





PHOTOGRAPHY, DRAWINGS  
& COMPUTER ART 1986-2004

*l'arte*



*Janet Kuypers*  
**JANET KUYPERS**  
SCARS PUBLICATIONS AND DESIGN  
WITH PENNY DREADFUL PRESS

*The front cover image is of the Aurora Borealis, Fairbanks, Alaska, September 2002. The back cover set of images are from: the Statue of Liberty in New Jersey, a rock formation in a National Park in Utah 1998, a basketball hoop photographed for the book (woman.) in 1991, assorted buildings added to a photograph of the Chicago skyline Kuypers photographed from the water in the mid 1990s, an airplane at Naples Airport in the late 1980s, the back of a Vincent motorcycle 2001, Arlington National Cemetery October 2003, a bison in Wyoming 1998, Rome's Colosseum 2003, the Louvre 2003, ancient Greek ruins in Agrigento 2003, a body of water in a National Park in Utah 1998m an Anniversary edition MG 2002, a statue of Jesus in the French Quarter in New Orleans Louisiana 2001, sports photography of a University of Illinois basketball game 1990, the Space Needle in Seattle 2001, a plastic newt on a window in Urbana 1992, the Eiffel Tower 2003, silk flowers photographed in a black light 1991, water at a temperate rain forest in Washington state 2002, Kuypers' hand 2001, Cape Canaveral 2001, a bicycle after an ice storm 1988, Kuypers jumping in the Wisconsin Dells (about 1995), a gondola in Venice 2003, Paradise Island 2000, a colorized painting photograph of Michael Stipe of R.E.M., bamboo from a temperate rain forest in Washington state 2002, an inverted photograph of a church on Wright Street in Champaign, a painting on the side of a Montreal building taken in the mid 1990s, the cover image from the CD "Sing Your Life", an Egyptian sculpture in Las Vegas, the Sears Tower, and the La Brea tar pits.*



*The image on this page was taken in a Temperate Rain Forest in Washington state in 2001. The background image on page 3 was taken on Lake Michigan, in Michigan, in 1988. The main image on page 4 was taken in Dachau, Germany in May 2003, and the image placed on the billboard on page 4 was taken on a modeling shoot for Body Body and Mark Verlaine Studios in Chicago 1999. The image on page 5 was taken in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The images on page 9 were taken in assorted places, from 1990 to 2003. The inverted camera image in the collage of photos on page 9 was created in a darkroom by John Yotka.*

## ANGELINE HAWKES-CRAIG WRITER/NOVELIST

(Kuypers is) a good photographer so the photos are always fun and/or educational to view.

## DAN LANDRUM, EDITOR, TAGGERZINE

I admire her courage, her self-honesty, her integrity in putting so much of herself into her work, into her art.

## JOHN SWEET, WRITER (ON CHAPBOOK DESIGNS)

Visuals were awesome. They've got a nice enigmatic quality to them.

## SAM CUCCHIARA, EDITOR, SLUGFEST

I think I would unequivocally say that she has the rare gift of expressing the personal as universal - which is art. She's an artist, and the world desperately needs more artists.

**L'ARTE**

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Information about past books is available upon request from Scars Publications and Design. Art is also displayed through <http://scars.tv> and <http://www.janetkuypers.com>, where there are three extensive art archives available on line.

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# MAGAZINE INTERVIEW

## DISCOVER U MAGAZINE VOLUME 2 ISSUE 7 12/9/03

**Discover U magazine:** You've traveled to Europe. Can you tell me about Europe?

**Kuypers:** When you visit, try to soak in as much as you can. The sights (natural and man-made), sounds (listening to others speak a different language can be fascinating), and feelings (the ambience of places are different even across the United States; learning different cultures and behaviors are memories you can keep with you) you experience in countries in Europe are different from what you're used to. So take pictures, but remember how people viewed their land, so you can keep more than snapshots from your travels.

Learn the culture of where you are visiting. Do your best to fit in when you're also witnessing things you can't see in the United States. This is also more helpful when needing to ask for assistance in a foreign country. You at least show that you're doing your best to fit in and otherwise not be in anyone's way.

People are more relaxed there. Meals are different. Stores are not always open and will close for a break during the day. People don't have cars everywhere like we do in America (European governments don't give gas and oil price breaks the way the U.S. government does, so you'll see tons of scooters and bicycles for travel). People can even use the trains or airplanes to commute from one country to another weekly for the jobs. Try to learn and understand the way people there live when you visit, and adjust yourself to this new way of living when in Europe.

**Discover U magazine:** You are currently compiling a collection of poetry and a collection of artwork. Can you tell me a little about these projects?

**Kuypers:** Six poetry books ("Hope Chest in the Attic," "The Window," "Close Cover Before Striking," "(Woman.)," "Contents Under Pressure," and "The Average Guy's Guide (to Feminism)"), a novel in letter form ("Autumn Reason"), a journal book or travel through the United States ("Changing Gears"), and one epic novel ("The Key To Believing") have been published containing parts of my writings. In 1998, I was in a near-fatal car accident, and after starting to recover I noticed that many of my writings have only been published under pen names, and there was no real organization to all of my writings. This was when the idea started (in 1998) to compile my writings into a collection book. Since then this idea has evolved into three books. One is of poetry (called "Oeuvre," which is French for a collection of work from a single author). One is of prose (called "Exaro Versus," which is Latin: "exaro" means "found" and collected, and "versus" simply means "line, verse"). And the last is of art and photography (tentatively titled "l'arte," which is Italian, simply enough, for "art").

"l'arte" contains primarily photography, but also drawings and computer-generated art work from the 1980 through 2004 of a number of topics:

Nature, City Scenes, Transportation, Churches, Graves, Statues & Memorials, Travel photography (through the United States as well as through 8 European countries and eventually China), Photojournalism, Political Photography, Photography in Advertising (including work with "Campus Acquaintance Rape Education"), Portrait Photography and Self-Portraiture, Art Photography, and even Fireworks Photography and Computer-Generated Art & Drawings.



**Discover U magazine:** You have done some work as a model. Are you still modeling?

**Kuypers:** No, I did the work as a model in 1999, but stopped working there because I moved with my husband John (then he was my fiancé) to his new job in Pennsylvania. But I have been a photographer, specializing in portrait photography, since the 1980s, and find that sometimes when trying to generate art photography, I can be the subject. So I'm used to cameras, and I'm used to being in front of a camera as well.

**Discover U magazine:** You have a love for photography. What do you do with that?

**Kuypers:** In the same way that I like to get ideas to people with writing poetry and prose, photography can also generate ideas or themes.

I think photography is a crisp, clean, and beautiful way of not only capturing a moment, but also capturing an idea. With it you can record the things you want to remember, but you can also share this with others and potentially give them ideas or feelings.

I've been a photographer for newspapers (photographing not only sports but also features), event photography and portrait photography (I've photographed parades and rallies, taken model photos but even used photos for yearbooks). I take pictures to document my own travels and life stories (from parties to weddings to still life pictures of buildings, mountains or scenery), and I also use photography as an art medium (I have also used a number of models for posed art photos).

I really do believe there are different ways to portray ideas and thoughts. One can be writing poetry, journals, essays, monologues or short stories. But another way is entirely visual - by using photography (or drawings, or computer-generated artwork) to get an idea across.

One can require a person reading from a page; another can portray an idea by a person merely looking at it. Photography is an excellent way to help portray thoughts and ideas, and its method is much more subtle (the viewer may not realize the intention of a picture when they are only looking at it).

**Discover U magazine:** Tell me about your web site.

**Kuypers:** I have my own web site (<http://www.janetkuypers.com>), and it is a center for getting any information about my work. There is a complete archive of my writing (individual pages, as well as links to my books and chapbooks), and there is a listing of past music with the acoustic bands I have been in since 1993 (radio interviews, mp3 files, live concert tracks at shows in Alaska, recordings from the weekly open mic John and I ran for poetry and music, and video, and clips some from live shows). There is a full listing of art and photography, and there are performance art show links I have done (first recorded show was in 1997, but more recent shows also have links to photography used, CD versions of the shows, some video, and mp3 files from the live show performances). There are a few personal link pages too - so there's a lot of information there to read from.

**Discover U magazine:** You are a writer, photographer, artist, traveler, editor, wife, woman, friend. How do you do it all? What do you do to relax?

**Kuypers:** I don't know HOW; I just do it. And no, I don't relax. I don't think I know how. I think my brain is always processing and wants to work. If there is something I could be doing, I might as well just start doing it. I've never been a procrastinator, and when there is something I see I want to accomplish, well, I work until I get the job done. So when I get a lot of ideas, I start on a lot of projects. I think I always see my life as having a goal line that I can see in the distance, so I keep pushing myself toward getting to that goal line. Because I do many things, I can get to a goal line for one project, but there is always something new that I keep striving for.

It allows me to keep pushing myself, and keep moving forward. I think striving for something keeps me strong, and keeps me alive.

**Discover U magazine:** What do you want to be when you grow up?

**Kuypers:** I think I just want to be someone that makes people think.

## MICHELLE JOY GALLAGHER, WRITER/WEBMASTER

A couple months ago, I had the fortune of meeting Janet through E-mail correspondence. I have since had the privilege of hosting her poetry, prose and art on my personal site. When she asked me to write a forward for her book, I didn't really feel I knew where to begin, and I, being a novice at anything of this nature, decided just to rush in headlong like I always do and write what I feel. Janet, forgive me if I'm not as graceful as some, but please know this is from the heart.

I thought I'd begin by telling you what Janet's photography is not. An unusual approach I realize, but stick with me. It is not just photography. It is not sterile the way most art of this genre usually feels to me. It is not fantasy, but rather fantastic reality. Janet's work is as surreal as it is playful and experimental. These are glimpses of a life... secrets that we have the privilege of being told. I feel I understand more about Janet than I did before her artwork graced the pages of my website.

## ARTISTFIRST.COM INTERNET RADIO INTERVIEW 9/11/03

**Radio:** *That's incredible. I'd like to tell our audiences that the artwork on the covers of Janet Kuypers' book, and inside, like in the beginning of chapters and all, she has created herself.*

**JK:** The only image I didn't create was the cover of **The Key To Believing**: I used stock photography of a gun and an AIDS ribbon and a key, but I just manipulated them to make them work for the cover. But all my books have my artwork in it, and yes, I'm usually taking my own pictures and creating my own art. Sometimes you don't know exactly what you're looking for when you're looking for an image for publication, and that's then when I think, 'oh, why I don't do it myself,' to get the image I was looking for.

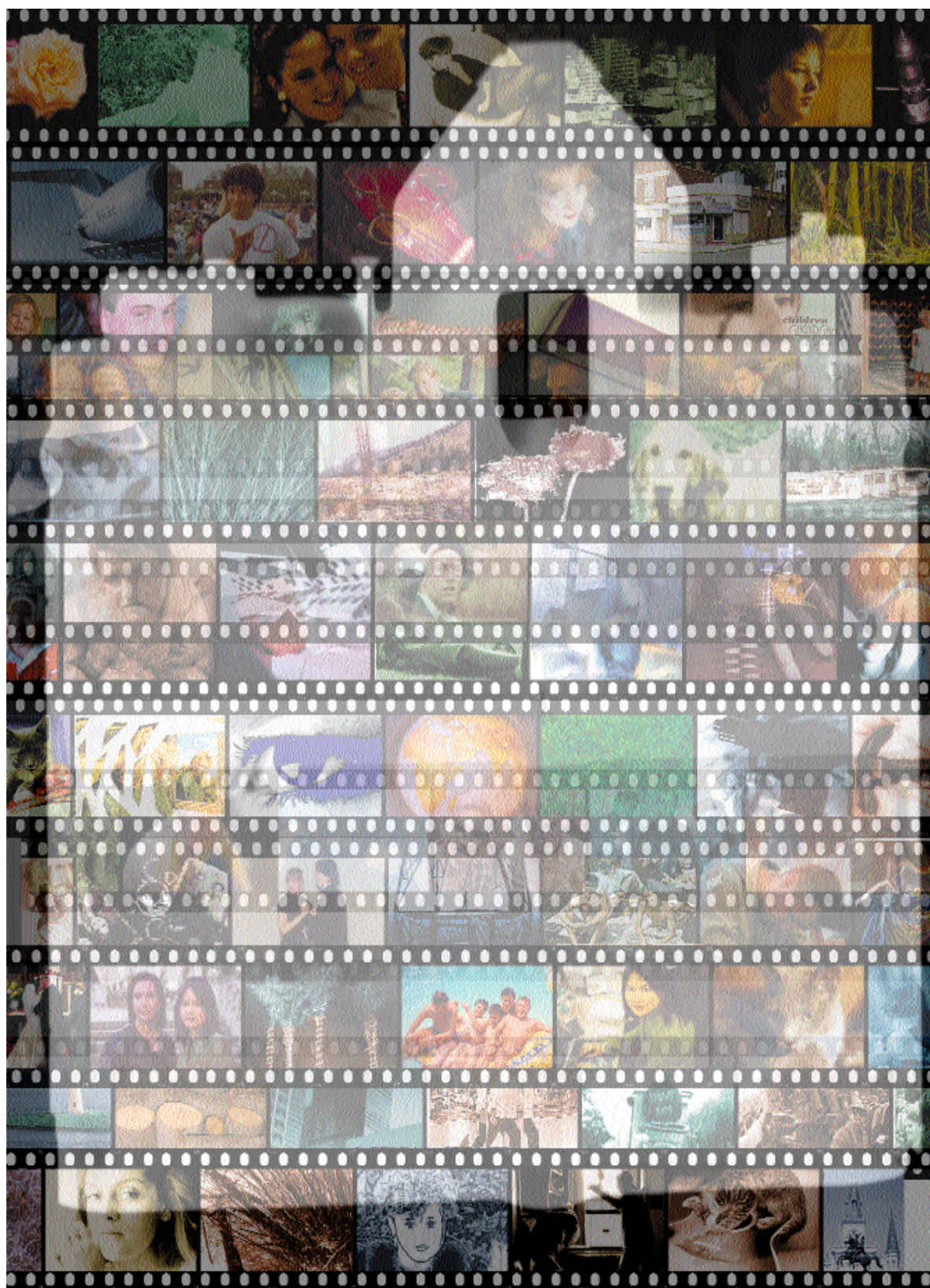
## JOHN YOTKO, ENGINEER/GUITARIST

One of the first things that struck me about Janet Kuypers was her passion for Objectivism and her need for logic and reason in what she does. I found that Janet is a purposeful, goal oriented person. She believes that if you do something, there must be a reason for doing it; she is driven to get things done ahead of schedule. Janet, in whatever she chooses to do, does it very well and better than most, whether it be as a graphic artist, a writer, a singer or a performer. When she is performing, often I can't tell where the performance ends and reality begins because of her ability to bring the audience into the moment. I have even heard bars spontaneously go silent to listen to her sing.

She is the perennial multitasker. When working she manages multiple items like they are one. In high school, Janet was not content to be part of the staff for a retreat program – she became an associate director. When a band that her and couple of friends put together needed gigs, she became the band manager and arranged dates. When she moved away from the city and didn't have a venue to perform in, she created one in a local bar by starting an Open-mic night. Then, on a trip to Alaska to photograph the Aurora Borealis, she talked a local soundman and musician to set up a show for her to do her last night there, where she sang eighteen songs in a show on a Friday night.

She mixes the various mediums that she works in to create performance art shows. Initially she used only her words and music. Her shows impressed a venue host enough that she became a regular feature at his venue. This was the driving force behind her exploring new avenues in her performance art. Janet's performances have grown — her artwork was added, then sound effects on her voice, then video clips and live video, and then even using children's toys as sound effects.

Twice she has been on television in Nashville and once in Chicago. I don't know how many times she has been on the radio. I don't know how she does it.



# ARTISTIC PERSPECTIVES

ZACH MILLER  
PAINTER

Kuypers' art jumps out when you view it - it's an amazing combination of circumstance and luck and artistic appreciation that she seems to capture. It seems that she's always on the lookout for a good photo or a good photo opportunity, and when something speaks to her personally she grabs it and squeezes everything out of it. All her photos are like that.

There is a determined skill she possesses - she sees something, she knew she wanted that something as a photo, and she just takes it. It sounds almost tyrannical, but that's what makes it great. This is the way her art comes across.

I don't like her portrait photography so much. There, I said it, it's just not my thing. I mean, you can see from her work in portrait photography that she has a lot of skill, that she knows how to control lighting and she finds beautiful backgrounds for pictures of people - but the portrait photography doesn't speak to me the way her other photography does. But you see, I like art, and I like the art I see in her pictures of anything from buildings to nature.

I love the way she displays architecture, because she is not only getting the technical aspects of it, but she also makes a point of putting a little setting in there too. That really helps you appreciate not only the building but also where it is in the world. She has a good way of looking at reality. Her photography looks very refreshing (instead of mundane).

Her appreciation for the natural and the man made structures and the way her eyes focus in on them is what is startling. What she displays for the viewer makes it much easier to appreciate what initially attracted her eye. She sets up the photos just right to make you see what she saw, and it is almost uncanny how well her photographs can make you appreciate what she appreciated.

I've seen her artwork in color and in black and white, and whether or not images are black and white or color don't really seem to matter. The photos come across to the viewer strongly either way. And when you see these images, it almost makes you feel as if you're seeing these scenes for yourself (not just that you're seeing images, but that you've actually seen the scene and lived through the experience). Seeing her work, in this way, makes the work a personal thing for the viewer.

Her photos really allow you to enjoy her experiences as much as you may enjoy your own experiences - you can enjoy viewing this art almost as much as you can enjoy your *own* memories or experiences. It's a wonderful talent; Kuypers can make her photos less personal, but I mean look less personal to only Janet Kuypers, but her work is still very personal, in a way, for the viewer, which can make these images on some levels extremely private.

Her work isn't "postcardy" because it doesn't have that commercial edge, and her images don't come across as "marketed" - that is how they can make you feel as if you actually have lived through what these images show.

When she appreciates things she photographs them to show the world, and it makes you (the viewer) feel nostalgic when looking at the images, because when she appreciates it you feel a bond with her, in a way.

Every time she sees something, she makes it more beautiful - at least long enough to capture that image to show that beauty to everyone else.

Her style of photography can seem straightforward and basic at times, but that makes a lot of her work easier to view. It makes the private viewing or the private understanding of the photo much easier because it leaves most of the variables out of it - because it is so basic, yet so beautiful and so unique.

I think Kuypers thinks when she creates her images:

“I’m not just taking this photo so that it’s there for everyone to remember, I’ll make it more than just ‘documenting,’ but something more.”

It is like Kuypers is taking a twist of lemon to her ideas to make the photos more palatable.

She puts an artistic twist to her photos. But when you look at her work, you don’t feel like you’re intruding by viewing, but you feel as if you’re looking in on a private little world. It is as if Kuypers says, “Here’s my house made of glass.

Yeah, I’ve got my private life, but it’s okay if you see it.”

She shares with you, and this is how these images can in one sense seem generic, but in another sense seem so private for every viewer.

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When an artist takes photos, they want to relay a certain feeling, a certain emotion, a certain idea. She does this, but in a much more subtle way - she can make you feel things or think a certain way, but you don’t feel so much like you’re being directed toward one thought or feeling. When you see the artwork, it just makes you **feel** something. Its a natural feeling you get; it doesn’t “feel” pushed. You feel naturally guided in that direction, it’s gentle (it’s not so authoritarian), it’s relaxed. As much as there’s a point and a focus to it, you don’t feel a need to conform to an idea, because there’s so much else to look at in her photos than just the focal point. You can take your time, you don’t feel rushed, you don’t feel pushed toward a certain opinion (you just work there on your own - it seems less like art that dictates its own impression). It leaves you independent, allowing you to see whatever you want to see - but at the same time it also somehow shows you ideas that the artist was trying to show.

when you see the work and see what the artist sees in her work, you combine it with your own personal experiences, you get that moment where you look at work from both points of view. With Janet’s work, you get this euphoric moment where you can see things from a neutral point of view, and that is really comforting. You may never have looked at things that way before, but you can then see things from a more non-biased view. That’s when you look at work and are overwhelmed with the experience of Janet’s work.

Her ability to compliment ideas in her art also comes through in her performance art with her writing. The way she sees things and the way she writes things, they compliment each other really well. It’s above and beyond what you’re normally used to with artists, and it’s strange, you usually don’t even see anyone that’s capable of not only writing out what they feel and then also having art, to have writing go with art so well, like she does in her performance art shows.

Her ability to completely explain herself and her vision is exceptional.



# INTRODUCTION

When I was little. I fell in love with the camera. I went around school, trying to catch everyone by surprise with my camera, loaded with film. But after the novelty wore off, I brought my camera to social events in high school, and friends would ask for copies. People asked me to teach them how to take pictures like I did; I even gave someone an old camera of mine.

I loved the response I got from others. People liked what I could uniquely do with this block of machinery, some unexposed film and an ordinary get-together. It was selfish, but it made me feel good. It gave me self-esteem when I had none. It made me feel talented.

It made me feel like I could do more.

It happened when a friend asked me to take portrait pictures of them; I was glad to do it. I didn't have appropriate equipment, so I went outside with them into a local forest preserve. I didn't need a flash and had a perfect background. I shot a roll of film on a single person (which seemed so extravagant to high school students).

After those pictures came back, another person wanted their photos taken, and then another, and then a couple wanted pictures taken together. Family members wanted their children photographed. I was invited to family reunions because they needed a photographer. My sister, the art teacher, encouraged me.

When I entered college I continued taking portrait photographs of students, but I also started freelancing, taking composite and group photographs for fraternities and sororities. My photo are even sprinkled through year books. I suddenly felt important. Companies normally do things like this, not one student. And not me.

So, for the first time in my life, I took a photography course in college. And another. Photo One. Photo Two. Alternative methods of processing. Photo-journalism. Color photography. Self portraiture. Documentation. And then I started taking pictures for the college newspaper. Photographs were used in a local newspaper, the yearbooks, literary magazines and advertising.

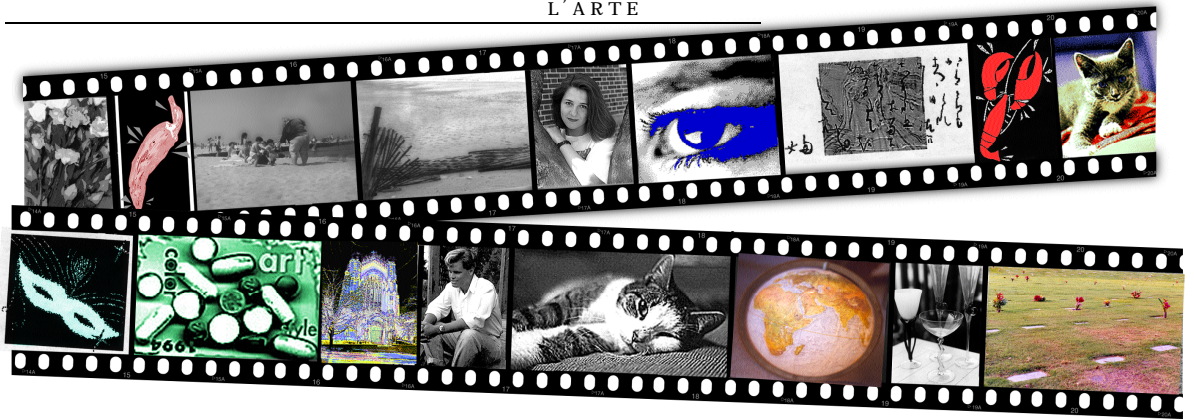
Then art.

My work started with portraiture but moved to more political work involving my studies in feminism, sexism and acquaintance rape. I started making collages; I combined photographs with text; I manipulated images on a computer. Then art work of mine was displayed at a local bookstore; then I was a major contributor to an art gallery showing and was interviewed on the news. My photography. My photography, my talent, was being called art.

Some people will tell you that photography isn't a true form of art, because the photographer is "capturing" what the real world looks like, where an "artist" who paints or sculpts is "creating." But in one sense, all artists are doing is using what is in their mind - col-



With lights inside, these arranged grape vines (right) were photographed in Pennsylvania.  
 Above: portraits of assorted models were photographed throughout Illinois, Colorado, Michigan, Utah and Florida.



lecting things from their own experiences. In one sense, no artist “creates” - they “rearrange,” they show their view of reality through a sketch pad and charcoal, or oil paint and a canvas.

In another sense, a photograph is never a perfect view of reality. What the viewer sees is the photographer’s perception of the world - what the photographer wanted you to see. It’s the angle they chose to distort proportions, it’s the light they chose to make an object look harsh or soft, it’s even the way they cropped the photo. Then it’s their choice of what colors, (or lack of color). It’s how they printed the image - did they burn some places so they are darker than they were in real life, did they increase the contrast, did they agitate the film while it was being developed so the prints look more grainy?

Photography still uses the conventions of the other visual arts, like composition, color and perspective lines. The difference is that photography is a technology-oriented art form; photography is also most understandably the most appropriate art medium of this age.

Photography can show evidence in a crime scene, it can draw attention to the lead story headlining in the newspapers, it can make you buy a product, it can make you feel good about yourself, it can remind you of heart-warming memories. It can even make you think about your views on issues of ethics or values. It can make you think.

Anyone can just pick up a camera and snap a photo at a party of friends. It becomes art when you take an artist’s perspective when putting your work on your canvas of film. These additional creative changes are possible through things like computer photography, which allows the artist even more freedom when manipulating images.

Over the years I learned that I could create the horrific or eerie, the romantic, or the down to earth. If I can express what the world meant to me, hopefully others could look at those images and feel something too.



Portraits of assorted models were photographed throughout Illinois, Colorado, Utah, New Hampshire, Montreal, the Poconos, and Hawaii.