Here Is A Clock Tower

Geoffrey Nutter
HERE IS A CLOCK TOWER

Whoever wishes to build a clock tower should study this one that I once saw. The first story is square, with four small gables. The second has eight panels and a roof, and above that four smaller gables with a broad space between each. And there are foliated heads of bearded men in stone, and ornamental leaves, an apple-colored glaze fired on. Behind the clock tower the bright tint of distant, well-wooded mountains. Beyond the mountains, the palatial clouds, the clouds of pearl and rose, and then the sea plain as octagon jade...plain as distance. There is another clock tower, that tells a different time, under the clouds of dusk. Now, it is both another and the same day, fleeting, small, refreshing as a raindrop. Now it seems you’re standing in its shadow. And now, again, you come up against the limits of a moment, with a searing intuition of its zenith. A robin pulls a worm up from between the blades of wet grass near the fallen obelisk. In the interior of the tribunes of the nave, looking toward the last bay, the notary public watches merchants bring back Syrian glass for envoys in the rain. The foliate heads of stone that stare ornately through the leaves, are now all talking amongst themselves, Sir, but not to you.