's (3 CD set), Kuypers the 2009 Poetry Game Show (3 CD set), Kuypers and the Religion of South Africa Burn Through Me (2 CD set), Kuypers "40", Kuypers Session and Other Stories, Kuypers the Stories of Women (amazon.com release), Kuypers "Dobro VeČe" (4 CD set), Kuypers "mammi" (4 CD set), Kuypers "Loving it All Out", Kuypers "What We Need in Life" (CD single), "Kuypers" "Made Any Difference" (CD single), Kuypers/Hardwick "Across the Pond" (3 CD set).*