

"CLEARINGS"

A project by Michel Comte & Yuichi Kodai

Wasserkirche, Limmatquai 31, 8001 Zurich

**Opening hours: Sat, 13 December 2025 – Sun, 4 January 2026;
daily except Mondays, 2–5 pm. Closed 24 and 25 December.**

Vernissage: Friday, 12 December 2025, from 6 pm

At the Wasserkirche in Zurich, internationally acclaimed multimedia artist Michel Comte presents his installation **CLEARINGS**, created in collaboration with Japanese architect **Yuichi Kodai** – marking the final chapter of the three-year art project **ART FLOW**.

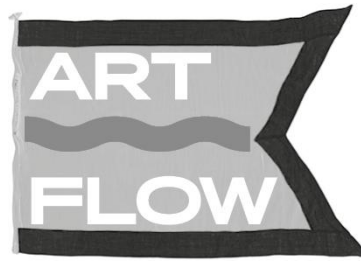
In autumn 2024, Comte created a site-specific art intervention for ART FLOW in the forest of Dietikon, with **Yuichi Kodai**. Together they explored the evolving character of the forest – the cycles of becoming, being, and decay inherent in nature. The guiding motto of the Dietikon Forest Corporation, "*Schöner Wald in treuer Hand labt das Aug' und schirmt das Land*" ("A beautiful forest in faithful hands delights the eye and protects the land"), served as the starting point for Comte's project.

The ten-part work consists of deadwood enveloped in a fine layer of copper foil. Deadwood plays a vital role in the forest ecosystem – serving as habitat for countless species and contributing to the nutrient cycle of the soil. The title *CLEARINGS* (from the German *Lichtung*, meaning both "clearing" and "clarification") expresses the artist's call for awareness in confronting the challenges of climate change and the relationship between humans and nature.

The project will remain on view in the Röhrenmoos forest near Dietikon until the end of November 2025. It comprises ten sites that can be explored as a walking parcours. From 12 December onwards, *CLEARINGS* will undergo a transformation: a central element of the forest installation – a twelve-metre tree trunk sheathed in copper – will be transported to the Wasserkirche and exhibited there over the Christmas period in a new context.

With this transformation, Comte reconnects to a key reference point of *CLEARINGS*: its link to Japanese culture. In Japanese tradition, clearings are referred to as "*Yorishiro*" – sacred spaces where silence holds something divine. Comte embraces this idea, inviting visitors to sense the pulse of the tree and attune to the subtle energies of the site.

Michel Comte (born 1954 in Zurich) is a multimedia artists known for his iconic fashion, advertising, and portrait photography of international figures. The grandson of aviation pioneer Alfred Comte, he began his career as an art restorer before being recommended by Karl Lagerfeld for the fashion house Chloé, launching his rise to prominence. Alongside his glamorous career, Comte increasingly turned to humanitarian and social issues. He worked for the International Red Cross in crisis and war zones and founded the **Michel Comte Water Foundation**, dedicated to human rights and the protection of natural resources. Since the 2010s, his work has focused on ecological themes, particularly the impact of climate change on nature and society. Following major museum exhibitions in Istanbul, Rome, and Milan, *CLEARINGS*, created for ART FLOW, marks his first site-specific public intervention.



About ART FLOW

ART FLOW is an evolving art initiative that, by the end of 2025, will have realised more than two dozen site-specific works throughout the Limmattal region. Each intervention is publicly accessible and invites new perspectives on the landscape and identity of the Limmattal. ART FLOW is curated by **Christoph Doswald** and takes place within the framework of **Regionale 2025**.

More information: www.art-flow.ch

This project is a collaboration between **ART FLOW** and the **Wasserkirche Zurich**. Our special thanks go to **Michel Comte**, **Yuichi Kodai**, **Ayako Yoshida**, and the **Holzcorporation Dietikon** for their valuable collaboration and support of the project **CLEARINGS**.

Programme

Vernissage CLEARINGS – A Project by Michel Comte & Yuichi Kodai at the Wasserkirche Zurich & Finissage ART FLOW
Friday, 12 December 2025, 6:00 pm

With the vernissage of *CLEARINGS* at the Wasserkirche, the art project **ART FLOW** also celebrates its **finissage**. After three years and more than two dozen site-specific works across the Limmattal, the project concludes at the Wasserkirche.

Following a welcome by **André Odermatt** (City Councillor Zurich, Vice President ART FLOW) and **Ulrich Gerster** (Church District Commission Altstadt), the ART FLOW team – **Christoph Doswald**, **Esther Nägeli**, **Simone Töllner**, and **Petra Winiger Østrup** – will offer insights into the project and its development.

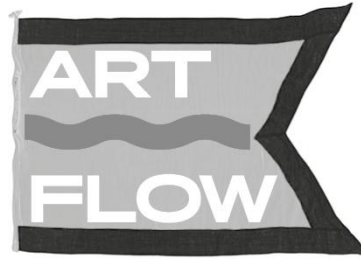
A **food truck** will provide refreshments at the start of the evening, followed by a convivial **apéro outdoors**.

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CLEARINGS – Photo Competition
Tuesday, 16 December 2025, 6–9 pm

The impressive land-art project *CLEARINGS* has been on view for a year in a forest near Dietikon. Across the seasons, the copper-clad tree trunks reveal their own unique magic. Visitors were invited to submit their most beautiful photographs to ART FLOW. The selected images will be presented on Tuesday, 16 December 2025, from 6 to 9 pm, in a special exhibition directly connected to *CLEARINGS* at the Wasserkirche in Zurich.

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Artist Talk with Michel Comte and Rev. Martin Rüschi

Friday, 19 December 2025, 6–7 pm

The copper-wrapped fallen tree displayed in the Wasserkirche during the Christmas period serves as the starting point for a discussion on art in the church, the current zeitgeist, and reflections on life and death.

Creative Workshop for Children

Monday, 22 December 2025, drop-in participation between 2–5 pm

The copper-clad tree in the Wasserkirche Zurich is part of Michel Comte's land-art project *CLEARINGS*. After an impressive journey from the forest of Dietikon to the heart of Zurich, the work inspires a story of transformation. In this workshop, children learn about the project and create their own artworks using wood and copper foil.

For children aged 5 and above. Admission and participation are free of charge.

Image captions: Michel Comte, *CLEARINGS*, Dietikon, 2024–2025

Photo credit: © ART FLOW / Peter Baracchi