

A woman with red hair, wearing a brown t-shirt and dark shorts, is sitting in a meditative lotus position on a paved road. Her eyes are closed, and her hands are resting on her knees in a mudra. In the foreground, a chalk drawing of a face is visible on the asphalt. The background shows a road with traffic lights and greenery. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

the Bahá'í Center
poetry show
6/4/16 from
Janet
Kuypers

Janet Kuypers

table of contents

progress / extend	3
falling / civil / greatest	4
Earth is a topiary	5
On Becoming a Woman	6
Viewing the Woman in a 19 th Century Photograph	7
Content with Inferior Men	8
<i>from</i> In the Air	9
Oh, She Was a Woman	10

bio: Chicago poet *Janet Kuypers* is a professional performance artist, writer, photographer, and a literary magazine editor running Scars Publications, which hosts two literary magazines, publishes books and releases CDs. With over 90 Janet Kuypers books published (as of 2016 of poetry, prose, novels and art), she has sung in 3 acoustic bands, and worked with 8 music groups combining her poetry with music. In 2010-2015 she hosted a weekly Chicago open mic *the Café Gallery*, with YouTube releases, a weekly podcast and a collection book. Her CD releases (40+) appear at iTunes and other online vendors, linked through <http://scars.tv> or <http://www.janetkuypers.com>.

<http://www.facebook.com/janetkuypers> <http://www.youtube.com/ccandd96>

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<https://itunes.apple.com/us/artist/janet-kuypers/id120904815> • https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/396332.Janet_Kuypers

Colophon: Designed with QuarkXPress v9.3, images edited in Adobe Photoshop CS6. Fonts: *AGaramond*, *Helvetica Neue Black Condensed*, *JanetBigCheese*, *Jenna Sue* and *Trajan*. Chapbook images were photographed of Kuypers on Parmer Ave. at the Tamayo turn lane 2/2016 in Austin Texas.

Show notes: Images projected in show display are Kuypers' ~1988 drawings interspersed with *deejay* images; background noise is sampled from Laurie Anderson tracks *Same Time Tomorrow* (13), *Someone Else's Dream* (14) and *On The Way To Jerusalem* (11) from her album release *The ugly One With the Jewels*.

progress

the police code was
played out to warn everyone:

Haiku in Progress



extend

doctors found gene to
extend life; plan to use for
anti-aging cream

falling

falling from the sky
I can only hope I'll be
landing on my feet

civil

a civil war is
raging in me, and I want
a revolution

greatest

see her do a flip,
walk the tight rope. This is the
greatest show on earth.

Earth is a Topiary

1.
he said
that maybe Earth
is a topiary.

and she said,
if the definition of a topiary
is that it's two thirds water
and a topiary is supposed to have
worms traveling around
and flies swarming in the air,
then yes,
Earth is a topiary.

2.
then he said,
but what if Earth is a topiary,
and it's a centerpiece
at a wedding table.

and the candles are stars,
he said.

and,
thinking of the candles
reflected in the eyes
of the guests at the table,
she said,
and the guests at the table
are the galaxies.
and at the end of the night
all of the guests leave,
and it's like all of the galaxies
are traveling away
at faster
and faster
speeds.

On Becoming a Woman

When I was young
I never had any lessons in how to become a woman

No one explained to me the blood you have to deal with
Every month, or the potential pain

like there are little people inside you, like little elves
Just kicking at the insides of you

No one explained to me that this is the beauty
Of being a woman

I thought women had enough to fight against
to begin with

So one day I noticed, while reading a book
That there was blood on my underwear

So,
I guess the process had started for me

So I told my mom what I saw
She said she'd buy some pads right away

That was all the talking we did about it
I never got a talk about the birds and the bees

Because, when the world seems to go silent
Just when you need it screaming loud and clear

You listen to the silence throughout life
And just hope that you'll know what to do

On this blindfolded battle
On becoming a woman

Viewing the Woman in a 19th Century Photograph

I see the woman in the picture,
I see their depiction of beauty —

of something
that couldn't work
that can't work...

I see the sepia toning,
but I also see the dependency,
and I see the degradation.

My mind has been cluttered.
I can't see the women,
I see the adornments of beauty
the preposterous impractical way
she has been made to be seen
and not heard.

She was forced with this image...
And it must be a shame
because now I've been tainted
with the knowledge of society,
with the knowledge of it's motives.
And now I can't even see the beauty.
I can only see the oppression.

“Oh, it's not like that anymore” they say.
as I wipe the make-up off my eyelids
and wonder who I'm trying to impress.

Content with Inferior Men

there are some theorists that say
that women need to be able to look up to a man
in order to feel complete. these theorists
would say that a woman could not be president,
at least not on a personal level.
think of it - here is a woman, the most important
person on earth, and she would never know of anyone
who had more power than her. how could she
look up to any man? how could she admire
any man? how could she respect any man?
and you know, i can kind of see that point,
how can you love someone you don't respect,
i mean, i want someone in my life that can teach
me something, that can help me grow, and if
i was the most powerful person on earth
i would probably think that no one could teach
me anything. but the only thing i could think of
in response to this theory is, why don't men
who are the presidents of the united states
of america find themselves unhappy with their
boring, unequal, supportive wives? why is it
that men are content with inferior women
but women aren't content with inferior men?

...from
in the air

Have you ever noticed that the air isn't normal air in an airplane? I mean, there's just something about the air in the cabin that's different. It's got a smell to it, that's the only way I can describe it. A smell of all these people, maybe not going places, but getting away, as fast as they can...

Once, when I was on a flight back from D. C., a flight attendant walked by, stack of magazines in her hand, Time, Newsweek, Businessweek, and I stopped her, asking what magazines she had. And she replied, "Oh, these magazines are for men." This is a true story. So I asked her again, what magazines do you have. I had already read Time, so I took Newsweek.

She was a woman who belched out loud,
she laughed too hard,
she swore too much.
And she grew up too fast.

She was a woman who worked on eight different projects
at once, and still managed to get them all done on time.

She was a woman who never lost control.
She planned everything,
she demanded perfection, and
she always had the answers.

She was a woman who raised the pitch of her voice
when she was asking for something.

She was a woman who never played drinking games,
because she never needed an excuse to drink.
Because she could drink most men under the table.
She loved dirty jokes, and
she seldom crossed her legs.

She was a woman who wanted to feel alive.
She was a woman who could not eat something she could not kill.
She wrote letters to the editor,
and when that wasn't enough
she *became* an editor, because
she liked making waves.

Because she was a woman who knew all to well
that you only had one life to live.
Don't do something because it's expected of you,
do it because *you* are a woman who knows what's right.
That golden ring is almost in your grasp.
You've got the brains,
and believe it or not,
you've got the brawn,
so don't let anything stand in your way.



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