

SLG

Press Release

Paulo Nimer Pjota: Encantados

Dates: 1 May – 23 August 2026

Main Gallery

Paulo Nimer Pjota (b.1988, São José do Rio Preto) is a Brazilian artist who predominantly works in oil, tempera and acrylic on canvas. His paintings draw on art history, popular culture, mythology and folk tales, merging multiple and often contrasting references to create new, imaginary scenarios. His approach borrows from the sampling and remixing practices adopted in Brazilian hip-hop and rap music, as well as on his experience as a graffiti artist as a teenager. Even then he was an aesthetic disrupter, pushing against the rules governing street art, which he found to be restricting. Breaking down cultural hierarchies has remained at the heart of his practice ever since.

At the SLG, Pjota will present a new series of paintings against an expansive mural painted directly onto the gallery walls to create a magical environment populated by mythical characters, dragons, crocodiles, monkeys and imaginary beasts. The sun, stars and moon are recurring motifs in Pjota's cosmos, as are ancient and modern vases, shells and invented vessels, often brimming with flowers and hybrid plants. The presence of music is also implied, by fantastical creatures drawn on the walls. A three-headed beast plays the trumpet, horn and sax all at the same time, whilst simultaneously beating a drum. One animal's throat merges with the instrument it's playing, and another sits on a turntable, scratching a record with its feet whilst playing a violin with its hands. This injection of silent music heralds the potential of a hidden world, of secrets behind the surface of this mysterious garden. Bringing together such disparate elements from the past, present and an imaginary world, Pjota introduces us to a new universe in which established attributions of value to various objects, artefacts and cultures are dismantled, making way for an alternative future.

The character of that alternative future is deliberately ambiguous. The exhibition's title, *Encantados*, meaning enchanted in Portuguese, draws on the dual definitions of a word which can refer to being charmed and filled with delight, but also to a state of being placed under a spell or bewitched. The potential for both positive and negative scenarios, the tension between them or their perhaps inevitable coexistence, runs throughout the show. All the works are imbued with a sense of fantasy and magic, but whereas some are overtly joyous, others could be scenes from a post-apocalyptic world. Unlike a story book in which a clear narrative unfolds, with a beginning, middle and end, Pjota's works leave the viewer to make their own sense of his fantastical scenes.

The exhibition at the SLG will be Pjota's first exhibition with a public gallery in the UK. It will also be his second institutional solo exhibition following his debut at Kunstinstituut Melly, Rotterdam, in 2025.

An exhibition of work by British Nigerian artist Ranti Bam will be on show in the SLG's Fire Station Galleries during the same period, 1 May – 23 August 2026.

For further press information, images and interviews please contact Anna Jones, Head of Communications: anna.jones@southlondongallery.org

NOTES TO EDITORS

Address and Opening Hours

South London Gallery, Main Building: 65–67 Peckham Road, London, SE5 8UH
South London Gallery, Fire Station: 82 Peckham Road, London, SE15 5LQ

The gallery is open Wednesday – Sunday.
southlondongallery.org

Social Media

Instagram: @southlondongallery
Facebook: South London Gallery
TikTok: @southlondongallery_

Paulo Nimer Pjota Biography

Paulo Nimer Pjota (b. 1988, São José do Rio Preto, Brazil) lives and works in São Paulo, Brazil. Recent solo exhibitions include *Na Boca do Sol II* at François Ghebaly, Los Angeles (2026); *A Lua e Eu (The Moon and I)* at Kunstinstituut Melly, Rotterdam; *Os alquimistas estão chegando* at Mendes Wood DM, Paris (2025); and *Na Boca do Sol* at Mendes Wood DM, New York (2024); *Do cômico e do trágico* at Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo (2023); *Every Empire Breaks Like a Vase* at François Ghebaly, Los Angeles, and Maureen Paley & Studio M, London (both 2022), as well as at The Power Station, Dallas (2021). His work has been included in institutional group exhibitions such as *1981/2021: arte contemporânea brasileira* at CCBB, Rio de Janeiro (2021); *Images that don't conform* at Museu de Arte do Rio, Rio de Janeiro (2021); *Trouble in Paradise* at Kunsthall Rotterdam (2019); *Sea of Desire* at Fondation Carmignac, Porquerolles (2018).

About the South London Gallery

The SLG has an international reputation for its contemporary art exhibitions by established, mid-career and younger artists and programme of film and performance events. Its highly regarded, free Communities & Learning programme includes a peer-led young people's collective; family workshops; artist-led projects on local housing estates; and a programme for looked after children.

The South London Gallery (SLG) was founded in the 19th century by philanthropist William Rossiter to 'bring art to the people of south London'. Today the gallery comprises its original site at 65 Peckham Road; the Fire Station, which opened to the public in 2018; Art Block, a space for local children and families on Sceaux Gardens Estate and an artist-designed garden.

The SLG is a registered charity, which raises more than half of its income from trusts and foundations, sponsors, individuals, and fundraising events.

***Paulo Nimer Pjota: Encantados* is generously supported by:**

Maureen Paley, London; Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo; and François Ghebaly, Los Angeles and New York