

Leap and Tumble

John Drury

What's more athletic
than the mind—poised like a forward
limbering at the free throw line,
cocking his arm and shoving it toward the basket, then
stopping, steadying, and with a flick
of his fingertips, lofting the ball
in a high, extravagant arc,
a ferris wheel's curve, as it shoots
and rushes to the net,
floating through the interwoven ropes.

One point. But in the mind,
his shot's already the moving
loom of a fountain in Munich,
water curling at the lip then dropping, in single
bursts of liquid you can follow down.
It's the wind, suddenly gone, silver leaves
upturned like the throats of children,
like Isaac, a stillness teetering
as the blades of dark rain
gather and thresh across the fairways.

What rises and returns
approaches music, a blessing
beyond sound, the way the orchestra
pauses in the overture of *The Magic Flute*,
just after commotion, and then the strings
resume, pianissimo.
It's like waiting for a lover who's underwater—
or a loon coming up
at different spots in Walden Pond—
or the prowess of a capsule, curving home
to a perfect splashdown,
or the rope bridge over rapids
into which you drop your fist of bills.