ÇİNİLİ HAMAM
ZEYREK

Zeyrek Çinili Hamam Presents Juliette Minchin's First Exhibition in Türkiye: Where the River Burns





Zeyrek Çinili Hamam is pleased to announce Where the River Burns, a site-specific solo exhibition by French artist Juliette Minchin, marking her first presentation in Istanbul. Curated by Anlam de Coster, the exhibition unfolds across the 16th-century hammam's recently unearthed Byzantine cistern and cold rooms.

Minchin was invited by de Coster to develop a site-specific project in dialogue with the hammam's layered material history, architectural memory, symbolism and enduring rituals. Her intervention, grounded in the alchemical transformation of materials such as wax, tin, and paper, explores themes of purification, divination, and care.

The hammam has long been imagined as a site of purification and rebirth. At its center lies the 'navel stone,' recalling the omphalos stone at Delphi, the Greek word for 'navel.' Delphi, the foremost oracular sanctuary of the ancient world, was regarded as the center of the Earth, a place where water served as a medium for both prophecy and purification. Through works in wax, tin, and paper shaped by fire and water, Minchin transforms the cistern into an oracle's shrine, where rituals of desire, care, and devotion trace connections between the body and the cosmos.

The exhibition follows a sequence inspired by the ritual structure of a traditional hammam visit. Upon entering the subterranean cistern, Minchin's signature wax drapery installations create a symbolic threshold, evoking a moment of release, disrobing, and transformation. These works reference the cold rooms of the hammam, where outer layers and social identities are shed before entering the ritual space. In her hands, wax becomes both skin and shell: pliable, protective, and porous. Process-based works continue through the cistern's passageways, including new

pieces from her Hydromancies series, delicate drawings on translucent paper created through the interplay of water, pigment, and fire. These works resemble celestial maps and palmistry, echoing both scientific and mystical traditions tied to hammam culture and Barbarossa, the original patron of Zeyrek Çinili Hamam.

Minchin also draws from the ancient practice of molybdomancy (divination using molten metal) with a new series of tin installations created in Istanbul. In the cistern's otherworldly setting, tin flows and solidifies into lace-like, reflective forms, evoking rivers, relics, and the reading of omens in molten matter. Other tin works directly respond to the restoration of the hammam, referencing historical objects uncovered during archaeological excavations.
During her time in Istanbul, the artist was also inspired by the city's devotional vernacular, its gestures of offering and wish-making. One new work is made from half-burnt candles collected from local churches. Once lit in hope, these remnants are transformed into a sculptural vessel for collective longing, memory, and spiritual residue.

As the final act of the exhibition, Juliette Minchin presents Omphalos, an ephemeral installation in the garden overlooking the domes of the Zeyrek Çinili Hamam. This installation of wax drapes on a metal structure creates an imaginary sanctuary with a cupola. Over time, the wax will melt and the metal will oxidize, embodying the transience of life.

This exhibition is the fourth project to take place within Zeyrek Çinili Hamam's contemporary art program initiated by Koza Yazgan and curated by Anlam de Coster, which seeks to preserve the social role historically carried by hammams as places of gathering, healing, and belonging through free exhibitions and public programs. Where the River Burns will be on view at Zeyrek Çinili Hamam from September 19, 2025, through January 18, 2026.

Where the River Burns weaves together ritual, architecture, and the transformation of materials through heat. Minchin's installations exist between the sacred and the domestic, the monumental and the intimate. Whether in wax, tin, or paper, she captures ephemeral traces of desire, gestures of care, and acts of devotion, transforming the hammam into a space where material becomes metaphor, and the river of ritual begins to burn.

Minchin's exhibition is the fourth project to take place within the scope of Zeyrek Çinili Hamam's contemporary art program aiming to preserve the social mission historically carried by hammams as places of gathering, healing, and belonging by offering free exhibitions and public programs.

About Zeyrek Çinili Hamam

Zeyrek Çinili Hamam, located in Istanbul's historic Zeyrek neighborhood, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, reopened in 2023 as both a traditional bath and a vibrant cultural complex, following thirteen years of meticulous restoration led by The Marmara Group.
Originally commissioned by Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha and designed by Mimar Sinan in the 16th century, the hamam is recognized as a masterpiece of Ottoman architecture. Its name derives from the exquisite Iznik tiles (çini) that once adorned its interiors, specially crafted for the space.
Named one of TIME Magazine's "World's Greatest Places" in 2024, Zeyrek Çinili Hamam stands as a landmark of cultural preservation and innovation. Open six days a week (closed Mondays), it offers a refined hammam experience with separate sections for men and women, operating daily from 08:00 to 22:00. The complex also includes a tranquil garden for special events, overlooking the majestic domes of the bathhouse.

Zeyrek Çinili Hamam offers more than a bathing experience. It houses a purpose-built museum that guides visitors through time, featuring Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman artifacts unearthed during the restoration process. Objects and tiles related to bathing culture are exhibited in the museum building, while the site's newly revealed Byzantine cistern hosts a dynamic program of contemporary art exhibitions, offering visceral encounters that resonate with the hammam's enduring ethos of community. The series began with the group exhibition Healing Ruins (2023), followed by solo shows dedicated to Alekos Fassianos (2024) and Anousha Payne (2025), curated by Anlam de Coster. Bringing heritage and contemporary design together, the hamam's shop features exclusive collections by leading designers and artists inspired by the site's architecture and rituals.

About Juliette Minchin

Juliette Minchin (b. 1992) is a French artist based in Paris, working across sculpture, installation, video, and drawing. A graduate of ENSAD in Scenography and the Beaux-Arts de Paris, she creates immersive, multi-sensory environments that engage deeply with materiality, light, scent, and sound.

Her practice explores themes of transformation and disappearance, plasticity, metamorphosis, dissolution, decay, and deliquescence, where each piece unfolds as an autonomous temporal sequence, marking the passage of time. Often presented in series and across various states, her works inhabit a space of essential ambiguity: is it the birth of matter or the death of form? In Minchin's world, beginnings and endings blur.

Using natural materials such as plaster, earth, wax, and liquid, her sculptures carry an organic quality, with surfaces that often resemble human skin. The repetition of gestures and the unpredictable evolution of materials lend her work a processual, almost alchemical dimension.
Immersive and introspective, her installations invite viewers into environments that feel material yet verge on the esoteric. The fictional spaces she constructs evoke ritualistic atmospheres. Through sacred and hieratic forms drawn from archetypes across cultures, Minchin's work taps into animist, mystical, and spiritual sensibilities, offering glimpses of transcendence at the heart of matter.

Minchin has exhibited widely in France and internationally, with recent presentations at the BIS Biennale (Saint-Paul de Vence), Sans Relâche (Monnaie de Paris), the HOOP Biennale (Oosterhout, Netherlands), Melting Chamber (Selfridges, London), and De Cinere Surgo (Palermo, Italy). In 2023, as a laureate of Mondes nouveaux, an initiative by the French Ministry of Culture, she presented La Croix, veillée aux épines (The Cross, Vigil with Thorns) at the Abbey of Beaulieu-en-Rouergue, alongside her first solo show at Galerie Anne-Sarah Bénichou. In 2024, she presented two solo exhibitions: Passages at ROOF-A in Rotterdam and Rivelazioni at Museo Sant'Orsola in Florence. Her work was also featured at Art Brussels and Art Basel for the first time, represented by Galerie Anne-Sarah Bénichou.

Recently, Minchin began collaborating with König Galerie, participating in a group exhibition at Bergson in Munich and during Berlin Art Week. Last spring, she presented new in-situ works at Château La Coste as part of the group show Par quatre chemins, Points de vue sur la scène actuelle, organized in collaboration with POUSH.

About Anlam de Coster

Anlam de Coster is a curator, writer, and art consultant, and currently serves as the Artistic Director of Zeyrek Çinili Hamam. With over 17 years of experience, she has shaped curatorial and strategic visions across museums, art fairs, and cultural institutions in Paris, London, and Istanbul.
Her recent exhibitions include The Volcano Lover (Galerist, 2025), as well as Anousha Payne: Murmurations (2025), Alekos Fassianos: Sailing to Byzantium (2024), and Healing Ruins (2023), all at Zeyrek Çinili Hamam. She is also the founder of Fairplay, a strategic consultancy operating at the intersection of art and design.

Previously, de Coster worked with leading institutions such as Istanbul Modern, SALT, and the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, and managed large-scale international projects for the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (İKSV) in collaboration with Christie's and the Institut de France. She has also regularly collaborated with galleries, publications, and fashion brands.
She brings deep expertise in the global art fair ecosystem. At Artsy, she led global strategic partnerships and played a key role in the digital transformation of major international fairs. Her leadership and advisory roles include PAD London, NOMAD, ARTINTERNATIONAL, and FIAC. Anlam de Coster holds a BA in Economics from Galatasaray University and Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, and an MA in Arts and Media Management with Cum Laude honors from Sciences Po Paris. She is currently based in Paris.