

Slow
Dazzle

Poems & Prose for 25 Artists

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Max Blagg

SHALLOW BOOKS

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- MB, 2016.

For the Pole, J.H., editrix extraordinaire

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Donald Sultan
Smoke Rings



Burning Down the House

The condemned man savors his final smoke. How good does that tobacco taste? Can he conjure a smoke ring as big as the Ritz that will carry him away from his imminent death? How long can he make this last cigarette last? A minute or a mile?

*

Smoke rings against a dark void, a dervish of white across the blue, figure eights, lazy Susans, helixes and clitty tongues, ampersands and julians. Car wheels spinning from interstellar crackups, cartwheels and the somersaults of saltimbanques, angels dispersing from the head of a pin to their fiery stations of the cross. A new alphabet of elegant indecipherable forms, delicate as spider webs. Black holes forming on the edge of the universe.

*

A child thinks the clouds are made
of the smoke belching from the stacks
of steel mills and factories.

*