PERFECT LIVES MANHATTAN

November 6, 2011

An opera by ROBERT ASHLEY
Arranged and performed by VARISPEED
PERFORMA 11

11:00AM THE PARK
Washington Square Park
Enter at Washington Place East

1:00PM THE BANK
Citibank
555 LaGuardia Place

7:00PM THE BACKYARD
Performa Hub
233 Mott Street

9:00PM THE LIVING ROOM
43 Great Jones Street

11:00PM THE BAR
Tom & Jerry’s 288 Bar
288 Elizabeth Street

3:00PM THE SUPERMARKET
Essex Street Market
120 Essex Street

5:00PM THE CHURCH
Trinity Lower East Side Lutheran
602 East 9th Street

Maps will be available at the PERFORMA HUB
(between Nov. 1 and Nov. 7)
or at any of the performance locations throughout the day
and online at
www.pplinto.com

Designed by Paul Pinto
PERFORMA11
presents

PERFECT LIVES
MANHATTAN
an opera by Robert Ashley
arranged and performed by
VARISPEED
Gelsey Bell
Brian McCorkle
Paul Pinto
Dave Ruder
Aliza Simonsw
with
Rick Burkhart, Dave Grossman
Woody Leslie, Dave Malloy, Mendi Obadike
Keith Obadik, Ellen O'Meara, Erin Rogers
Tom Swafford and Jeffrey Young

On their day off in a small Midwest town, two traveling musicians and two local siblings hatch a plan to take all the money from the Bank to Indiana for one day and then bring it back, thus performing the perfect crime... or a work of art.

Robert Ashley, a distinguished figure in American contemporary music, holds an extraordinary reputation, thanks to his work in new forms of opera and multi-disciplinary projects. His recorded works are acknowledged classics of language in a musical setting. He pioneered opera-television. The operatic works of Robert Ashley are distinctly original in style, and distinctly American in their subject matter and in their use of American language. Fanfare Magazine calls Ashley's Perfect Lives "nothing less than the first American opera...", and The Village Voice comments, "When the 21st Century glances back to see where the future of opera came from, Ashley, like Monteverdi before him, is going to look like a radical new beginning."

Varispeed is a newly formed collective of composer-performers from music and theatre companies Panoply Performance Laboratory, Unlimited and Why Not, breaking site-specific, sometimes-multiperformative, oftentimes-urban, forevermore-experimental events. Founded by Aliza Simon, Dave Ruder, Paul Pinto, Brian McCorkle, and Gelsey Bell, Varispeed came together in June 1997 for a six day, 11 hour celebration of Robert Ashley's Perfect Lives. Future projects include, among other all-day musical events, John Cage's Empty Words.

Gelsey Bell is a singer, songwriter, and scholar. She has four albums of original work and recently appeared on Jay Viverito's Shakespeare. She's just finished her first opera, new work, SCALING, and will be appearing in Robert Ashley's That Morning Thing. She is in thingNY, a PhD Candidate in performance studies at NYU, and the Critical Acts Editor for TDR.

Brian McCorkle is a composer/performer/digital artist, currently co-Director of the Panoply Performance Laboratory with Esther Neff. He can be seen in upcoming performances as composer/performer of Robert Ashley's That Morning Thing and the COIL Festival (as part of Too Shy to Stare by David Freeman).

Paul Pinto is a composer, vocalist and founding director of the new music group Panoply Performance Laboratory. He has been in performance since 1983, and has recorded and performed with such masters as Robert Ashley. He is a Professor at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and has worked extensively with Robert Ashley, on the Piano, NUDES, and For Stefano Tsaligkunis. His recent projects include: thingNY (11th and 12th), That Morning Thing, and the 19th Annual Stefano Tsaligkunis Memorial Concert at NYU.

Dave Ruder is a creative type who's been based in Brooklyn since 2005. He first encountered Perfect Lives in 2004 on VHS in the Wesleyan University Science Library. He was momentarily fascinated by the work, and decided to create a performance of the piece. The following year, he approached Robert Ashley about the possibility of performing the piece live, and the two began working on the project. They eventually settled on a performance at Gracie Mansion in New York City, in November 2011. The event was a huge success, and has since become a regular part of the Perfect Lives repertoire.

Perfect Lives is a daylong performance that takes place in two separate locations, each at a different time. The performance is divided into two parts: the morning part takes place at a local bar, while the evening part occurs at a local theater. Each part of the performance features a different set of performers, and is designed to explore different aspects of the piece. The performance is a collaborative effort, involving a large number of musicians, actors, and other artists. The goal is to create a unique performance experience, one that is both entertaining and thought-provoking. Perfect Lives is a complex and innovative piece, and is sure to be a highlight of the New York City performance scene.