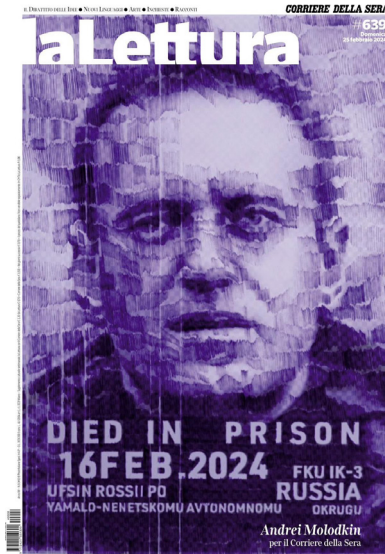


Julian Assange visits artist who held \$45m worth of art hostage

Andrei Molodkin threatened to destroy works by Picasso and others if the activist died in prison. Now, he is exhibiting a portrait of Assange in a new show

Simon Bainbridge

21 November 2024



Andrei Molodkin & Julian Assange, *Date of Freedom* (2024)
© the artist

FIRE Andrei Molodkin

In an age of catastrophe, transgression is the only method left to connect culture with reality.

Andrei Molodkin's new work employs the same methodology as his 2024 project, *Dead Man's Switch*. This new work will be presented at Galleria Giampaolo Abbondio during Easter in the medieval town of Todi, Italy.

In *Dead Man's Switch* Molodkin used Art History as a shield to protect Julian Assange. Picasso, Rembrandt, Warhol and Rauschenberg were held hostage in exchange for his freedom. Everything would be destroyed by a chemical reaction in less than one hour if proof of Julian Assange's life was not confirmed. Within a year, Assange was free. Mirroring the language of power, as a tool of negotiation, *Dead Man's Switch* was a clear proposal in which the White House became the author of the artwork; the outcome depended entirely on their decision.

In the new work, as in the aforementioned work, history and contemporary reality are the authors.

Notes to Editor:

FIRE. Andrei Molodkin
Opening: 4 April 2026, 12:00
Closing 14 June 2026
Curated by Giusy Caroppo
Galleria Giampaolo Abbondio,
Todi, Piazza Giuseppe Garibaldi, 7,
06059 Todi PG, Italy

