

Update for Francis Joseph

The quiet Danube eases past the quays
As though all meanings and all things which freight
Already had been borne away: a silt
For deltas, wreckage in the Dardanelles.
Restorers raise a time that never was,
Of ruins recent and without pathos,
As if some Japanese film studio
Put up Vienna's separate but equal
For the reptile monster to destroy:
High octane breath on Buda, panicking
The restaurants of Pest. Or as if each
Had been constructed as the other's folly,
Bridges in between them all their real.
What Romany the Germans did not gas
Are violinists in the restaurants.
One cannot know if Lehar stole from them
Or they from Lehar. It will be "Play, Gypsy"
When the Bomb has fallen. Centuries
Of occupation by the Ottomans
Have left at least a Turkish Bath, intact
And functioning, a Crescent on its dome.
Or is it sickle without hammer, Marx
As emblem put to rout? Crusades and creeds
Come each apart. The Double Eagle split.