

Words of Power, Dances of Freedom

A woman sets a plastic bag in front of the stage
and puts her purse inside. Her gray hair hangs
to the small of her back and her blue, summer dress
covers a body that is slender but losing the curves at its hips.
Arms now free she dances when the band begins.
Her right foot touches. She lifts it, then plants,
and pivots her body one full turn.
Touch, plant, pivot, touch, plant, pivot.
Uninhibited by onlookers and at ease
she glides across Pioneer Square.

A crippled man in a motorized wheelchair is there too.
His body is a wreck – slumped posture, tongue protruding,
and neck bent locking ear to shoulder. The woman
takes his twisted hand, moves in and away
shortening and extending her arm to keep contact
dancing a modified Western Swing. The crippled man
fingers the controls. His chair dances forward and back.
She twirls. The chair circles. The two orbit
and for a moment infirmity is forgotten