Kasmin is pleased to present *Between the Earth and Sky*, an exhibition of twenty-two monolithic sculptures that brings together examples of the form spanning from 900 A.D. to 2019. The exhibition demonstrates how stelae, herms, and columns have acted as repositories of meaning or markers of time and place across many cultures since prehistory, as well as the way in which the expressive possibilities of this format continue to resonate with sculptors working internationally today. Be they analogues for the human form, waypoints, sentinels, support structures, memorials or otherwise, their metaphorical and formal potency abides.

Featured in the exhibition are artists Diana al-Hadid, Alma Allen, Huma Bhabha, JB Blunk, James Lee Byars, Saint Clair Cemin, Max Ernst, Vanessa German, Rachel Harrison, Robert Indiana, Isamu Noguchi, Beverly Pepper, Per Kirkeby, Ugo Rondinone, Tom Sachs, Bosco Sodi, and Marie Watt, as well as a selection of premodern sculptural objects from ancient civilizations across the globe that embrace the connection between the physical and spiritual worlds.

Guided by the architectural logic of the space, *Between the Earth and Sky* consists of an immersive installation of a field of vertical sculptures, highlighting both the universality and the diversity of the form in contemporary, modern, and premodern works of art.

The poured concrete ceiling of the gallery is divided by 20 frustum-shaped skylights, forming a grid of 10 x 10 ft squares on the polished concrete floor below. Each square hosts one sculpture that draws a line of sight from the ground up toward the sky, creating connections between the object and the viewer, heaven and earth, and the cardinal directions.

As they stand in relation to and contrast with each other, the forms seem to express a timeless and universal language. Embodying exaggerated human dimensions, they speak wordlessly, vessels that lay bare the communicative function of art and its enduring symbolic possibility. And while the works point skyward, *Between the Earth and Sky* primarily reminds us that this narrow band of habitat—nestled above the brimstone of the earth’s inner crust and the inhospitable pressure of the upper reaches of our atmosphere—plays stage to all human endeavor, whether it be the sacred, profane, momentous, comedic, or absurd.
Intertwining various threads of archeology, anthropology, geology, and mythology, many of the works abound in symbolism common in the art of prehistory—ancient images that formally resemble those we recognize from modern art. Critic and curator Lucy Lippard has said that such contemporary works, “lay claim to a certain geometric simplicity, large-scale, directness, or a surrealistic chaos.” Where the natural materiality of Ugo Rondinone’s *the dignified* (2019), Saint Clair Cemin’s *Girl and Thoughts* (2014), and JB Blunk’s *Presence* (1967), hark to paleolithic models of representation and abstraction, Max Ernst’s *Le Génie de la Bastille, Huismes* (1960), Alma Allen’s *Not Yet Titled* (2017), and Huma Bhabha’s *God of Some Things* (2011) offer examples of bronze structures that appear to have emerged from the earth itself. Elsewhere, Diana al-Hadid’s *Head in the Clouds* (2014) and Vanessa German’s *Keep Dreaming! A Map to the power of imagination in times of war & sorrow* (2017) present heavily adorned idolic figures that emanate a mystery akin to magic.

Kasmin is pleased to collaborate with Damon Brandt on the premodern selection of works in *Between the Earth and Sky*. Brandt brings forty years of experience and expertise to the fields of ancient art from Africa, Oceania, and the Americas.

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