Al Green's "Let's Stay Together"

furnishes a dance hall

filled with over 50

rhythm-less

spoken-word poets

somewhere in South Florida.

The classic ballad behooves you

to move once the groove

Electric Slides into your eardrum.

The dance floor was a vacant plateau

urging to be occupied.

Neglected by the rhythm-less

standing off to the side

who decide to twist,

rock, and glide

at their own personal leisure.

Creating sights similar

to miniature seizures.

It's quite a sad thing to watch.

Those who botch even the simplest

of moves, groove next to those

who haven't decided

whether they want to nod their heads

or bend their knees.

So, they do both.

Not quite simultaneously,

but the effort is imminent.

And in a sense, I expected

to see better dancing

before remembering that we're in a night club

in the daytime,

surrounded by poets;

people who are more constructive

with their hands

and damn near destructive with feet,

and finally,

I remembered that we're in West Palm Beach.

And in that moment,

I realized how much I missed my city.

'Cause I know, if we were in

Chicago,

we woulda been steppin'...

Steppin' is our ritual.

Habitual like annual debates

between Sox fans and Cubs fans.

Though, this be the choreography

of kings. The un-official homage

to our history.

We step

as if we've got live-wire legs

and time bomb toes,

as soon as the rhythm

grows unto us like a funky fungus

infected with Dance Fever.

We step

as if we tryna sketch the skyline

into the dance floor below.

What 'chu know 'bout that?

This ain't the typical hoedown

you're accustomed to in yo' town,

this is Chi-Town.

The greatest city in the nation.

And steppin' is its physical representation.

So we step.

No matter where we are.

We use our feet to stamp

the four stars and two horizontal lines

into any canvas we can find.

We paint any town

the colors of the Chicago flag.

We grab your attention

at the slightest mention of any

\*dope beat to step to\*

any music Chi-City

steppers can rep through,

we go in.

\*This is for the steppers.

This is for the--

1, 2, checka,

baby lemme know wassup...\*

As soon as the rhythm

scra--sc--

scratches the record

the a boogie-ing batch of chicken pox,

we go in.

\*Get up, get up, get up...

Wake up, wake up, wake up...\*

From "Sexual Healing"

to "(At Your Best) You Are Love",

to "Step in the Name of Love",

all the way back to Al Green's

"Let's Stay Together"

furnishing that dance hall

filled with over 50

rhythm-less

spoken-word poets somewhere

in South Florida, Chicago's presence was felt.

Because we stepped

as if we knew the entire world was watching.

Chicago.

Chicago is a city

in which every triumph

we have ever been proud of

has been coupled with a tragedy

from which we are still trying

to journey away.

But in that moment,

we stepped.

Because Chicagoans know

that no matter how great, nor small;

every journey begins

with a single

step.