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OUTSIDERISM

April 18–June 8, 2013
Grand re-opening reception:
Thursday, April 18, 6–8pm

Gregory Blackstock
Harrell Fletcher
Paul Laffoley
Michael Patterson-Carver

ARTS PROJECT AUSTRALIA

Alan Constable
Julian Martin
Christopher Mason
Lisa Reid

THE CREATIVE VISION FACTORY

Knicoma Frederick

Outsiderism, Fleisher/Ollman's inaugural effort in our new gallery space, explores the various manifestations of so-called outsider and self-taught art in a contemporary context, examining the frameworks we use as both viewers and artists in making sense of the impulses responsible for a wide range of artistic creativity. Outsider, self-taught, disabled, visionary, obsessive, art as therapy, vernacular—these are some of the categories we utilize, fraught as they might be, to sort out a vast array of work which stands in relief to the offerings made by artists who are more easily assimilated within mainstream contemporary art. However, in recent years, the contemporary art world—artists, curators, and institutions—has become increasingly interested in exploring notions of the "outsider." More and more we see this work thrown into the mix, even witnessing collaborations between "professional" and self-taught artists. *Outsiderism* will explore this recent turn and include works by artists with developmental disabilities and behavioral health issues from studio programs in Melbourne, Australia (Arts Project Australia) and Wilmington, Delaware (The Creative Vision Factory); paintings by Paul Laffoley exploring complex theories through diagrams, display charts and geometrically structured compositions in which text and image are woven together; drawings by Gregory Blackstock that catalogue and classify objects and ideas important to the artist from foreign alphabets and speed boats to flags and fireworks; Harrell Fletcher and Chris Johanson's video collaboration with David Jarvey, an artist with Down's Syndrome; and drawings of protest and political allegories by Michael Patterson-Carver, an itinerant artist and activist.

Outsiderism inaugurates Fleisher/Ollman's new gallery space, next door to the Fabric Workshop and Museum, and coincides with an important exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, *Great and Mighty Things: Art from the Jill and Sheldon Bonovitz Collection*, March 3–June 9, 2013. Our show will take a fresh look at so-called outsider art by emphasizing contemporary practitioners and providing a new context for this work.

Fleisher/Ollman is a highly appropriate venue for *Outsiderism*. The gallery opened in Philadelphia in 1952 as the Janet Fleisher Gallery, and over the course of the next four decades established a reputation as one of the world's premiere sources for self-taught art, helping to develop major public and private collections of this once-marginalized group of artists. Fleisher/Ollman was among the first to mount major exhibitions of work by Henry Darger, Sister Gertrude Morgan, Bill Traylor, and Martin Ramirez. Since 1997, the emphasis has shifted to also include contemporary artists who reflect the influence of the self-taught.