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## Step In Time

Paul Heinz  
*College of DuPage*

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## Step In Time

Paul Heinz

A litany of locutions,  
budding shoots from institutions  
held in high regard,  
measured beats accelerating  
from adagio to allegro to presto  
until we give no thought  
to their origins.  
Just sound waves on the air.

Dittos to you, Rush.  
Step in time.

I curl my toes along the rope  
and push open palms against  
the fear of what lies below:  
A critic's condemnation?  
A neighbor's denigration?  
Whispers from behind cupped hands?  
All of the above.  
In short, the discourse of those with differing shoe sizes,  
for so few follow Atticus's advice.

Don't even get me started on that.  
Step in time.

An unsuitable function,  
an unfavorable form  
with too few deviations  
(and even those only inches off center).  
Consider a joke my friend once made  
in response to the disappearing rain forests:  
"Hey, the trees in *my* yard are fine."

Mixed feelings?  
Indeed.  
Step in time.

Paradiddle, paradiddle.  
Regard the drummer  
whose rhythm drives the goal  
of reaching the coda in unison.

## Step In Time (cont'd)

Paul Heinz

All together now (black, white, green,  
red), a million Chinas  
taking it on the chin,  
slaves to song's form,  
Milgram's loyal subjects.

But now consider the soloist  
whose improvisations inject  
a surge of humanity  
into the anemic veins of A-A-B-A,  
revitalizing the standard  
into something less standard.

We step in time.

We step in time  
until one day  
we break stride across the bridge,  
not to rescue the masses,  
but to liberate the soul.

Adagio? Allegro?  
No matter.  
Just one.  
Echad.  
Uno.  
Ein.

Out of time.