

THOMAS DANE GALLERY

Harriet Staff, 'Cast for Robert Ashley early 'Speaking Opera' Includes Wayne Koestenbaum & Amy Sillman + Only Days to Reach Kickstarter Goal for the Whitney Biennial & You Can Help!', *Poetry Foundation*, 18 March, 2014
<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2014/03/cast-for-robert-ashley-early-speaking-opera-includes-wayne-koestenbaum-amy-sillman-only-days-to-reach-kickstarter-goal-for-the-whitney-biennial-you-can-help/>

The screenshot shows the Poetry Foundation website interface. At the top is the Poetry Foundation logo (a bird in flight) and the text 'POETRY FOUNDATION'. To the right are links for 'About Us', 'Visit', and 'Contact Us'. Below the logo is a navigation bar with categories: 'POEMS & POETS', 'FEATURES' (highlighted in yellow), 'RESOURCES', 'PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES', and 'POETRY MAGAZINE'. A banner for 'HARRIET a poetry blog' is visible. The main content area features a post titled 'Cast for Robert Ashley Early 'Speaking Opera' Includes Wayne Koestenbaum & Amy Sillman + Only Days to Reach Kickstarter Goal for the Whitney Biennial & You Can Help!' by Harriet Staff. The post includes a 'Share' button and a 'Print' button. On the left sidebar, there are sections for 'CATEGORIES' (Featured Blogger, Foundation News, Open Door, Poetry News), 'FOLLOW HARRIET ON TWITTER' (@poetrynews), and 'ABOUT HARRIET' (The Poetry Foundation's blog for poetry and related news, with links for More about Harriet, Contributors, and Archive). At the bottom of the post, there are three small black and white photographs showing people performing on stage.

When [Robert Ashley](#) died on March 3, we wrote near the end of our post about the work he was involved in at the time:

Robert Ashley was in the midst of working on *CRASH*—a new opera for six voices with an intimate account of his life—to be directed by Alex Waterman and performed, along with two other operas over three consecutive weeks

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(featuring 30 artists), for the Whitney Biennial. A benefit for the operas will be held at [Issue Project Room](#) in New York on March 24.

The artists and producers mounting the three operas for the Whitney have only five days to raise the rest of the production funding, or they lose it all! If you're an Ashley fan, please visit their [Kickstarter page](#) and throw some billets their way.

In addition to the world premiere of *Crash* (2014), a new autobiographical opera for six voices, Waterman will be recreating Ashley's early "speaking opera" *The Trial of Anne Opie Wehrer and Unknown Accomplices for Crimes Against Humanity* (1968), the cast for which was just announced: artist Amy Sillman (also exhibiting in the Biennial), poet and cultural critic [Wayne Koestenbaum](#), artist, actress, and forensic therapist Mary Farley, and visual artist Barbara Bloom.

And then there's [Vidas Perfectas](#), the Spanish-language version of Ashley's television opera *Perfect Lives*. That project alone is fascinating:

With Ashley's blessing, Alex Waterman directs this all-new production from a Spanish translation by Javier Sainz de Robles.

The 2014 Whitney Biennial marks the beginning of the filming and recording of the complete opera (all 7 episodes) in full theatrical staging, co-produced by Alexandra Rosenberg, Ballroom Marfa, and El Paso Opera, in association with ArKtype / Thomas O. Kriegsmann.

All episodes will be filmed in front of a live audience, in collaboration with Scott Kiernan and Victoria Keddie of E.S.P. TV, on the 2nd floor of the Whitney Museum. Footage shot in Marfa, Texas in February 2014 will be mixed with live camera feeds as part of the live television experience.

In July 2014 the production will travel 'on location' to Marfa, TX in a collaboration with co-producers Ballroom Marfa, where subsequent footage

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will be shot and combined with the Whitney Museum footage in post-production for the official TV/DVD release of Vidas Perfectas.

In 2014/15 Vidas Perfectas will tour worldwide, and the Vidas Perfectas DVD will be released after broadcasts and screenings in early 2015, preceded by an online pilot available exclusively to our Kickstarter supporters.

We can't wait. Good luck in reaching [your goal](#), all.