

# HAN SEOK HYUN

## SIMPLY FRESH!

January 8 - January 30, 2010

opening reception : January 8, 5 - 8 pm



*Must Be Fresh!!!* Series, oil marker on plastic bag, 31 x 46 inches, 2009

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chicago, IL: Walsh Gallery's exhibit *Simply Fresh!* features an assortment of plasticized cabbage and lettuce leaves in a variety of media including sculptural installation, photography, and drawings. The Seoul based artist Han Seok Hyun became obsessed by how to preserve the freshness of a lettuce leaf 5 years ago. In particular, he was driven by the premise that the art world judges talent and creates success based on how "fresh" an artist's work is. Thus, Mr. Han set out to create art that in fact is permanently fresh. His exhibition opens Friday, January 8 and runs through January 30. The artist will be present at the opening.

When the artist was asked why was he making lettuce of all things he replied, "Because lettuce is the freshest vegetable that loses its freshness the fastest." Thus, Han Seok Hyun set about to create an almost "supernatural" type of lettuce, one that defies the passage of time. While engaged in this mission, Mr. Han routinely brings in references to classical Western art as well as borrowing on the visual lexicons of Christianity, Buddhism, and ancient Greek and Roman cultures. Mr. Han has in fact taken the most humble and common of all vegetables and placed it on an altar literally. He has also tried to metaphysically heighten the status of the everyday by borrowing from the compositional structure of classical still life paintings.

Despite the lettuce looking green and eternally fresh, the lettuce is actually made with completely "not green" materials of vinyl and plastic, which continue to present the world with an eco nightmare in terms of landfills. However, Mr. Han is also talking about different types of plasticity and commodification such as exists in religion and the art world.

Han Seok Hyun, born in Seoul Korea in 1975, is an emerging multimedia installation artist and sculptor. He has an MFA from the Korean National University of Arts in Seoul and a BFA from Hongik University. His work has been exhibited in Korea, the UK, and in the US. He previously showed with Walsh Gallery as part of a group exhibition, *Service Station*, in 2007.