Tug of War

Tobias Hauser

October 31 – December 5, 2026
Opening: Friday, October 30 / 6 pm

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In “Tug of War,” Tobias Hauser presents new works at *fiebach, minninger*. The title draws on the metaphor of tug of war, which is central to the entire exhibition, while also making a pop-cultural reference to Paul McCartney’s 1982 album of the same name. The title track on that album is interpreted as an anti-war song in the context of the Cold War, but also as a personal exploration of McCartney’s rivalry with John Lennon.

It's a tug of war
(Pushin' and pushin', pullin' and pullin' Pushin' and pullin')[1]

Human beings are part of an ongoing trial of strength. Both sides pull, exert force, and create tension until the rope eventually snaps. The outcome remains uncertain. As in McCartney’s song, the rope in Hauser’s work can stand for many things: the eternal back-and-forth between good and evil, between war and peace. The rope’s variable configuration suggests that the course of a conflict can change at any moment. The strange shapes strung along it can be interpreted as symbols of potential combatants; their green colour quickly evokes associations with military themes.

The images of the city maps zoom out, allowing the viewer to gaze from a drone’s-eye view over cities, which can thus be experienced in this way. In these visualizations, Hauser combines a broader exploration with a specific location and current events.

The “Bones” series, which Hauser has been working on for years, is very explicit in its material symbolism: it refers to the human body and to the possibility of depicting it in a reduced form, as a kind of skeleton. The “Bones” appear as scattered remains, as traces of what is left behind after a conflict.

As a result, the works in the exhibition range from explicit references to war to more open symbolism of human conflicts, power struggles, and vulnerability. The tug-of-war illustrates this metaphorically, for a game can quickly turn serious. Hauser’s works explore the tensions and limits at which the rope might snap, and the consequences of human action.

[1] Paul McCartney, „Tug of War“, on: *Tug of War*, Parlophone, 1982, LP.