

2021 Poetry Postcard Fest Afterword

I so love the Poetry Postcard Fest. Each year the fest allows me to experience new depths in my own creativity. The poetry side of spontaneous composition has been something I have practiced for 27 or so years. (This does not mean every poem is a keeper, but writing 30-40 poems every summer leads to a few that are.) The IMAGE side of things and the CALLIGRAPHY aspect of the poetry postcard fest continue to challenge me and there does not seem to be an end to this delight, except of course when September comes. It is my birth month and I like to go backpacking and see if I can lower my stress.

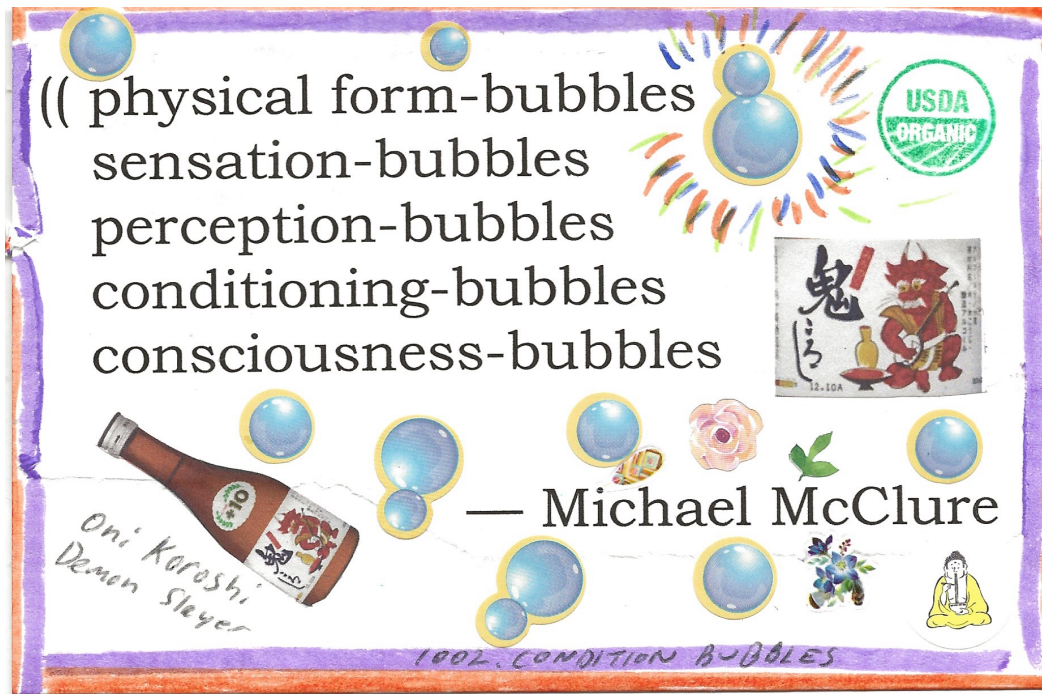
With the 15th Poetry Postcard Fest being a tribute to Michael McClure and Diane di Prima, epigraphs were easy to find and very generative for me. I used Michael's last book, *Mule Kick Blues* and Diane's *Revolutionary Letters* and *Buddhist Ruminations*. McClure's poem: FLOWER GARLAND FROTH For Zenshin Ryufu, Philip Whalen On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the ordination of Philip Whalen was endlessly fascinating and generative for me. In it he references "foam" and "bubbles" as in:

((physical form-bubbles
sensation-bubbles
perception-bubbles
conditioning-bubbles
consciousness-bubbles

This I took to mean the energetic expulsion of past experiences, usually unconscious, that create our experiences and reality. The practice of Zen is a discipline to be here and now and Michael had an active practice the last quarter of his life, but to see how he renders it in terms of bubbles was and is endlessly fascinating. More on bubbles in a moment.

1,002. Condition Bubbles
1-August-2021 Neal Lemery
Tillamook, OR TUX woo' kwib,
Casa del Colibrí, Cascadia
— Neal!

It all bubbles up from
us as we try to be
Lion Poems & again
((& again)) fall short
wallowing in the shadow
of condition bubbles
which on Friday morning's
pillow smelled like
Oni Koroshi so at least
none of those demons.



Diane's Revolutionary Letters were very much like postcard poems. Both have an epistolary nature; they are addressed to *someone*. So it was quite seamless to vamp off Diane's letters.

When it came down to process, I continued what I had started early in the pandemic, 2020, when the fest was expanded by 107 days. I created the poem part and worked on the image after. This gave me a greater degree

of continuity and as such was helpful given the somewhat esoteric nature of much of my content and the way it comes out.

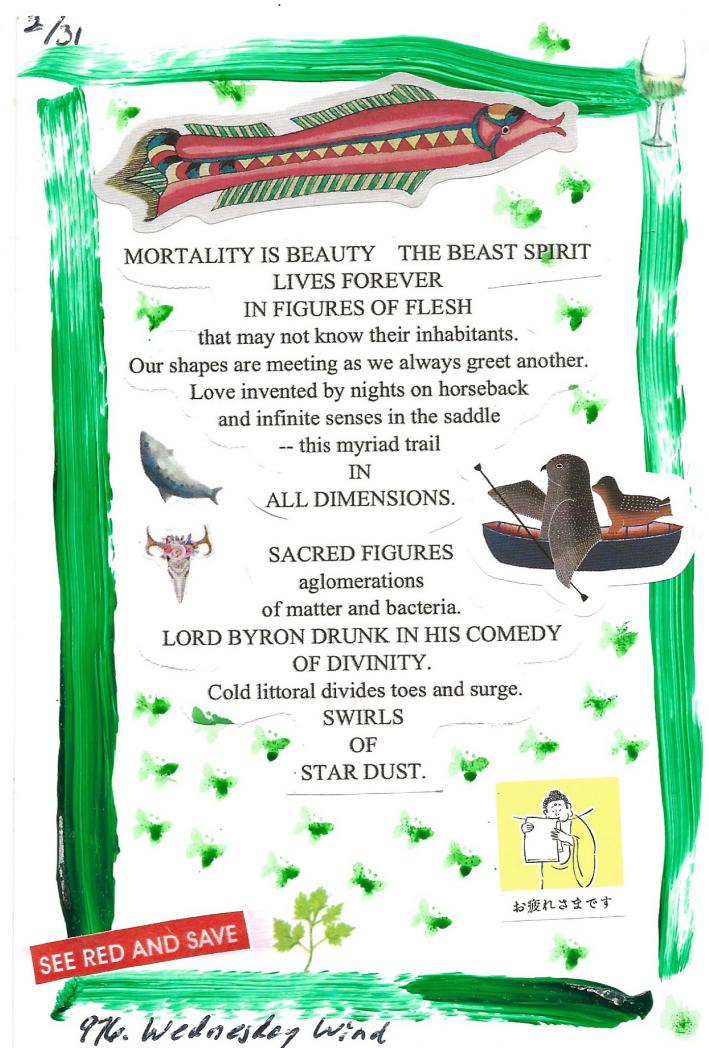
Yes, there is outright stealing. Linda Roller sent cards I think in 2019 where the poem started on the front and continued on the back. This allowed me to have longer epigraphs such as this one:

7-July-2021 Barbara Jean Walsh
Springfield, MA - Barbara Jean!

TUX woo' kwib watershed,
Casa del Colibrí, Cascadia —

“Our shapes are meeting as
we always greet another.”
— Michael McClure

As shapely as our body
- mind allows. Verdant as
Colette's green splashes
above a sulfur river
just trying to be here
far from the clear cuts
watching Wednesday wind
shape the lake.



And from Tim Mateer, I stole astronauts, except mine are *cosmonauts*. in my poem to Tim:



984. Squint

— Michael McClure

A collage of a music player interface. The background is a dark blue album cover for Julian Lage's 'Squint'. The album cover features a large, faint 'SQUINT' text and a smaller 'JULIAN LAGE' text. The music player interface is overlaid on the bottom half of the image. It includes a title 'Short Form' by 'Julian Lage', a progress bar showing 0:22 / 3:08, and playback controls (play/pause, previous, next). The player is set to 'LIVING ROOM' output. The collage is decorated with several stickers: a red rose in the top right, a cloud with raindrops in the top right corner, a yellow electric guitar on the right side, a dreamcatcher in the top left, a green Celtic knot in the middle left, a yellow star at the bottom center, and a cartoon of a person in a red robe sitting cross-legged in a circle at the bottom right. Handwritten notes in yellow ink are on the left side: '10/31' at the top and '984. Squint' below it.

Or this:

1005. Jamaica Played in Peoria

4-August-2021 June Sanders
Milford, CA TUX woo' kwib,
Casa del Colibrí, Cascadia
— June!

& the last note of
Jamaica Stopover pops
before it plays again &
It Played in Peoria as a
sliver of my personal myth
when Shel sd I cd use
intro music & there was
Ralph temporarily out of
Oregon which, by then,
I'd learned to pronounce
like a Cascadian.



I could go on and on but am being called to make pancakes. I love how much passion people have for this project and love how it colors every August I experience which, as you know, is the longest month of the year at 56 days. Sorry July, nothing personal.

peN
Casa del Colibrí
8:08am, 1 Sept 2021