

Bob Bicknell-Knight
Solidarity, 2017
MDF board, 96 sim cards, wood, glue
30 x 35 x 1.7 cm



Solidarity is a sculptural work made primarily from SIM cards and duplicates the shape of the well known hammer and sickle symbol adopted by the communist party and created by the Russian artist Yevgeny Kamzolkin in 1918. In modern day society to me the SIM card is the embodiment of communication and the excessive use of the digital screen. Since the widespread use of the smartphone it's said that no one really 'talks' anymore, losing that utopian vision of what a phone represents, and in turn what the internet was once said to represent. Much like peer to peer networks like Bitcoin or Napster, where no one user holds ownership of the whole site or has a hierarchical position, communism seems to work on the principal that if everything was owned by the users, or the population, everything would be equal and great. In reality, when the communism ideology is adopted by countries or groups, for example North Korea, it usually breaks down and a sole dictator rises up through the crowd, causing poverty and violence to transpire. It rarely if ever works as it was originally intended to by the main philosophers of the movement like Marx or Lenin.

Alongside this it seems to be the case that the people who promote this movement only really want to become dictators themselves, like Stalin or Trotsky. Much like communism, the advent of the smartphone and the internet were supposedly created to provide everyone with a voice when in reality it's a lot less idealistic and utopian than that. This is a simple outline of the main concept behind the work.