

## SUMMER DREAMS

*In memory, James McGarrell*

Lightning crackles across  
the gray Indiana sky,

repeating itself like a pulse  
in the brain. Dancers and

divers – an endless iteration  
of pose – establish

a vocabulary of nuance.  
The romance of meaning,

suns, moons, apples, circles,  
patterns of trash. Faces,

blunted as focal points,  
embody against cliché

a density of character –  
what actually goes on

between women and men.  
Fictions play out in

the spatial resonance  
of interiors. Embassies

of imagination. Globes  
and mirrors, insolent

nymphs, or for that matter  
a girl trainer and her

elephants – things seen in  
the action of the mark

become his thought; music  
held in mid-flight to

an allegory. One day,  
passionate and furious,

a young woman dashes

up the travertine stairs

of a palazzo. Only in  
a city like this where tea

and shadows fill out  
the afternoon is her life

impossible. The white car  
waiting in the drive. She

scatters things as she goes,  
her hat with its scarlet

feather. It's the rise of  
her bare foot, the arch as

her heel lifts off the step  
in an exquisite line,

that he remembers. You  
can't take it out. The mind

moves along the glossy  
rose-amber walls, away.

His titles import an  
element of time, 'Prelude,'

'Day In, Day Out,'  
'Young and Old' –

it was something he  
envied in the work of

writers; how meaning  
emerged from intervals

of duration. But painting  
wasn't that. The muse

stood like an apparition  
in the pool of her own

long gown. It defied  
temporality and contained,

as a way of knowing,  
all things at once.

His last words were  
the names of colors.