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## 'ARTISTS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO CHALLENGE AI': CHARLES SANDISON'S PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

BY MAX FOSHEE ON 22 APRIL 2025

The artist Charles Sandison explores AI through the prophetic eyes of the Delphi oracle in a new site-specific moving image installation commissioned by the PCAI in Delphi, Greece.

To see the future, often we have to take a look at the past. *The Garden of Pythia* by Charles Sandison is a site-specific moving image exhibition commissioned for the PCAI in Delphi, Greece. Sandison explores the new through the old utilising the bygone idea of the Delphi oracle, high priestess at the temple of Apollo in Greek mythology, to examine ancient world prophecy through new age artificial Intelligence.

Coding, logic boards, and the mobile devices glued to our hands are how we see and experience technology today, but these items are far from the antiquated technology of ancient Greece. The purpose, however, has seemingly remained the same: to harbour and understand information while foreseeing the issues that lie ahead, much like the old Delphi Oracle. Sandison effortlessly blends the two, using historical imagery, local geology, flora and fauna he interprets the Oracle, or Pythia, as the first organic computational thinking device and applies this through modern AI to transform the data collected.

I believe artists have a responsibility to engage with, to appropriate, and challenge conventions in AI rather than only protesting it without trying to understand its history and how it will change our collective culture futures.



Charles Sandison, Garden of Pythia, 2025 (work in progress). Courtesy of the artist. PCAI artwork commission

Sandison began coding at the age of 12, and through the guiding hands of Glasgow School of Art, turned his skills with cipher into a practice centered around immersive

data based work. Pi, or Global Centre for Circular Economy and Culture, where the work will be permanently exhibited, focuses on showcasing art that addresses environmental, sociological, and philosophical issues. 'I hope that my art-work allows viewers to engage with the subject of AI so as to transcend pre-defined negative commentary and take it as an experience in the context of the amazing visual location of the installation on the mountain side', says Sandison, who is ensuring that his work and Pi's message captures the cultural, historical, and environmental integrity of Delphi and in turn the Earth through the artistic lens of multi-media creatives.

Delphic statues, reimagined memories, and collected information are translated into projected code, bi-lingual text, and reconceptualised statues that paste themselves onto the natural ecosystem surrounding the Pi. Sandison highlights the natal essence of Delphi, thinning the veil between the past, present, and future. Crossing over the mythological Archeron, the river which separates the living world from the underworld, Sandison revives the venerable questions we asked Pythia, and helps the audience understand that the questions asked then are much the same questions we ask now.



Charles Sandison (portrait), 2024. Photo: Teija-Tuulia Ahola

As Sandison says, 'I believe artists have a responsibility to engage with, to appropriate, and challenge conventions in AI rather than only protesting it without trying to understand its history and how it will change our collective culture futures.'

*The Garden of Pythia* is open now.



Charles Sandison, *Garden of Pythia*, 2025 (work in progress). Courtesy of the artist.  
PCAI artwork commission

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