



cc&d magazine
chapbook issue
ISSN#1068-5154

Ultimate Connectivity

Janet Kuypers

in the first poetry show on nature and connectivity
before the Awesmic City Expo
at the Palmer Events Center,
Austin Texas Sunday 10/16/16

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J.K. bio



Chicago poet and Pushcart Prize nominee 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://www.janetkuypers.com> or Scara Publications on line at <http://scars.tv>.

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

Ultimate Connectivity: trying to separate peace from war

Wanted to see the other side of the world.
Wanted to roam the streets with wandering cows.
So I thought that docking at the Bay of Bengal
would lead to a great vegetarian communal experience.

But
women are second class citizens there, forced to
wear layers of clothes everywhere to hide themselves...

So I
walked along the naval base in Visakhapatnam,
wandered to the row of Emperor statues along the shore —

and I
wondered why two thirds of the statue plaques
(written in Hindi and English)
wrote that most people
were Emperor and poet.
Warrior and poet. Freedom fighter and poet.

Which made me think:
poetry is a platform for peace. And it made me
wonder, do we all live in this balancing act,
where we speak softly and carry a big stick.
Which creates the crucial question: do
we need war to have peace?
When is it possible to understand peace
if we haven't gone through a battle to get it?

Human life has always had that uphill battle,
where we all work, we all fight some form of war, until
we will all finally feel peace.

Ultimate Connectivity: disconnect to reconnect

People are rushing,
don't have time for breakfast
after you slammed the alarm snooze button three times,
stumble out of bed, you're clean enough,
forget the shower, clean up your face,
smooth your hair, put on your work clothes,
grab the briefcase, lock the door,
speed up but avoid the sweat of a near sprint
to make it to the train, or the bus stop.
You can get something to eat on the way,
you think, as your light pant doesn't change
once you've stopped at the stop.
You've still got places to be,
check your watch,
look down the street,
where is your carrier,
you need that vehicle
to get you to where you need to be.
Pace a bit. Adjust your clothes.
Check your watch again.
This is corporate America, you think, hurry up and wait.

The world rotates at a thousand miles an hour.
Everything is spinning.
You see more and more, but feel connected less and less.

So maybe it's time to make choices
and it's time to lay claim
to everything we've been blindly giving away —
'cause if I can make choices
to walk flights of stairs
instead of taking smoke breaks at work,
or if I can pick up recyclable garbage

left on the street by piggish people
who can't even take care of their own trash
(because if I don't do something after I complain
I'm almost as bad as they),
if I can make choices like that, maybe it's time
to look for peace, or even meditate, anywhere.

I mean, if you're waiting for work at a bus stop,
then try to relax right there.
Maybe you can reconnect by disconnecting.

Find some time like this to just stop,
because everything around us moves too fast anyway.
The world orbits it's axis
at close to one thousand miles an hour,
it speeds around the sun
at sixty-six thousand miles an hour,
and our solar system
is hurtling around the outer edges
of our Milky Way galaxy
at four hundred eighty-three thousand miles an hour.
And news flash —
our entire galaxy is speeding away from other galaxies too
at an astounding one point three million miles an hour,
which, the last time I checked,
we keep getting closer to the speed of light...

So, if the news from the world bombards you
while you're being hurled through the cosmos,
maybe that is when you need to meditate,
mentally step outside it all. Maybe then
you could then gain a new perspective.
Come to peace with everything.
And maybe that is when,
when you disconnect,
that this hurtling Earth can come full circle
and everything can connect again.

Ultimate Connectivity: aches and pains

Had a really heavy workload;
months went by,
the workload piled,
the boyfriend was bringing me down

and I'd wake up every day
in so much pain,
shoulder, elbow, back and knees —
the pain drove me to a doctor

and after the blood tests
they found nothing wrong,
but they guessed it was arthritis
and give me really strong pills.

They'd make me dizzy,
they'd knock me out,
but they didn't relieve the pain...
So after four months I got away —

got away from the work,
got away from the boyfriend.
Enjoyed the sun and the sand
and felt at peace again.

And that's when I realized
I didn't need that boyfriend,
and I can handle the work
so... I didn't need the pills.

And the aches and pains,
they went away —
and it only happened
when I brought peace back again.

Ultimate Connectivity: how coffee can be relaxing

Every time I went back
to my childhood getaway...
Every time I'd go for a walk
I felt like half the people knew me.
You didn't feel afraid
to say hello to strangers
because everyone here was at home.

Now, I don't drink coffee.
I don't like the taste
and I don't need the caffeine.
But when I was here,
at what seems like my own little retreat,
I'd pour myself a really weak cup,
sweeten it up to replenish my sweet stock

and I'd sit at the table
outside in the morning to write,
or I'd sit at the bench
and watch retired couples
play round robin doubles tennis.

They'd ask me if I'd like to join them,
but no, I was happy here,
with my insanely weak coffee
that was just warm enough
to warm my spirits,
and keep me company
as I enjoyed the morning breeze
and the connection I felt
with everyone around me.

Ultimate Connectivity: getting naked with nature

After hiking for miles
at Arches National Park,
I realized that coming
at a cooler time of year
pretty much meant
that I had the park to myself.

I walked for miles,
saw no one, anywhere,
and when I saw that no one
had followed my walk
along one ridged mountainous

edge to a plateau,
I did something
I never thought I would do
in a public place.
I looked around,
saw for miles
that I was alone,
so I got undressed,
and sat in the lotus position
on top of my small pile of clothes
and tried
for one brief moment
to connect with nature.



I'd close my eyes.
Then open my eyes,
find no one still there,
then look around,
maybe close my eyes again.

The only thing that stopped me
was the breeze
at this mountain ridge,
'til I decided
that maybe I had
enough nature
for one day
before I put on my clothes
and continued my walk,
watching the red rock
and truly feeling
that I was finally
a part of this world.



Ultimate Connectivity: swimming with the fishes

Already in my wet suit,
I sat in the back seat of a car,
itching to get into the water.
The water at this bay in Oahu
was amazingly blue,
and all I wanted
was to get into that water
and swim with the fishes.
And as soon as we got there,
they warned me not to cross
that coral reef in the water
where the currents could take
me out too far into the deep.
So I nodded my head
and went straight to the shore,
and not too far in
I swam to a school
of bright blue dinner plate sized
fish with bright yellow fins.
And so I followed the fish,
and after the fact
they told me
that the first thing I did
when I got in that water
was that I swam right past
that coral reef in the water.

Oh, I'm sorry, I was just
swimming with the fishes,
and on this day
the current didn't take me away...
Because the only thing
that would take me away
was not the current,
but the vibrant fish
that let me share
their space with them.
I wasn't there
to invade their space,
I was just there to swim
with beautiful creatures
and commune
in a part of the world
so few people could ever
have the change to enjoy.
So yeah,
I'll cross that line,
I'll do it again,
just to swim with the fishes
and connect with any life form
I could possibly find.



Ultimate Connectivity: forgetting fear and feeling free

Standing in the water
maybe twenty meters from the shoreline
I saw one Sea Lion facing off
with another Sea Lion on the beach.

In an effort to say
that they were the beach master,
one started to chase
the other into the water,
to kick them off their domain.

Now, a Sea Lion
can get up to seven feet long,
and when one male
started chasing the other
into the water,
these giant animals
were barreling straight toward me.

But no, I wasn't scared,
they weren't after me,
so I stood perfectly still
as one splashed past me to my left,
and the other splashed past me to my right.
I think a few people
at the beach were scared for me,
but I was fine,
and went into the water
and swam toward
the row of sleeping
white tipped sharks
along the ocean floor.

I counted more than two dozen,
and was stunned how perfectly
these sharks remain so straight
in a row when they slept.
So after seeing the sea,
I swam back to shore
and turned my eye to the sky.
The Frigate birds
would swarm us humans
hoping for leftover food,
but I photographed flying finches,
and watched Nasca birds,
both male and female,
keeping their eggs warm
before they would hatch.
It's nice to see
when looking at creatures
not like you and me,
that we can see
that they may not be
as scary as can be,
but, like you and me,
they are just living to be free.
And when you look closely,
that is
really nice
to see.



Ultimate Connectivity: a bird in the hand

So after a night camping
at Bryce National Canyon
(yeah, yeah, there was snow on the ground,
but my sleeping bag zipper wasn't broken...)
I got out of my tent in the morning
and a few little birds fluttered by.
Now, one seemed to hang out
a little too close,
so I put some grain
in the palm of my hand,
stretched out my forearm
and remained perfectly still.
Almost on cue,
less than two minutes later
the bird landed on the palm of my hand
and enjoyed the bounty I gave them





And suddenly I felt
like I was Mother Earth,
I could stretch out my arms
like a scarecrow
but this time the animals
wouldn't be afraid,
and with my outstretched arms,
I would give them food,
and shelter, and love.

And maybe that was when
I twitched my finger,
or else I was out of food,
but the next thing I knew,
my three inch little bird
took a step or two
along my palm
and across my fingers
before it flew away.



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published in conjunction with *ccd* magazine
the UN-religious, NON-family oriented literary and art magazine

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<http://scars.tv/ccd>

ISSN 1068-5154

INTERNET ISSN 1555-1555

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Magazines: *Children, Churches and Daddies* (cc&d magazine), founded Jan 1993, Down in the Dirt, conceived 1994, founded 2000

Books: *Hope Coast to the Arctic, the Window, Chase Cover Before Solstice*, (Woman), Autumn Rain, Contents Under Pressure, An Average Guy's Guide To Founding, Changing Gears, the Key to Believing, Domestic Violence, etc., Queens, Enzo Verme, I, the Other Side, The Bear Lady's Silhouette (regular and 2005 Expanded Edition), Poetry, Seeing Things Differently, Clump/Chomping, Death Comes to Harvest, Harvest Performances, Six Rivers, Life on California, Queens, Rough Moon, The Entry Project, The Other Side (2004 Edition), Stop, Stay True Life, The Beauty and the Destructive, ccd #167.5 (Writing to Honour & Cherish, editor optional), Honor & Burn (the Queens edition), 568#, ccd #170.5 Distinguished Writings editor edition, Living in Class, Silent Scars, Telling It All In, It All Comes Down, Rising to the Surface, Solenopsis, Chapter 58 (v1, v2 & v3), *Floppy, Literature for the Study and Elys (v1, v2 & part 2)*, A Wake-Up Call From Tradition, (writers), Dark Matter: the Mind of Janet Kuypers, (Evelyn), Get Your Buzz On, Janet & Joan Together, po-em, Telling Poetry to the Streets, the Open-Book-Get-Your-Books, the Written Word, Dead, Prepare Her For This, Unearthed, Living in a Big World, Palled the Trigger, Venture to the Unknown, Janet Kuypers: Enriched, She's on an Open Book, "40", Section and Other Stories, the Stories of Women, Prominent Pen (Kuypers edited), Essential, the 2012 Date-book, Prominent Tongue, Classic Moments, Feast, Stability Stability Stab Stab Stab, a Picture's Worth 1,000 words (color art book and black art book), Life, in Color, Post-Apocalyptic, Burn Through Me, Under the Sea (photo book), Partiality, Revealed, 100 Hertz, Owe me the Movers, Let me See you Stripped, Part of my Pain, Rape Section Like a Death, Say Nothing, Twittered, when you Dream tonight, the Poetic Table of Poetry, a year long Journey, Don Vuyayak, Sulphur & Sawdust, Slate & Marrow, Blister & Burs, Rise & Repeat, Survive & Thrive, (not so) Warm & Fuzzy, Torture & Triumph, Oh, the Elements, Side A/Side B, Balance, Chaos Theory, Writing To Honour & Cherish, Distinguished Writings, Breaking 5-Lines: Unlocking the Mysteries, the Book of Scars, We The Poets, Life on the Edge, Revealing all your Daily Little Scars, Despair Remains, Charred Remnants, Charred Remnants, Hope & Creation, Bending the Curve, Layers of Creation, Dark Matter, Survival of the Fittest, Growing Through the Dirt, Laying the Groundwork, Weathered, who, in my blood, (bound) 13 editions, Enriched Poetry, ccd Enriched Prose, Enriched with Dirt, An Open Book, Literary Town Hall 12 editions, Prominent Pen (2 editions), 100 Words, 1,000 Words, the 2012 Literary Date Book It Was All Foreordained, Cultural Touchstone, the Mission (new edition and dogbook edition), Purpose, Falling, Clump/Titillate, After the Apocalypse 2013 date-book, After the Apocalypse (poetry edition), After the Apocalypse (prose edition), Entanglement, Guilt by Association, don't forget it, don't listen, read, here minimum, Post as Sociopath, Drowning, Art is not Meant to be Touched, the Broken Path, a New Pen, Need to Know Basic Introduction edition and extended edition, the "used to know" 2015 literary date book, one Solitary Word, What Must be Done, Adrift, Salvation, the 2016 literary date book anthology, the Chosen Few, Sunlight in the Sanctuary, the Swan Road, the Significance of the Frontier, the Svetavoturo Unpublished, Harvest of Goss, the Little Monk, Infamous in our Prime, Anis Nis: an Understanding of her Art, the Electronic Windmill, Changing Women, the Swan Road, the Significance of the Frontier, the Svetavoturo Unpublished, Harvest of Goss, the Little Monk, Death in Malaga, Moments/Mori: in the Palace of Creation, R.L.P., Bob the Bumble Bee, Remnants and Shadows, I Saw This, the Drive, Thomas of Tea, Crushing Down Nineteenth, Blue Callar Ballet, sopran, In Your Heart the Apostrophe's Yearnings of God, the Adventurers of the Key to Believing, Janet Nis: an Understanding of her Art (second printing), *Richard Ender / Charlie Newman*, 12 Times 12 Equus Grass, a Marble Made Pauline Barthes with a Marble Apple in her Marble Hand, Challenges of Night and Day and Chicago Poems, Lighten Up, Not Far From Here, Waterhead, You Have Finally Won, Aurora C. Suburban Rhythms, Down Syndrome, the Dark Side of Love, The pill is man's best friend, Angela's Symbolic Is Goodness of David's Spine, Poems and Stories from The Blue Callar Book of the Dead, Cat People, Death of an Angel, Ghost, Science: A Curandero's View, Ghost Dancers Leaping from a Tree, the 4-D Window, Open Wounds, Justice Justice, Justice, Gunther, Cats, Screams Cloud Island, When the World was Black and White, a Petal Under Pavement, the Holy Sea of CEE, Book 15 "Thailand to Volcanoes, Lost in an Eden, I Was Charles Bronson's Secret Hostage, Eresable Band, Royal Doner's Death Scene "its of Thee, Understood, Akashic Shogun, Champagne - Hot Water, How a Bullet Behaves, the Thing in the Lounge of WagonWheel (I Come in Ancient, the Second Stage Something is Something, The Second Acting Live in Alaska, Pallas & Kuypers Live in California, Shadowing Other Footprints, the Next Door and Other Poems, Major Arcana, Sins Peoria Nolle est Gloria, Short Takes, Seeing Strangers, Re-Vivifying America, The Tribes Joshua Drive Out of the Land, Butchery of the Innocent, Hammer-Chained, No Refit - No Ocean, Dancing at the Abyss, a noia of eschews with guns, the Blazing Hands of 100 Drummers, Make the Wind, - The Window, the Corrosion, The Pyre On Which Tomorrow Burns, Cowboy Hats and Railways, Give What You Can, Come Fly with Me, Out of the Web, Don't Tread on the Ice Age, Entering the Ice Age, Entering the Ice Age, the Line to Power, Four the Farsaken, Falling Into Place, Unknown, Forever Bond, Exploding on the Scene, Moving the Earth, Arizona Again, by its Smoke, No Return, Wrapping It Up, Link to its Chain, Short out of a Cannon, Incalculable ink, a eye eye, Idols, Striving, See Belly, and Thus be Moved, Approaching From, Beyond the Gates, the Curve of Arctic Ice, Iden, a Mad Escape, Testament, the New Deal, the Captive and the Dead, When the Walls are Paper This, the Nighttime City, Suggested Torture, Down in the Dirt #084, Clearing the Debris, Skelated Remains, When the World Settles, Along the Surface, Into the White, Life... from Nothing, Down in It, Wake Up and Smell the Flowers, Looking Beyond, See the World Burn, America the Lost, Catch Fire in the Treetops, Wisdom in Broken Hems, Symbols Manifest, Grounded, Perfectly imperfect, I Pull the Strings, am I really interesting, Home at Last, Spiralling, a Rural Story, Treading Water, Black Cat, a Bad Influence, Too Many Miles, the Path of Last Resistance, halo goodbyee halo, When the Walls are Paper This, Planets Apart, Planets Apart, Nighttime City, the Breaking, Suggested Torture, New moon, a Perfect Solitude, 6 Feet Under, The Hive, the 23 Enigmas, Sacred Birds, Being Real, the Blind Eye, the Ratle the Effort the Yell

Compact Discs: *Mom's Favorite Hair the demo tapes, Kuypers the final (MP3 inclusive), Words and Flowers the beauty & the desolation, The Second Acting Something is Something, The Second Acting Live in Alaska, Pallas & Kuypers Live in California, MP3/Windows Orchestra through Holes, Kuypers Seeing Things Differently, SD 20 "It's Back, Kuypers Clump/Chomping, Release From Chaos The Entry Project, Kuypers Six One One, Kuypers Stop, Kuypers Hatfield Performance, mp3 CD, Kuypers Death Comes to Harvest, Kuypers Yearnings of Queens, Kuypers Home On the Coast, Kuypers Caricature-Cathedral, The Other Side Connection: the DMU Art Connection: the DMU Art Connection: Kuypers Questions in a World Without Answers, Kuypers SM, Kuypers T200 Radio CD set, Kuypers A Favorite Hair and the Second Acting Live in Alaska, recorded artistic Writing Theory, Oh (audio CD), Life in the Cafe (CD set), the DMU Art Connection: Holes, the DMU Art Connection: Holes: Depressive or Something, Classic Radio Classic Radio Week #1, Classic Radio Classic Radio Week #2, Classic Radio Classic Radio Week #3, Classic Radio Classic Radio Week #4, Classic Radio Classic Radio Week #5, Classic Radio the Classic Collection Collection #01-05 (5 CD set) an Audio CD 2 CD set, Classic Element 2 CD set, Chorus in Motion (4 CD set), SD/SD Something to a Hit (EP), PRA Live for the Price of a Don (EP), K&L, Joke and Hysteria: An American Parody, Kuypers An Artist's Trial/Paul Baker/The Jackson Producers Trio Fusion (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 See, Paul's (3 CD set), Kuypers the 2009 Poetry Game Show (3 CD set), Kuypers and the Haters of South Africa Burn Through Me (2 CD set), Kuypers "40", Kuypers Section and Other Stories, Kuypers the Stories of Women (amazon.com release), Kuypers "Duhro Yo'Ce" (4 CD set) Kuypers "tamm" (4 CD set), Kuypers "Letting It All Out", Kuypers "What We Need to Live" (CD single), Kuypers "Made Any Difference" (CD single), Kuypers "Burdick" "Across the Pond" (3 CD set)*