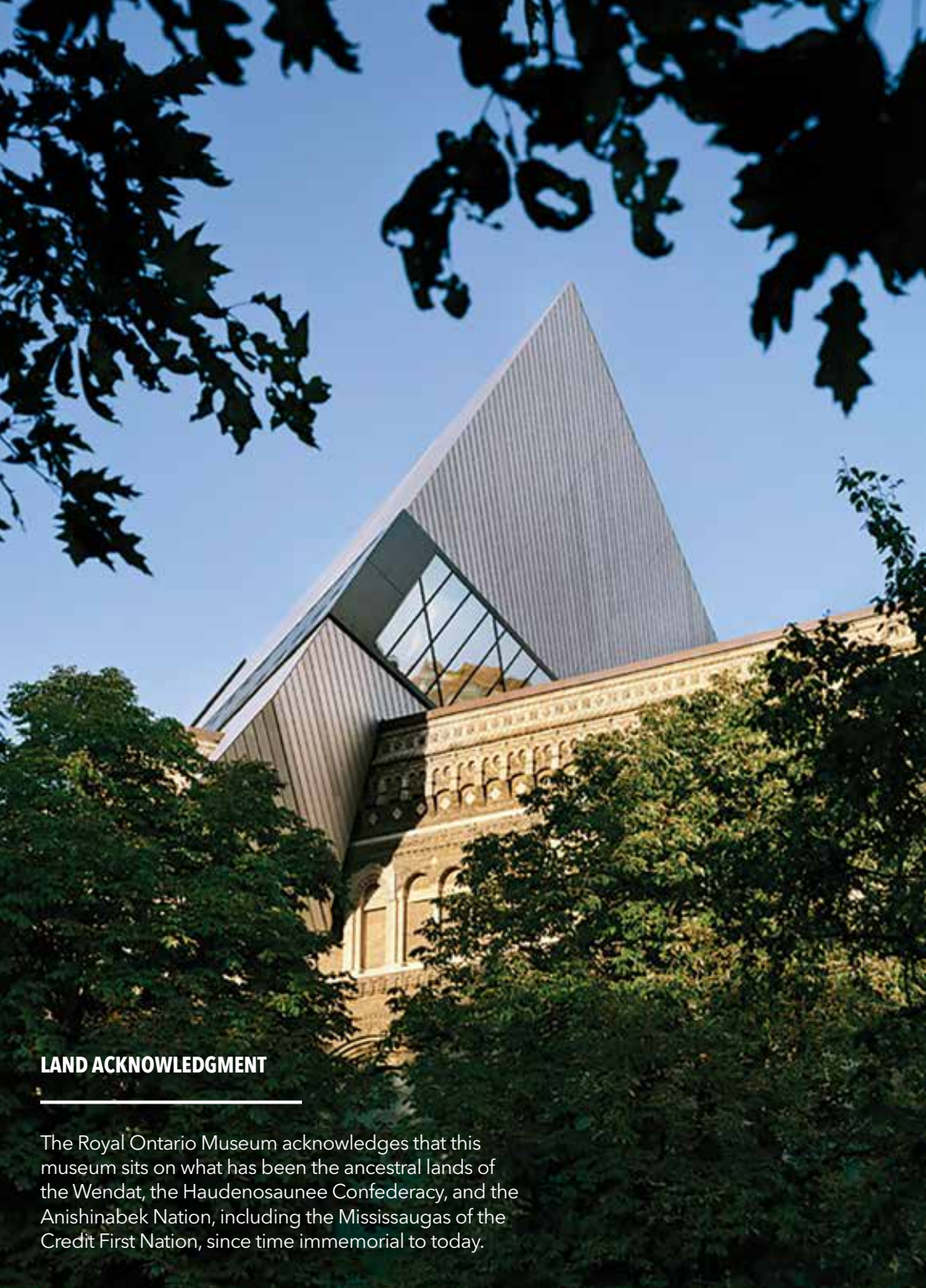




**R·M 21<sup>ST</sup>**  
**CENTURY**

**THE MUSEUM'S  
STRATEGIC  
DIRECTION**



# OUR 21ST CENTURY MUSEUM

Museums are trusted institutions with valuable assets and enormous potential. Yet a profound 21st century paradigm shift is reshaping the world around us. In this dynamic environment, museums must reshape themselves as well to sustain their relevance and thrive as we move deeper into the century. Museums have been slow to confront this challenge, but for those committed to adapting to the new landscape, there is tremendous leadership opportunity.

As the world evolves, museums must evolve to align themselves with a new set of realities marked by changing demographics and unprecedented global interdependence. Contemporary culture has altered dramatically. Digital technology is now a seamless part of daily life. Our global community is increasingly integrated and connected. Democracies are wrestling with equity and inclusion. And urban communities—Toronto in particular—are more culturally diverse than ever before. Concurrently, audiences' choices for cultural, leisure, and learning experiences have expanded exponentially, resulting in new competition for cultural institutions.

Looking to the future, museums' long-standing strengths—their collections, destination buildings, original research, and scholarly authority—remain essential. But alone, they are no longer enough. They must become the foundation upon which new capabilities are built to respond effectively to the changing environment.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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The Royal Ontario Museum acknowledges that this museum sits on what has been the ancestral lands of the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Anishinabek Nation, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, since time immemorial to today.



What additional qualities are required for 21st century success? Museums must play a central role in community and cultural life. Engage visitors in dynamic ways that are relevant to their own experience. Seek out authentic voices and diverse points of view. Create and present knowledge in new ways that cross traditional disciplinary boundaries. Embrace change and pursue innovation.

Long recognized for our multidisciplinary collections, groundbreaking research, exceptional exhibitions, and iconic architecture, the ROM is evolving with the changing landscape and becoming an evermore outward facing institution. Situated in a truly 21st century context—in the most diverse major city in the world, within a province and country known for pluralism, openness, and global perspectives—we are now poised to take a dramatic leap forward on the global stage. We will build upon our strengths and apply them in fresh and far-reaching ways. We will think, act, and invest to build greater engagement through inclusion, transdisciplinary thinking, digital practices, and innovation.

Our ambition for the future is bold, and with our new strategic direction to guide us, we will achieve our goal to become one of the world's foremost 21st century museums.



# ROM MISSION

We transform lives by helping people to understand the past, make sense of the present, and come together to shape a shared future.

We build and share global collections, create knowledge, inspire learning, encourage gathering, and spark exchange on topics within the intersecting worlds of art, culture, and nature that matter to people and communities.

A visitor viewing the wall sculpture *Straying Continents* by El Anatsui in the Shreyas and Mina Ajmera Gallery of Africa, the Americas, and Asia-Pacific.

# THE ROM IN 2028

## ROM VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The ROM will become a distinctly 21st century museum. We will be known globally for expanding the boundaries of knowledge, innovation in presenting that knowledge, and public relevance within the intersecting worlds of art, culture, and nature. We will be universally recognized as Canada's leading museum and as one of the foremost cultural institutions anywhere in the world.



## OUR LOCAL IMPACT

The ROM will be an undisputed focal point of cultural and community engagement for the people of Toronto and Ontario.

We will be recognized as a critical community anchor—a place where people gather, learn, socialize, and seek inspiration. And we will be an essential destination for engagement and exchange about the important issues that affect our lives.

Our growing visitor base will mirror our diverse community and audiences will see themselves reflected in our galleries, exhibitions, and programs.



VISION FOR THE ROM IN 2028

## OUR GLOBAL IMPACT

Building on our hundred-year heritage of engagement with the world, the ROM's influence—artistic, cultural, and scientific—will be felt nationally and internationally. We will set the standard in the global museum field for best practice in public engagement, ground-breaking research, and generative thinking on topics that matter to people's lives.

Our exhibitions will be sought after by the world's leading museums. Our engagement and learning programs will be held up as examples of best practice. Our curators will be in demand as keynote speakers and published in prestigious journals. Our collection will be widely known as one of the finest in the world. International tourists will point to the ROM as a must-see destination when visiting Canada.

Dr. Jean-Bernard Caron, Richard M. Ivey Curator of Invertebrate Palaeontology, in the Burgess Shale collecting samples for the new Willner Madge Gallery, Dawn of Life, set to open in 2021.



## VISION FOR THE ROM IN 2028

# OUR ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHS

To realize this vision, we will have enhanced our facilities, upgraded our digital capabilities, invested in talent, and built a resilient and sustainable financial foundation.

Our physical campus will provide an even more dynamic platform for public engagement, and all who enter our doors will feel welcomed and uplifted by our architecture. Digital thinking will be second nature. The ROM will attract and retain leadership and staff with the skills and experience that museums need in the 21st century.

Our strong balance sheet and resilient financial model will give us the capacity to weather the unexpected and the flexibility to pursue the innovation and change that go hand-in-hand with global leadership.





# ROM OVERARCHING GOALS

A dedicated commitment to achieving four overarching goals will be central to realizing our bold Vision for the Future:

- › To dramatically increase our relevance to the people of Toronto and Ontario and become even more central to the life of our community.
- › To ascend to the top tier of leadership in the global museum field.
- › To transform our facility so that it welcomes and inspires all our visitors and delivers a distinctly 21st century museum experience.
- › To significantly build our talent base and financial strength commensurate with the needs of a great 21st century museum.



# ROM STRATEGIES

Our strategies fall into three categories:

*Revolutionary*  
*Evolutionary*  
*Enabling*

Taken together, these interdependent strategies chart a course for realizing the ROM's vision of leadership as a great 21st century museum.

Students getting hands-on with collections and research through problem-based learning, using digital technologies and arts-based processes in the ROM Makerspace.



# OUR REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGIES

The 21st century ROM must think and act in fundamentally new ways. Revolutionary strategies reflect major shifts in mindset for the ROM and opportunities to break new ground in the museum field on 21st century frontiers:

- › Establish the ROM as the undisputed focal point for cultural and community engagement.
- › Build on our singular strengths encompassing art, culture, and nature to chart a new path for transdisciplinary practices.
- › Lead the field by fully infusing digital thinking into a museum environment.
- › Chart a new path for how museums in Canada can engage even more meaningfully with Indigenous communities.
- › Launch a ROM Next Level Ideation Lab.



# OUR EVOLUTIONARY STRATEGIES

The 21st century ROM must adapt its traditional strengths to align with its 21st century ambitions. Evolutionary strategies reflect the ways the ROM will reshape existing resources and activities to bring the 21st century museum to life:

- › Transform and revitalize the ROM's physical campus to meet the needs of a great 21st century museum.
- › Take a set of high potential collection areas to a position of global leadership and renown.
- › Strengthen and secure our curatorial capacity and enhance access to and stewardship of our collections.
- › Infuse a visitor-centric mindset throughout the Museum.
- › Further enhance the exhibition portfolio and refresh galleries.
- › Facilitate sustained learning that meets the 21st century needs of students, families, and adults.

Visitors enjoying the exhibition *Designing Asian Design*, with the work *Cloudscape* by Xiaojing Yan overhead.



# OUR *ENABLING* STRATEGIES

The 21st century ROM must develop the financial resources, talent, and plan to enable the success of our vision:

- › Build and develop our talent.
- › Develop and implement the next major capital campaign for the ROM.
- › Develop and implement a robust, dynamic, and detailed business plan.

ROM Indigenous Knowledge Resource Teacher Graham Paradis speaks to a group of visitors about the Bull Head's Robe painted by Two Guns in 1908, in the Daphne Cockwell Gallery dedicated to First Peoples art & culture.



# ROM CORE VALUES

**CREATIVITY** in our approach to challenges

**ADAPTABILITY** in changing contexts

**RESPECT** for our differences

**EXCELLENCE** in all aspects of our work

**COURAGE** to take risks and try new things

**COLLABORATION** across boundaries

**ACCOUNTABILITY** for outcomes

A visitor captures an image of a Standing Buddha, from the Ming Dynasty, 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century, in the Matthews Family Court of Chinese Sculpture.

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The ROM is an agency of the  
Government of Ontario

