

## Janet Kenny

Janet Kenny was born and educated in New Zealand. She went to London and made her operatic debut at Glyndebourne Festival Opera; she continued as an opera and concert singer for some years until ill health ended her singing career. After relocating to Sydney, Australia where she worked in the anti-nuclear movement, she published a book about Chernobyl and an essay about Nobel laureate novelist, Patrick White. Ms. Kenny's poems have been published in *The New Formalist*, *The Raintown Review*, *The Susquehanna Quarterly*, *Nectarzine*, *Writers' Hood*, *Mi Poesias*, *Pierian Springs Poetry Journal*, *Beyond Borders*, and *Del Sol Review*, among others. She edited *Ironwood* poetry journal until stepping down recently for political reasons.

### Am I allowed to say this yet?

Chernobyl was just a sign, an indication of the crime.  
Collaboration by the human race in a malodorous disgrace.  
I don't speak of the lies about how safe it was  
but of the game that despised living things, the foul  
infiltration of mendacity that bleated maxims,  
mantras. No side was innocent, all implicated.  
Patriotic sacrifices were expected. Nothing  
visible leaked out until those babies in the Pacific  
but that was later. *Every Australian home is a fallout shelter*  
said Titterton and we hated him. From the Urals  
to Ohio we were saved from each other. Polynesia  
sacrificed for three competitors in the Pacific sea  
and now the subcon, as the smart set call it,  
may be the next for some nuclear fallout and babies  
arrive as though no threat was down the wind ...  
not yet, not yet ... we will forget, we will forget.

### The Queen Shops

Across the harbor, towers loom misty  
in the humid air. So much is promised,  
but illusory, on close inspection, nothing there  
means much apart from stage sets for  
my daily play. And yet that sense of city  
spices dull suburban ways. I walk with groceries  
in fabled Babylon. Erect and graceful,  
with sandaled feet I tread tasteful streets  
and shed the years to sway with regal steps.  
Today, subjects acknowledge pulchritude;

imperiously I push the button as the lights  
change letting royalty proceed. Through  
leafy boulevards that roll towards the view,  
cats do obeisance, mew respectful greetings.  
Dogs of standing bow-wow, meeting me  
at gates. Across the harbor, ships slip  
past, one in, one out, and helicopters  
putter round about. Small parrots speed  
and shriek. Nothing collides, not parrots  
ships, copters nor shopper. Bright through cloud  
the sun sleeks unifying light on unimportant  
lives whose archeological potential is inconsequential.  
Dullness relieved by architecture inspired this lecture.

**follow the intensions**

*to minimalist poets*

follow the intensions

follow

the

dots

telegraph

clues

messages in bottles

allusive

elusive

over horizons

something

vague

happens

maybe...

Noises and stink words snap and bite.

Lewd landscapes loll against oceans.

Volumes of matter intrude. Famine, fornication,

fire, diesel oil and filth, shout speed  
and rapacity as motors rev for death.  
Vines throttle trees in an excess of life  
and fear murders love repeatedly.  
In mirror images, small gestures ignite  
imagination. Nerves stupefied by drums  
seek pallor, cold meaningless gestures.  
No emphasis to punctuate peace.

do they  
remember

the sistine *fingers*

not touching

and hope

for a

divine

*SPARK*

?