

PRESS RELEASE

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New director appointed to the Geneva Museum of Art and History

Geneva City Council has appointed Marc-Olivier Wahler as the new director of the Geneva Museum of Art and History (MAH). Mr. Wahler, 54, has headed up major international institutions in Europe and in the United States. He will take up his new position on November 1st with the challenging mission of embodying and sharing the vision of a reinvented museum.

Swiss curator and museum director Marc-Olivier Wahler, who will succeed current director Jean-Yves Marin, will be entrusted to define and lead the MAH cultural and scientific policies in line with the specifications adopted by the City Council in June 2018.

“This appointment marks a decisive step in the dynamics of the museum’s renovation and expansion process. It shows our determination to bring this ambitious project to fruition and achieve a new vision by fully exploiting the MAH’s rich and diverse collections and its long-standing roots in Geneva’s DNA”, said culture and sports Executive Councillor Sami Kanaan.

Inaugurated in 1910, the MAH is one of the three largest museums in Switzerland and a true encyclopaedic institution with a wide range of collections spanning from archaeology to applied arts and fine arts.

An internationally recognized curator, scholar and museum professional, Marc-Olivier Wahler brings wide-ranging expertise to the MAH. After graduating in Philosophy and Art History from the Universities of Neuchâtel and Lausanne, he began his museum career as a curator at the Cantonal Museum of Fine Arts in Lausanne, before contributing to the opening of Geneva MAMCO (Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art) in 1993. He then co-founded the CAN (Centre d’art Neuchâtel) in 1995, before heading to New York to run the Swiss Institute in 2000.

Director of MSU Broad Museum (Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan) from 2016 to 2019, he previously served as director and chief curator for the Palais de Tokyo (2006-2012), revamping and renovating this institution to make it one of the world’s most esteemed art museums.

Throughout his 25-year career, Marc-Olivier Wahler has curated more than 400 exhibitions around the world, mainly as a museum director and chief curator, but also as a consultant and independent curator.

A skilful communicator, Mr. Wahler also pays particular attention to mediation and cross-disciplinary exchange, as evidenced by his numerous publications and lectures.

As part of his new role as head of the MAH, Marc-Olivier Wahler will have to carry an in-depth reflection to achieve a cultural, scientific and thought-provoking project addressing the key issues of the next decades and positioning the MAH on Europe’s cultural map.

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