

Lasata is the name of this painting by artist Kris Gebhardt, and a Native American word meaning “place of peace.” And indeed, in a round-about way, this work of art shows a peaceful Midwestern farm owned by Gebhardt’s friend and COOK Group, Incorporated Chairman of the Board, Steve Ferguson.

All foreground, the focal point of this work of art is a fierce bull – reminiscent of a cave painting, Lasata carries with it a deep seeded meaning. The form, solid and tough, feels like it is in motion – going somewhere quickly to do something important – just like the man Gebhardt has trained with for the last 15 years.

As with many of Gebhardt’s mixed media treasures, he could have merely copied his subject. He could have recreated Ferguson’s sturdy jaw, steel blue eyes and pewter-colored hair – but if you ask Gebhardt he’ll tell you that’s why we have cameras. Any artist can practice and put forth an effort that is a shining example of realism. When Gebhardt wanted to honor his friend, he did so by depicting the qualities that Ferguson embodies in an abstract way.

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Ferguson is strong and fierce like bull. Among other positions, he served four terms in the Indiana House of Representatives, was active on the State of Indiana Commission for Higher Education and was a member of the Board of Trustees at Indiana University. He has appeared before several U.S. House Committees and has tirelessly protected family, friends, community, business, jobs and our nation. He will fight to the death, like a bull, to protect what is important to him. Mr. Ferguson is a survivor; and according to Gebhardt, he is “a force that will put a horn in your ass if you tread on that which he holds dear.”

Lasata 71” by 71”