Sandra Stevens is a native Texan and was raised on a Texas cattle ranch where she began drawing and painting cattle and horses at an early age. She was influenced by an aunt who was an artist and her early passion for art was encouraged by her family.

Sandra graduated from Blinn College in Brenham, Texas. After graduation she became known for her fine-art photography. Her photographic images have been featured in numerous exhibitions as well as newspapers, calendars, CD covers, and magazines, as well as in the collection of Houston's Museum of Fine Art.

More recently, Sandra returned to painting on canvas full-time. Her favorite choice of subjects continues to be cattle and rural scenes. She says, “Simply put, I paint what I love”. She often uses her own photographs for reference when she paints. Her medium of choice is oil over an acrylic underpainting.

Sandra's paintings have been exhibited in several prestigious national western art shows and have also been on the cover of *Gulf Coast Cattleman* magazine. Her work is shown in several established fine art galleries and hangs in the private homes and offices of collectors throughout the United States.

Sandra splits her time between her studio in Sugar Land, Texas and her longhorn ranch in Columbus, Texas where she also paints, “once the cattle are fed and the chores are done!”

*“Little Milk Thief”*  
by Sandra Stevens

*Texas Longhorn cows, like most bovine breeds, are known for being good mothers. They are fierce protectors of their young. They have the advantage of sharp horns to keep predators away. They are also known as good “milkers”.*

*I spend a lot of time on big Texas longhorn ranches sitting in pastures for hours with my camera waiting for the right moment to photograph. I especially enjoy observing and documenting the mother cows and their calves. I watch the calves playing with others of like age. I watch when a single cow stands guard over several calves “baby-sitting” while the other*
mothers graze nearby. I've also observed the occasional, opportunist calf who has figured out how to steal milk from a cow other than his own mother. The little “milk thief” will use his wiles to make sure this other cow is otherwise occupied with her own calf, usually sneaking up from behind, to get an extra meal.

Now, it's not unknown for a cow to accept a stray or orphaned calf and allow it to nurse. However, usually they will not accept a calf that is not their own, and therefore the “sneak attack” method is usually the only one that meets with success. It is not by accident that a cow rejects the approaches and nursing attempts from all calves except her own. If the mother cow let all the calves in the herd nurse, then only the oldest calves would survive. Nature insures that the mothers will (usually) invest in their own offspring and no other.