DELFINA
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PRESS RELEASE

Maxwell Alexandre:
Sanctuary and the Shadow of its Walls

Exhibition dates:
8 October - 23 November 2025

Opening:
Tuesday, 7 October 2025
18:30-20:30

Times:
Tues-Sun, 12:00-18:00

Delfina Foundation is pleased to present *Sanctuary and the Shadow of its Walls*, the first institutional solo exhibition in the UK by Brazilian artist Maxwell Alexandre. Marking a pivotal evolution in his practice, the exhibition unveils a series of newly commissioned paintings on *pardo* paper alongside site-specific scenography, contemplating the nuances of seeking sanctuary and exploring its fragile borders.

Maxwell Alexandre, detail of *Pátio do Clube do Flamengo na Gávea [Flamengo Club Courtyard in Gávea]*, 2025. Oil on *pardo* paper, 250 x 188 cm. Photo: Julia Thompson.

Over the past five years, Alexandre has been developing an ambitious painting series *Clube (Club)*, shifting his focus from Black figurative works depicting the vibrant scenes in his community to the everyday life inside Clube de Regatas do Flamengo — a prestigious multi-sports club in Rio de Janeiro. Perched beside the Rocinha favela where Alexandre grew up, Flamengo offers a strikingly different sense of calm and order.

At Delfina Foundation, the artist transforms the basement gallery into an immersive, almost theatrical haven. His works weave together architectural details, the subtle social choreography of bathers, and the formal play between sun and shadow. In doing so, Alexandre invites us to ponder: *What does it mean to construct a place of safety in a turbulent world? What happens within a sanctuary? And what lingers at its edges?*

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Notes to Editors

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Images and press pack

The exhibition lead-image, installation shots, and previous work by the artists can be found here. Following installation, please also find documentation images on the same link. All image reproduction is conditional on use of captions and credit lines as found in image credit sheet.

Maxwell Alexandre

Born in 1990 in Rio de Janeiro, Maxwell Alexandre is one of the most celebrated contemporary artists in Brazil today. Raised in an evangelical household, Alexandre competed as a professional skater and fulfilled military service, knowledge that fundamentally sustains his output. He graduated in Design at Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (PUC-RJ), in 2016. In 2018, he received the São Sebastião de Cultura Award from the Cultural Association of the Archdiocese of Rio de Janeiro, in the category of Plastic Arts. That same year, he participated in an artistic residency at the Delfina Foundation in London. In 2020, he won the prestigious PIPA Prize and participated in an artistic residency at the Al Maaden Museum of Contemporary African Art (MACAAL), in Marrakech, Morocco, resulting in an installation for the group exhibition *HAVE YOU SEEN A HORIZON LATELY* at the same institution. The following year, he was named artist of the year by the Deutsche Bank and listed as one of the top 35 avant-garde artists by Artsy. In 2023, he was awarded “Man of the year” in the Culture category by GQ magazine. Also in 2023, the first Pavilhão Maxwell Alexandre was inaugurated in São Cristóvão, followed by the second Pavilhão in the favela of Rocinha, both in Rio de Janeiro. From March to June of the subsequent year, the Pavilhão Maxwell Alexandre 3 was held at the Museu Histórico da Cidade, Rio de Janeiro, featuring the series *Clube*.

Alexandre has held solo exhibitions in Brazilian and international institutions and galleries, at the Sesc Avenida Paulista in São Paulo, and at the Museu Histórica da Cidade, in Rio de Janeiro, in 2024, and in the previous year at the Casa SP-Arte, in São Paulo; Cahiers d’Art, Paris, and La Casa Encendida, Madrid. His 2021 solo exhibition at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris was followed by his solo show *Pardo é Papel* at The Shed, New York, in 2022. This exhibition had previously travelled to the Instituto Tomie Ohtake, São Paulo, and the Fundação Iberê Camargo, Porto Alegre; the Museu de Arte do Rio, Rio de Janeiro; and the Musée d’art contemporain de Lyon, France, in 2019. In 2020 Alexandre presented a solo exhibition, *Pardo é Papel: Close a door to open a window,* at David Zwirner, London.

His work is included in the collections of the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, the Museu de Arte de São Paulo, the Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, the Museu de Arte do Rio, Museo Reina Sofia, Musée d’art contemporain de Lyon, and Guggenheim Abu Dhabi.

Delfina Foundation

Founded in 2007, Delfina Foundation is a London-based independent, non-profit foundation dedicated to facilitating artistic exchange and developing creative practice through residencies, partnerships, and public programming. As London's largest residency provider, Delfina has hosted over 450 artists, curators, and writers in residence from over 85 countries around the world, partnering with institutions, including Tate, V&A, ICA, Frieze, Chisenhale, Art Jameel, and Dhaka Art Summit.

Credits

The exhibition is supported by the Maxwell Alexandre Exhibition Circle with the generous support of Almeida & Dale.

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