

“Ivan Grubanov is a passionate collector of obsolete peripherals of power. He owns a vast collection of 'Dead Flags', flags of countries that do not exist anymore. The core of Grubanov's collection as well as the focal point of his interest are the flags from his native former Yugoslavia: the federal flags, the flags of the constitutive republics and provinces, the flags of the worker's unions and the Communist Party. The system of belief that projected value and magical potency to these objects is no longer present and they remain as 'death masks' of the ideology that once established them. Through an obscure process that challenges painting as a tool for interpreting history, Grubanov transfers the anima of the 'Dead Flags' onto the realm of images.

He soaks the flags in a mix of chemicals and paint and leaves them for days until they release color and the imprint of their wrinkles and symbols onto a piece of clean canvas. The resulting paintings are not altered by hand or intention, but present a piece of evidence left by the 'Dead Flags', the genuine outlines and fluids of their corpses.

When removed from the source, the established canvases generate a renewed system of belief, their dynamic composition, the beauty of their colors and shapes and the connotations of what they embody produce them into most convincing paintings. The embodiment in the paintings is enabling a symbolic replacement of the source, it does not merely project an image, it replaces the biopolitical influence of a flag with the biopolitical potency of a painting. The authority of painting rests on the absence of authority, it equalizes presence and absence and invokes a powerful influence on life that can continuously compete for recognition. According to Ivan Grubanov, to paint is to fight for the right to continuity.”





































































