



## Perfect Lives: An Opera

By Robert Ashley, Kyle Gann

Dalkey Archive Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Perfect Lives: An Opera, Robert Ashley, Kyle Gann, Raoul de Noget, an over-the-hill singer, and his younger pal Buddy (The World's Greatest Piano Player), find themselves in a small town in the Midwest. They become friends with the son and daughter of the local sheriff, and the four hatch a plan to do something that, if they are caught, will be seen as a crime, but if they are not, will be art: they will rob the town bank, take the money over the border into Indiana, and then return it all the next day. With this story at its center, Robert Ashley's inimitable Perfect Lives goes on to demolish every narrative convention in the book, taking in conflicting perspectives, texts, tones, narrators, and philosophies, roping in Midwestern ennui, pop songs, self-help tapes, heist movies, the lost city of Atlantis, dirty jokes, the history of American immigration, the preternatural flatness of Illinois, boogie-woogie, Giordano Bruno, and, finally, an elegy for thought itself. Perfect Lives is as much a summation of America as *All in the Family* or *Paterson*, and is every bit as essential.

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