

waltzing
for
whitman

by sam deleo

I will join the masses
In the street for the protest,
And the line on the sidewalk
For the half-price sale,

I will join the beggar
Sleeping on the bench
And the fashion party
At the country estate,

I'm joining parlors of the secure,
Pathways of inside information,
And retired farm couples still on
The dole from the great Dust Bowl.

I will join the men eyeing
Each other in the park,
And the glistening mounds
Of women on the beach —
I'm a player, not afraid to say,

I will join behind the followers
And ahead of the leaders,
Around the sidesteppers
And facing the stampededers,

I'll join in for the sing-a-long,
Then barely mouth a word,
Talk for hours on end
Without care of being heard.

I have joined on your side
And also joined your enemy,
Lost in the family of the crowd,
Have tied your fears to your hopes
And your hopes to your fears
Until both grow out of proportion
And can no longer cancel each other,
Can no longer offer you the comfort
Of locating my whereabouts in
The timeworn whereabouts crowd.