

THE QUILTS OF GEE'S BEND at the PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART and a visit to the RODIN MUSEUM

As one of the largest museums in the United States, the **Philadelphia Museum of Art** invites visitors from around the world to explore its renowned collections, acclaimed special exhibitions, and enriching programs. In the main building's sweep of 200 captivating galleries, visitors find many surprises and changing exhibitions. There are striking Renaissance master paintings, elaborately carved stone altarpieces, and entire period rooms and architectural settings from around the world. Since the Museum's founding in 1876, its renowned collections have grown to include more than 225,000 works of art.

On a twelve-city American tour, the "**Quilts of Gee's Bend**" will be on exhibit at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The exhibit has received tremendous international acclaim from Newsweek, National Public Radio's Talk of the Nation, Art in America, CBS News Sunday Morning, PBS's NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, just to name a few. Art critics worldwide have compared the quilts to the works of important artists such as Henri Matisse and Paul Klee. *Gee's Bend* is a small rural community nestled into a curve in the Alabama River southwest of Selma, Alabama. Founded in antebellum times, it was the lands of Joseph Gee and his relative Mark Pettway, who bought the Gee estate in 1850. After the Civil War, the freed slaves took the name Pettway, became tenant farmers for the Pettway family, and founded an all-black community nearly isolated from the surrounding world. During the Great Depression, the federal government stepped in to purchase land and homes for the community, bringing strange renown — as an "Alabama Africa" — to this sleepy hamlet. The town's women developed a distinctive, bold, and sophisticated quilting style based on traditional American (and African American) quilts, but with a geometric simplicity reminiscent of Amish quilts and modern art. The women of *Gee's Bend* passed their skills and aesthetic down through at least six generations to the present.

Our next stop will be the **Rodin Museum**, located just a few blocks from the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The Rodin houses the largest public collection of works, outside of Paris, by the celebrated late nineteenth-century French sculptor Auguste Rodin. With extraordinary works of art and a spectacular garden, the Museum offers a clam retreat from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. As visitors approach the front gate, they are greeted by one of Rodin's most famous works, *The Thinker*, while the powerful *Gates of Hell* stands at the Museum's entrance. Inside, visitors will discover casts of many of Rodin's best-known sculptures, including *The Burghers of Calais* and *Eternal Springtime*, as well as maquettes, drawings, and waxes.

We will stop for dinner at one of Central Pennsylvania's finest family-owned Italian restaurants, **Visaggio's Ristorante**. Choose one from the following: 1) Roast Pork Rustica (center cut pork loin baked in the house tomato sauce, served with linguine or gnocchi; or 2) Pollo O'Lynda (chicken breasts lightly floured, sautéed in butter, topped with marinated artichokes, cream, spinach, various cheeses and thinly sliced ham). All entrees are served with a house salad, Italian bread, dessert and beverage.

DATE: **Wednesday, September 17, 2008**

TIME: **6:00 a.m. departure** from the Fullington Bus Terminal on the corner of Fox Hill Road and Fillmore Road. There is free parking on site.

COST: **Member \$98.00. Guest \$110.00.** Guests may register after June 19, 2008. Transportation, driver gratuity, museum admission fees, and dinner are included in the cost of the trip.

NOTES: 1) We will be making a breakfast stop, at your own expense, on the way to Philadelphia. 2) Each person is responsible for the cost of their lunch on this trip.

REGISTRATION: 1) **Register by phoning the OLLI Reservation Line (238-6113).** Leave your name, phone number and the trip you are registering for. 2) Once you receive a phone call to verify your reservation, payment should be mailed to the OLLI office at P.O. Box 10661, State College, PA 16805. 3) If, for any reason, you cancel your reservation after payment has been made, a cancellation fee of \$10 and any non-refundable expenses OLLI has incurred will be deducted from your refund. 4) Anyone who cancels his or her reservation, and has not sent in their payment at the time they cancel, is responsible for, and will be billed for, the same aforementioned cancellation expenses.