

At the Museum Café

Peter H. Desmond

For lunch I order matzo ball soup
before I tour the museum.

“How was it?” asks the waitress
as she wipes the table.

“It was light,” I say, “Airy.
A dense matzo ball
is like a stone in your stomach.”

She smiles. “Some people ask me
why it doesn't have noodles, or carrots.”

Halfway through the exhibit
I reach the hollow boxcar
stenciled “Karlsruhe” on its side:

Karlsruhe, Rhineland hometown
of my German ancestors,
car that rolled towards Mauthausen,

crammed with Jews
from one of the
four hundred ghettos,

each with its traditions,
its folk songs,
its recipes for soup.

Oh Rascal Children of Gaza

Khaled Juma

Oh rascal children of Gaza,

You who constantly disturbed me with your screams under my window,

You who filled every morning with rush and chaos,

You who broke my vase and stole the lonely flower on my balcony,

Come back –

And scream as you want,

And break all the vases,

Steal all the flowers.

Come back,

Just come back...