



Josh Basseches

Director & CEO, Royal Ontario Museum

A distinguished leader with almost three decades of experience transforming museums, Josh Basseches is known for his bold vision and strategic approach to engaging audiences, connecting museums to their communities, and presenting knowledge in new and innovative ways. Since his appointment as Director & CEO in 2016, ROM has solidified its position as Canada's most visited museum and now ranks among the top ten museums in North America. With the launch of an ambitious Strategic Direction in 2018, Basseches set a new course for ROM, repositioning the museum as an ever-more relevant 21st century institution and focal point of cultural and civic engagement. During his tenure, Basseches has overseen the ongoing revitalization of the Museum, including the reopening of its heritage entrance, the addition of welcoming outdoor public and programming spaces, and the development of a new, 10,000 square-foot gallery on the origins of life—the first of its kind in North America.

In addition, he has significantly expanded the Museum's exhibitions, educational programs, digital presence, and high-profile collection areas, and opened ROM's gallery of First Peoples to the public free of charge. Basseches has also launched a robust travelling exhibition program and established new endowed curatorships, including the world's first curator of climate change.

Prior to his ROM appointment, Basseches was Deputy Director of the Peabody Essex Museum (PEM) in Salem, Massachusetts. At PEM, he was pivotal to the institution's decade-long reinvention into one of America's leading museums, including a critical capital campaign that raised more than \$600 million (USD). Before joining PEM, Basseches served as Executive Director of the Harvard Museum of Natural History (HMNH), where he launched the repositioning of the HMNH from a prestigious, but inwardly focused, university museum into a vibrant, public-serving institution.

Basseches is also active in the museum professional community. He is a member of the Big 13 museum directors representing the world's largest museums with natural history collections, and he previously served as a trustee of the Association of Art Museum Directors and as President of the New England Museum Association.

Basseches holds an MBA from Harvard Business School, an M.A. from Boston University, and a B.A. from Amherst College. He is currently completing a Ph.D. in the History of Art and Architecture at Boston University and is an Associate of Victoria College.

His research and writing focus on international artistic and cultural exchange.