

# PAUL PINTO

COMPOSER VOCALIST PERFORMER

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pfpinto.com

thingNY.com

varispeedcollective.com

## BIOGRAPHY



Photo Credit: Stefanos Tsigrimanis

Composer Paul Pinto creates, performs and produces experimental music and theatrical works, primarily focused innovative and engaging new form of opera-theater that fuse the musicality of American speech, poetry, classical music, extended vocal techniques and electronic sound art. He is a founding member of the acclaimed collectives Varispeed and thingNY, and his music has been performed across the U.S. and internationally with and by ensembles, performers and presenters around the world, including Joan La Barbara, Pauline Oliveros, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Ne(x)tworks, the Cuarteto Latinoamericano, loadbang, wildUP!, The Industry in LA, The Royal Scottish Academy Chamber Chorus, the Carnegie Mellon Concert Chorus, New Thread Saxophone Quartet, Iktus Percussion, BRIC Arts, The Whitney Biennial, The Kitchen, Roulette, Experiments in Opera, the Panoply Performance Laboratory and Performa.

His recent work as a composer, collaborator, vocalist and multi-instrumentalist has been praised in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, *NewMusicBox* and *Time Out New York*. With his performance collective, Varispeed, Paul created a new site-specific arrangement of Robert Ashley's seminal opera for television, *Perfect Lives*, which made *TONY's* "Best of 2011" List and was praised by the *Times*' as one of the "standout operas of recent decades".

For years, Paul has been an advocate of underrepresented experimentalists in the classical music concert halls, particularly Julius Eastman and Robert Ashley, and has worked to diversify modern opera both in casting, and in form and style. Paul has chosen to work equally with traditional instruments and vocalists, lo-fi electronics, unconventional sound-makers and amateur musicians, creating one-minute opera, concert length chamber music, and durational performance art. At the helm of thingNY, Paul has premiered hundreds of works from emerging and established composers including Pauline Oliveros, Vinko Globokar, Art Jarvinen, John King, Kyle Gann and Gerard Grisey. With thingNY, he co-created and performed the operas *ADDDDDDDDD* (2008), *TIME: A Complete Explanation in Three Parts* (2011), *Jeff Young and Paul Pinto, Patriots, Run for Public Office on a Platform of Swift and Righteous Immigration Reform, Lots of Jobs, and a Healthy Environment* (2013) and *This Takes Place Close By* (2015). Of their latest work, the new music journal *I Care If You Listen* writes "rarely, if ever, [have I] seen an encyclopedic array of experimental effects so intimately linked with their expressive potential."

As a vocalist, Paul has performed in the U.S. and Asia in untraditional chamber music works and experimental and improvisatory creations, including the 5-octave lead role in Peter Maxwell Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, in John Sanborn and Dorian Wallace's video opera, *Temptation of St. Anthony*, and originating the Broadway role of Balaga in Dave Malloy and Rachel Chavkin's hit musical, *Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812*.

Scenes from his ballet, *Miseke* are available on DVD and CD through the educational UK label, Learning and Teaching Scotland. In addition to thingNY's comic book opera release *ADDDDDDDDD* and their latest album *minis/Trajectories*, Paul has self-released four albums: *The Gentlemen* (2009), a suite for vocals and electronics, *Every Note on the Piano* (2010), *NUDES: live at the Mary Benson Gallery* (2010), and *For Stefanos Tsigrimanis* (2011) an elegy for turntables, voice, guitar and electronics. His scores have been published by Deep Listening Publications.

Paul is a recipient of several awards and grants from the New York Department of Cultural Affairs, New Music USA, Chamber Music America, The Puffin Foundation, and is currently in residence at the HERE Arts Center, where he is developing a new electronic opera for 2017, *Thomas Paine in Violence*.

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## SELECTED WORKS

### **Thomas Paine in Violence** (2017)

opera for 9 vocalists, vn, vc, hp, pno, electronics, directed by Rick Burkhardt  
Nov 2017 – Joan LaBarbara, Ne(x)tworks, HERE, New York

### **minis\_001-012** (2008-2016)

a series of compositions for various chamber ensembles of speaking/singing instrumentalists

### **This takes place close by** (2015)

an opera by thingNY, directed by Ashley Tata  
Sep 2015 – thingNY, Knockdown Center, New York

### **Molly** (2015)

for three female singers and electronics, video by Matthew Bernard  
Jun 2015 – Bloomsday Celebration, Knockdown Center, New York

### **Unintelligible Response** (2014)

for 5 singers and 4 singing instrumentalists (hp, pno, vn, vc)  
Jan 2015 – Joan LaBarbara + wild Up! Ensemble, Wallis Center, Los Angeles

### **Hack It!** (2014)

for voices

### **"...with laser focus; while, maybe, a little syringe...; When I'm done with this one, I'm done fer good."** (2014)

for solo trombone

### **Agnus Dei (Sheep to the Slaughter)** (2013)

3 sopranos + any number of accompanying singers

### Music for **Empty Words** (2012)

a work by John Cage, interpreted and arranged by Varispeed

### **The Good Person of Szechwan** (2012)

music for the play by Brecht, for singers, strings, percussion and cello

### **Jeff Young and Paul Pinto, Patriots, Run for Public Office on a Platform of Swift and Righteous Immigration Reform, Lots of Jobs, and a Healthy Environment: an opera by Paul Pinto and Jeffrey Young** (2012)

Jan 2016 – 14-day tour of the Southwest and Mexico

### **Cataract** (2012)

for multiple drumsets  
Nov 2015 – Iktus Percussion, Roulette, New York

### **Perfect Lives** (2011-)

an opera by Robert Ashley, arranged by Varispeed  
Sep 2015 – *Perfect Lives Jersey City*  
May 2014 – *Perfect Lives Pittsburgh* – Pittsburgh Festival of New Music  
Aug 2013 – *Perfect Lives Catskills* – Mount Tremper Arts  
Sep 2011 – *Perfect Lives Manhattan* – Performa

### **TIME: A Complete Explanation in Three Parts** (2011)

by thingNY and Panoply Performance Laboratory

### **anyone's story** (2010)

for amateur SATB chorus

### **Music for Your Living Room** (2011)

for solo Bb clarinet + installation (large scroll score, bamboo, twine)

- For Stefanos Tsigrimanis** (2010)  
for solo performer, two portable turntables, vocalist, guitar and electronics
- sax concerto** (2009)  
saxophone soloist and six non-sax players playing saxophones
- My Super Special Recital** (2008)  
multi-instrumentalist + 3 accompanists (any instruments or non-musicians)
- g3db.Dido (goodbye, Dido)** (2008/2013)  
baritone, bass clarinet, trumpet, trombone
- "hands... my hands"** (2007, rev. 2013)  
voice, electronics and unspecified instruments
- Music to accompany the slow painful death of** (2006)  
singers, unspecified instruments, drum kit
- Miseke** (2005)  
ballet for chamber orchestra
- 1984: Images for Orchestra** (2004)  
3-2-3-3; 4-3-3-1; timp, 4 perc, pno; str

## R E C O R D I N G S

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- Dave Malloy - **Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812** [original Broadway cast recording]  
Reprise Records [digital download, CD]
- Robert Ashley - **Crash**  
Lovely Music CD 5001
- thingNY - **minis/Trajectories** (the music of Paul Pinto and Erin Rogers)  
Gold Bolus 024 [digital download, CD, LP]
- Paul Pinto - **For Stefanos Tsigrimanis**  
self-release [digital download]
- Paul Pinto - **The Gentlemen**  
self-release [digital download]
- thingNY - **ADDDDDDDDD**  
self-release [CD + comic book]
- animal nudity - **NUDES** (Stefanos Tsigrimanis + Paul Pinto)  
self-release [digital download]
- thingNY - **Thing Tank: : : (live at)**  
self-release [digital download]
- Dave Malloy - **Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812** [original cast recording]  
Sh-K-Boom [digital download, CD]
- loadbang - **Monodramas - g3db.Dido (goodbye, Dido)**  
Analog Arts [digital download, CD]
- Robert Ashley - **Perfect Lives Catskills** Arranged by Varispeed, video by Matthew Bernard  
Mount Tremper Arts [digital video]
- Panoply Performance Laboratory - **The Transformational Grammar of the Institutional Glorybowl Part III: Institute\_Institut**  
Gold Bolus 010 [digital download, CD]
- Paul Pinto - Scenes from **Miseke**  
Learning and Teaching Scotland [CD, DVD]

## SELECTED PERFORMANCES

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***Thomas Paine in Violence*** by Paul Pinto

Nov 2017 – Music director/Manchorus – HERE, New York

***Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812*** by Dave Malloy (Dir. Rachel Chavkin)

2016-2017 – Balaga/Opera Singer/Servant – Original Broadway Cast, Imperial Theatre, New York

Winter 2015 – Balaga/Opera Singer/Servant – American Repertory Theatre, Cambridge

Spring 2013 – Balaga/Opera Singer/Servant – Kazino, New York

Fall 2012 – Associate music director/Balaga/Opera Singer/Servant – Ars Nova, New York

***Temptation of St. Anthony*** by John Sanborn and Dorian Wallace

Winter 2016 – Tony - Palais Jacques Coeur à Bourges, France

***Eight Songs for a Mad King*** by Peter Maxwell Davies

May 2016 – King George – Greenwich House, New York

**Ecstatic Music Festival** (works by Pinto, Rogers, and Helado Negro)

Feb 2015 – vocalist/percussionist/pianist – Merkin Hall, New York

***Mother Earth*** by Erin Rogers

Jun 2014 – electronics and sound design - Carnegie Hall, New York

***Inuksuit*** by John Luther Adams

May 2014 – percussionist - Pittsburgh Festival of New Music, Pittsburgh

***Crash*** by Robert Ashley

Apr 2014 – “Paul” - Whitney Biennial, New York

**School of the Arts presents: The Music of Paul Pinto** (works by Pinto, Robert Ashley and Dennis Bathory-Kitsz)

Mar 2014 – vocalist/electronics – School of the Arts, Singapore

***Moby Dick, Part III: The Ballade of Pip*** by Dave Malloy

Mar 2014 – Pip – Joe's Pub, New York

**Immediacies Series: Music for Pianos, Pianist and Anti-Pianists** (works by Pinto and Dennis Bathory-Kitsz with Alia Musica)

Sep 2013 – vocalist/electronics/pianist – Firehouse Space, Brooklyn

**Yes Nix** by Tori Wrånes

Nov 2013 – vocalist/casting assistant – Performa '13, New York

***Our Defensive Measurements*** by Gelsey Bell

Feb 2013 – vocalist/percussionist – Roulette, Brooklyn

**SPAM v. 3.0** (works by over 60 composers performed in one evening)

Dec 2012 – vocalist/percussionist/pianist/electronics/actor/music director – Flushing Town Hall, Queens

**Cage @ 100** (works by John Cage - curated by Miguel Frasconi)

Sep 2012 – vocalist/pianist/electronics – The Stone, New York

**WOW** by Joe Diebes

Summer 2012 – countertenor – Figment Festival, New York

**To Scale** by Cough Button (Lynn Levy, Dave Ruder and Aliza Simons)

May 2012 – The Architect – Experiments in Opera, Roulette, Brooklyn

***Un Jour Comme Un Autre*** by Vinko Globokar

Apr 2012 – percussionist/vocalist/sound designer/music director – Chashama Long Island City, Queens

***That Morning Thing*** by Robert Ashley

Nov 2011 – vocalist – The Kitchen, New York

## CURATORSHIPS

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### **The Immediacies Series** (with thingNY)

Presenting over 60 artists at 12 events with a focus on promoting out-of-town artists.

2014 – Firehouse Space, Brooklyn, NY

2012-2013 – Vaudeville Park, Brooklyn, NY

### **New Music Showdown** (with Steven Leffue)

Yearly marathon of multiple New York new music ensembles.

Feb 2014 – Part of the Composers Now! Festival, JACK Space, Brooklyn, NY

Jun 2013 – JACK Space, Brooklyn, NY

### **The Comformer Perposers Series**

Presented 24 artists across 12 salons for composers performing solo works-in-progress

2009-2010 – University of the Streets, New York, NY

## AWARDS & RESIDENCIES

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### **2017**

**ComPeung** Residency (Chiang Mai, Thailand)

**AEA** Extraordinary Excellence in Diversity on Broadway Award (*Great Comet of 1812*)

**AEA** Outstanding Ensemble on Broadway Award (*Great Comet of 1812*)

**New Music USA** Impact Fund (thingNY)

**HERE** Artists Residency Program (*Thomas Paine in Violence*)

### **2016**

**Mount Tremper Arts** Solo Residency (Catskills)

**Puffin Foundation** (*Thomas Paine in Violence*)

**Copland Fund** (thingNY)

**Amphion Foundation** (thingNY)

**New Music USA** Impact Fund (thingNY)

**HERE** Artists Residency Program (*Thomas Paine in Violence*)

### **2015**

**Copland Fund** (thingNY)

Grant from New York City **Department of Cultural Affairs** (thingNY)

Re-grant from the **Queens Council on the Arts** (thingNY)

**HERE** Artists Residency Program (*Thomas Paine in Violence*)

### **2014**

Visiting Teaching Artist in Composition (**School of the Arts**, Singapore)

Grant from New York City **Department of Cultural Affairs** (thingNY)

Re-grant from the **Queens Council on the Arts** (thingNY)

**HERE** Artists Residency Program (*Thomas Paine in Violence*)

**Standard Toykraft** Residency (*This takes place close by*)

### **2013**

**Wildacres** Retreat Fellowship (North Carolina)

**Mount Tremper Arts** Residency (Varispeed, Catskills)

Regrant from the **Queens Council on the Arts** (thingNY)

**Net/Ten** ensemble grant (Varispeed)

**New Dischord Festival** featured artist (Chattanooga, TN)

**MADE HERE**: Season Three featured artist

### **2012**

Space grant from **Chashama** (Queens, NY)

Regrant from the **Queens Council on the Arts** (thingNY)

### **2011**

Regrant from the **Queens Council on the Arts** (thingNY)

**LaGuardia Performing Arts Center** Residency (thingNY)

### **2010**

Teaching Fellow in Composition, **Midori & Friends**

## PRESS & ACCOLADES

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“A composer and performer of astounding talent. He is one of those musicians who apparently can do anything”

-Robert Ashley, composer

“singing with a cult-leader-magnetism”

-*Operavore, WQXR*

### **thingNY**

“Face it! This is why you live in New York.”

-*Time Out New York*

“...as avant-garde as anything I’ve seen recently – by which term I inexactly mean that it was more focused on how we live at this exact moment than on the traditional conventions of concert-giving.”

-Kyle Gann, *PostClassical*

“bashing the boundaries of concert music and and gargling out social commentary in a way that can only be described as *that thing*.”

-*The Weekly Dig* (Boston)

### **Perfect Lives Manhattan**

“Staged by performance-art cabal **Varispeed** in public and private spaces throughout the Village and Soho, this live version of Robert Ashley’s seminal multimedia opera was punky and profound, showing that innovation has less to do with bottomless budgets than with vision and spirit.”

-*Time Out New York* [“Best of 2011”]

“The Varispeed production, presented as part of the Performa 11 festival, was less an act of rescuing a work from oblivion than one of repurposing its materials to unleash latent potential, while remaining faithful to its textural integrity and structural rigor. That Varispeed’s members could express themselves so readily through Mr. Ashley’s work while remaining faithful to it was impressive.”

-*The New York Times*

### **ADDDDDDDDD: an opera by thingNY**

“ADDDDDDDDD takes rapid-fire, largely spoken-word lyrical content and plays it out across a pulseraising background constructed of sonic accents like dingy bells and remote control channel changing—multiple streams of content flashing by at warp speed. Even in its audio-only CD release format, it’s somehow all consuming. I bet no one feels the urge to check their email during a live performance. *ADDDDDDDDD* is packaged with a fun, quirky, comic book libretto. A lovely item that takes the album a step beyond the usual CD release, it makes the physical object in the digital age an interesting piece of art in and of itself, worthy of shelf space and providing plenty of additional visual stimulation.”

-*NewMusicBox*

### **TIME: A Complete Explanation in Three Parts**

“...this thoughtful work explores each moment to the fullest. It also has a most stunning performance book of the program, script, score, and production notes that is well worth a donation. The deft mixing of video, music, and word-play allows audience members to take in whatever they wish, along with ideas on making use of their own time.”

-*Flavorpill*

### **For Stefanos Tsigrimanis**

“Excellent. I loved the honesty about it.... Definitely get your hands on the recorded version.”

-Douglas Laustsen, *WRSU*

## SHORTER BIOS

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### 130 words

**Paul Pinto** creates, performs and produces experimental music and opera-theatre that fuses the musicality of American speech, poetry, classical music, extended vocal techniques and electronic sound art. He is a founding member of the acclaimed collectives Varispeed and thingNY. Paul has presented music across the U.S. And internationally. As a vocalist, Paul works on a diversity of projects including the lead role in Peter Maxwell Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, and originating the Broadway role of Balaga in Dave Malloy and Rachel Chavkin's hit musical, *Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812*. His latest album *minis/Trajectories* with thingNY features eight of his verbose chamber compositions. He is currently in residency at the HERE Arts Center where he will premiere his opera *Thomas Paine in Violence* in November.

### 90 words [square]

**Paul Pinto** is a composer, writer and multi-disciplinary performer. He founded the experimental music ensembles thingNY and Varispeed. Paul released his album *minis/Trajectories* featuring eight verbose chamber compositions. Paul is an avid interpreter of the weird, recently playing the lead in *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, and often arranging and performing the works of Robert Ashley. His psychedelic electronic opera, *Thomas Paine in Violence*, premieres at the HERE Arts Center in November. He currently plays the role of Balaga on Broadway's *Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812*.

### 80 words [loose]

**Paul Pinto** is a composer, writer and performer. He makes weird noises sometimes. Sometimes with his experimental music groups thingNY and Varispeed. Other times just in his living room. Sometimes he writes them on paper and makes other people make the weird noises for him. His album with thingNY, *minis/Trajectories*, is out now. He's writing an opera called *Thomas Paine in Violence* for the HERE Art Center. He's currently singing and dancing on Broadway in *The Great Comet of 1812*.