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Ressort: Special interest

More Earthly Than Otherworldly

Tel Aviv, 17.07.2026 [ENA]

Since the autumn of 2020, mysterious metallic or stone pillars have been appearing around the world and often overnight, often in remote landscapes, and almost always without explanation. No one knew where the object came from, or why it appeared at all.

The find in the Utah desert swiftly turned into a worldwide exchange of creativity, media, and collective imagination. The first monolith, a precisely crafted stainless-steel structure rising several meters from the ground, stood in stark contrast to the rugged terrain around it. Its smooth, geometric surface immediately evoked the iconic monolith from 2001: A Space Odyssey, that symbol of knowledge, evolution, and the unknown.

As images of the Utah monolith spread, similar structures began to appear in Romania, California, Wales, and Germany. Some were meticulously constructed, others improvised; some firmly anchored, others so light that two people could carry them away. Their pattern was unmistakable: sudden appearance, viral fascination, swift removal. Nothing about their materials or craftsmanship suggested extraterrestrial origins. Instead, they pointed to human creativity — a blend of guerrilla art, internet culture, and the irresistible temptation to replicate a global mystery.

Yet perhaps the true significance of these monoliths lies not in their origin but in their effect. They transform ordinary landscapes into stages for wonder and speculation, revealing how easily our desire for mystery intertwines with the power of imagery. In an age where almost everything can be explained, they create brief moments of uncertainty — small interruptions that remind us how fascination often thrives without answers. In this sense, the monoliths, whether made of metal or stone, are less cosmic messages than quiet expressions of human imagination, invoking the unknown only to give us back a sense of awe.

Bericht online lesen: https://t.en-a.eu/special_interest/more_earthly_than_otherworldly-94124/

Redaktion und Verantwortlichkeit:

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