

Voice

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MUSIC

ROBERT ASHLEY Old people—a community so marginalized it doesn't even have a future to look forward to—are the subject of Ashley's "Celestial Excursions," which has its domestic premiere tonight. America's most inventive and ambitious opera composer seamlessly interweaves several natural-language recitatives (performed by Thomas Buckner, Sam

Ashley, and Joan La Barbara, among others), pop-song nostalgia, pre-recorded electronics, and "Blue" Gene Tyranny's homey piano playing into what should be a witty, moving, and densely textured meditation on aging, memory, and the great unknown. **WEDNESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8**, the Kitchen, 512 West 19th Street, 212-255-5793. (Gehr)