

# boho

*a new american spirit*

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*9* & .10  
SPRING 2011

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Regardless of mediums, bohemians are artists at the core. The heart's brush is limitless, leaving nothing unexplored.



*We fell in love with Brooklyn-based artist Madeline von Foerster for her earth-saving masterpieces using oil and egg tempera. Read her story and other Brooklyn artisan's stories in this all new section.*

**classic beauty**  
The artist is as much of a classic beauty as her work. Her exquisite tattoo reflects her love of nature.



(text by gina la morte) photography by andrew kist and steve prue

## earth's GOLD

Eco-artist Madeline von Foerster paints classic masterpieces that showcase her contemporary view on the environment.

When we learned about Brooklyn-based artist Madeline von Foerster, we felt like we had discovered gold. Her incredibly detailed, luminous paintings celebrating women and nature are put together like a renaissance masterpiece. Von Foerster is a passionate environmentalist that finds it fitting, if not always easy, to express her love of nature in her work. "At the absolute core of my work is my love of nature, and my desire to honor and protect our beautiful planet. This is not abstract or theoretical for me. For example, a painting I did in 2009 of a rhinoceros. It is a portrait of an actual Indian rhino, which survived for twenty hours after being shot and having her horn cut off by poachers. I cried while I was painting her. That might sound overdramatic, but for me, this is the heartfelt passion, which inspires my work. The same painting also has a bouquet of medicinal plants, which have been found to have similar properties to rhino horn, for use in Chinese medicine. Since that is the main threat to rhinos, these plants bring hope to the painting". Inspired by

reliquary chambers she visited in German churches, she uses a 15th century oil and egg tempera technique. Her use of reliquaries, which are containers to store relics popular in medieval times, serve as the central symbol in her work. She says, "We create living reliquaries in the form of zoos, for animals, all but extinct in the wild...and our Natural History Museums are repositories for remains of the vanished and vanishing." While von Foerster knows her paintings alone can't change the world, they can ignite a fiery passion in others to make their own world changing effort. She says, "A women's desires are the force that will change the world. We can do so much more than we think. It's not always a comfortable feeling when you are going for what you truly want and believe; it feels very scary. If we recognize that, we can begin to relish that experience, rather than run from it". Her show, in July is at Roq La Rue gallery, Seattle. [www.madelinevonfoerster.com](http://www.madelinevonfoerster.com)



