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Helmut Lang
SPERONE WESTWATER,
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Like the fashion that made him famous, Helmut Lang's (b. 1956) sculptures are sleek, sexy and mostly monochromatic. Lang, of course, is usually recognised as having been the creator behind his synonymous high-end clothing brand. He dropped this life a few years back, surrendering control in the mid-noughties. It was then that he became the artist we know now – a total phoenix tale. Sperone Westwater has the privilege of being the first New York gallery to show Lang's work, and it is quite a strong show for him too.

Resin sculptures in blacks, greys, earth tones and just a touch of colour (staying true to that sartorial sensibility) are scattered throughout the gallery in the form of columns and abstract wall hangings. The columns are like uprooted birch tree logs, leaning on the wall at around 10 or 11 feet tall. They have presence against the stature of a normal person, but are not large enough to feel monolithic. The sculptures are more than just indebted to fashion: they are a curiosity, which ooze an inability to avoid fashion.

Tastefulness and austerity is what Lang's work deals with. The artist is at his best when he applies his masterful knowledge of fashion to objects. From the colour palette, to the modest scale, to the tactility of the objects, Lang's sculptural work differs very little in spirit from his tailored objects. It is no trick of appearance that his art looks right at home in the gallery setting – Lang has practically been vetted his entire life for this moment. From the vast range of collaborations to the production of designs, he has finally arrived at the point that he seems to have desired all along.