Curator of Indigenous Art and Cultures

ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM
The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) is Canada’s celebrated international museum and houses extensive collections of art, culture, and nature featuring more than 13 million items. It is the largest Museum in Canada, with forty galleries showcased in its original heritage buildings and its 2007 Michael Lee-Chin Crystal extension designed by Studio Daniel Libeskind. Opened in 1914, the museum is Canada’s largest field-research institution, with research activities that span the globe.

Attracting more than 1.4 million visitors per year, the ROM has an annual operating budget of $65 million and is a world leader in communicating its research and collections to visitors. The ROM is an indispensable resource for building community by nurturing discovery and inspiring wonder.

For more information on the Royal Ontario Museum please visit www.rom.on.ca.
The Position

Curator of Indigenous Art and Cultures

The ROM seeks a dynamic, energetic, innovative individual with a track record of success in exhibitions, public engagement, and curation. The successful candidate will play a critical role in the development and implementation of a strategy to build, interpret and present the collection of Canadian Indigenous Art and Cultures to visitors and audiences broadly.

The ROM’s collection of Indigenous Art and Cultures is significant within Canada, featuring more than forty thousand cultural items and works of art from diverse lands and cultures. The collection includes items from many Indigenous communities that span the last two centuries up to works by contemporary Indigenous artists. The ROM has important collections of Indigenous ceremonial and cultural heritage as well as important works of contemporary art. The ROM Fashion & Textiles collections and archaeological collections also house important Indigenous materials.

The Curator will join the Museum at a critical time, as the ROM charts a new course to engage visitors and communities more deeply in its collections, research, and dialogue on contemporary issues. The position offers an opportunity to expand the ROM’s world-class collection and exhibition program into contemporary art and cultures, while maintaining its historic strengths. The ROM is seeking a Curator to offer fresh perspectives on the influence of Indigenous art and cultures in today’s world. The successful candidate will help shape the institution’s commitment to Indigenous Art and Cultures, create innovative ways of sharing collections and information, help build a program of community engagement, and promote an inclusive relationship in partnership with Indigenous communities.
The Position  
Curator of Indigenous Art and Cultures

To contribute to the goal to offer a balanced account of history in Canada, and present Indigenous Art and Cultures from Indigenous perspectives, the new Curator will help create new and culturally meaningful exhibitions in the First People’s gallery and temporary exhibitions. They will collaborate with the ROM’s Learning Department in their efforts to infuse Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into the museum’s educational and outreach programming. They will engage with Indigenous communities and ROM staff to contribute to the Ontario curriculum in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies, and address the Calls to Action specific to Education as recommended by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

The successful candidate will enjoy working in partnership and engaging with donors, collectors, scholars, external communities, and other partners, and will welcome interactions with many audiences, including families and children. They will believe strongly in meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities and lead by example to further a culture of inclusion and reconciliation at the ROM, and mutually support and work with the ROM’s Indigenous Advisory Circle. They will conduct original research in their area of specialty and make the results available through exhibitions, public programs, and publications. The Curator’s leadership will ensure that the Indigenous Art and Cultures collection, as well as other collections at the ROM, are interpreted from multiple voices, that stories are inclusive and not told from a single museum perspective.

The successful candidate will be a specialist in their field but interested in broad issues and questions related to Indigenous Art and Cultures that have relevance in Canada and the contemporary world. Their knowledge should extend widely regarding historical periods and media. The ROM is open to considering a range of candidates from an Associate Curator level to Senior Curator, consistent with the candidate’s experience and the strategic goals of the museum.
Education and Experience

- A Ph.D. in Indigenous art history or a closely related field at the time of appointment, or the equivalent in professional experience, exhibitions, and publications.
- A strong background of work within a museum or related environment, knowledge of peer institutions, and experience developing and implementing exhibitions, and working with internal and external stakeholders and communities.
- Knowledge of and experience with the dynamics of cultural heritage in contemporary works.
- Experience curating Indigenous art or cultural material.
- A research and publication record specialization in some aspect of Indigenous Art and Cultures, combined with broader interests in the field.
- Suitable credentials for cross-appointment to the University of Toronto or similar program at another University or Institution is considered an asset.
- Working knowledge of Indigenous languages is an asset.

The ROM Curator will be expected to

- Play a leading role in the development and rotation of permanent galleries and special exhibitions;
- Participate in the development and implementation of plans to engage community stakeholders, including Indigenous communities in Ontario and throughout Canada;
- Curate the ROM’s Indigenous and related collections encompassing the diversity of Indigenous cultures across Canada, and build the collection in new directions;
- Actively contribute to the development of public programming in a variety of formats, from on-site to online;
- Act as liaison with the Indigenous community groups and participate in meetings and events as appropriate;
- Participate in fundraising activities to support ROM/Indigenous community initiatives related to Indigenous Art and Cultures and the ROM’s Indigenous collection;
- Conduct or oversee research on ROM collections within their area of specialization, as well as facilitate research on the collection by outside/visiting scholars;
- Develop a program of original, scholarly research and publications, usually relating to ROM collections and exhibitions;
- Participate in fulfilling the teaching mission of the museum, through periodic university teaching and/or through supervision of interns at the museum;
- Work with the ROM library, which holds many rare examples of books and scrolls, to continue to build resources on the study of Indigenous Art and Cultures;
- Have an excellent command of spoken and written English.
Duties and Responsibilities

Exhibitions:
- Work collaboratively with educators, exhibition teams, designers and artists in the development, interpretation, and installation of special exhibitions and permanent galleries.

Public Program/Outreach:
- Prepare and give lectures, tours, and workshops to the general public, volunteers, professional colleagues, and other groups.

Research, Publications, Programs, Collections:
- Collaborate with curatorial colleagues, collectors, patrons, and cultural organizations to generate important publications and public programs;
- Take responsibility for the Indigenous collection, including study, rotation and display, care and record-keeping, provenance research, digitizing and publication;
- Build and refine the collection into new areas, such as modern and contemporary art and culture;
- Assume a leadership role in the program of repatriation of objects of cultural patrimony and sacred items;
- Help maintain and promote the Indigenous People’s collection and galleries;
- Maintain professional affiliations in scholarly and museum curatorial organizations, professional societies, and relevant committees.

Fundraising:
- In collaboration with fundraising staff, actively cultivate support for acquisitions, exhibitions, symposia, research grants, and fellowships through association with professional organizations, foundations, and patrons at the local and national level, and abroad.

Personal Characteristics
- Ability to multi-task and handle competing demands within a large, multi-layered, and active museum;
- Ambitious for the ROM and its efforts to develop strong networks with Indigenous communities, with established national scholars and institutions, and to continue development of a welcoming and collaborative external and internal culture relative to Indigenous issues;
- Bring an interest in leveraging interdisciplinary possibilities and programs to build collaborative partnerships internally and externally;
- Intellectually curious with an appetite to engage on a wide array of topics;
- Demonstrated understanding of the complexities involved in cultural heritage collections and exhibitions;
- Has high emotional intelligence.
The Application

The ROM will begin reviewing applications in **August 2019**; the posting will continue until the position is filled. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply for this international search, however, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority. We welcome applicants who are of First Nations, Inuit, Métis, or other Indigenous ancestry.

Nominations are welcome.

**To apply** in confidence, email 1) a letter expressing interest in this particular position, giving brief examples of past exhibition experience and proposed research areas and projects; 2) a curriculum vitae; and 3) names of three (3) references with contact information. Submit applications to the retained search firm: Leaders International Executive Search, via email to nicole@leadersinternational.com.

For more information or to apply for this opportunity, please contact Ms. Nicole Perry, Consultant with Leaders International at 613-788-8254 ext. 105.

The ROM is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. Upon request, suitable accommodations are available under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA) to applicants invited to an interview.

**Compensation** (governed by Collective Agreement):
- $67,144 to $143,367 per annum (commensurate with rank and experience)
- Full benefit coverage includes medical and dental plan, life insurance, long term disability, and pension
- NOTE: This is a unionized position, and the Curator will be a member of the ROM Curatorial Association (ROMCA)
The name Toronto is derived from a Mohawk word “tkaronto,” which means “where there are trees standing in the water.” It is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, along with other Indigenous groups that represent this valued community.

Toronto has a population of 2.8 million people making it the largest city in Canada, the fourth-largest city in North America, one of the top 25 cities globally for its quality of living, and the best place to live in Canada, according to MoneySense. Toronto welcomes 40 million tourists a year. It supports a lively art and culture scene that includes museums, galleries, performing art organizations, and many festivals (including the Indigenous Art Festival). Toronto is recognized as one of the most diverse and multi-cultural cities in the world.

Toronto is the home to Ontario’s Parliament Buildings as well as multiple post-secondary institutions – the University of Toronto (the largest university in Canada), Ryerson University, York University, OCAD University, Humber College, and George Brown College.

Toronto schools reflect the diversity of the population. The four school boards – English public, French public, English Roman Catholic and French Roman Catholic – provide many options, including French immersion programs. There are also several private, secular and religious, schools and boarding schools.

The Royal Ontario Museum is an iconic building boasting the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal inspired by the ROM’s extensive gem and mineral collection, the design was quickly dubbed the ‘crystal’ because of its crystalline shape. The Royal Ontario Museum has a unique 100-year history of conducting ground-breaking research in all areas of art, culture, and nature.

Just offshore from the city centre are the Toronto Islands known as ‘Menecing’, meaning “On the Island” in the Ojibwa language. The islands are home to parklands and the Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport. The island community is considered the largest urban car-free community in North America.