

Artist Statement

MICHAEL LAUGHLIN

11150 Glenoaks Blvd #26 Pacoima Ca 91331
michaell90046@yahoo.com 323-401-6468
www.michaellaughlinart.com

My current work is a series of paintings exploring the anatomy, psychology and physiology of cattle. They are painted in the tradition of the Baroque masters, mimetic both in technique and with their tenebrist style. There is no embellishment of the proportions, and their muscular system is accurate and surprisingly similar to that of humans.

After a number of years concentrating my efforts on the study of the human form, I turned my attention to cattle after a vacation to the Texas Hill Country. I found these beasts fascinating. They possess a strength I doubt I can fully comprehend, and as well they carry themselves with primal dignity. I also found the relationships between humans and cattle complex, and these paintings are presented as an open-ended examination of one's own experiences of how cattle have affected our society, our culture, and our personal views.

Cattle serve as icons of food, sport, divinity, strength, finance and family. I traveled to a variety of cattle ranches, and was surprised to find that while some see these animals as product, others regard them as trophies, while others as pets, and often they hold a special place in the hearts of those providing for the animal.

These paintings are about identity: the identity of the cattle as individuals, and the identity of those holding a personal relationship with them. Some are gentle, some proud, some weary with age, some playful, and some filled with a rage that eclipses their strength. For us, they serve as signifiers of one's own intentions.