



© ART WOLFE / WWW.ARTWOLFE.COM HEADSHOT: JAY GOODRICH / ART WOLFE STOCK

Human Canvas.

Art Wolfe

Born 1951 in Washington, USA



Wolfe is a photographer and conservationist, best known for colour images of wildlife, landscapes and native cultures. His photographs document scenes from every continent in hundreds of locations – they have been noted by environmental advocacy groups for their visual impact. In the last 30 years, Wolfe's work has been published in more than 60 books including *Vanishing Act*, *The High Himalaya* and *Water: Worlds between Heaven & Earth*.

Art primarily uses a Canon camera, though not exclusively. "It is growing up as a painter that led to the 'Human Canvas' project, where I combine my roots as a painter with my observations of nature and camouflage and my passion for photography into one enormous artistic endeavour. This is where I started out and this, I think, is my most successful work to date. To photograph animals in the wild you must have this instinctively, otherwise you are simply hoping for the random chance encounter. I can distinctly remember the first moment I became absolutely hooked on wildlife photography. I was on a canoe trip in the Bowron Lake of North Central British Columbia, on a YMCA group trip. Thankfully, I brought along my first camera, a little Kodak Brownie Fiesta. On the lake, we came across an enormous moose. He was just feeding on vegetation under the water and I photographed him for what felt like over an hour as we paddled ever closer. I was so excited, terrified and overjoyed all at the same time. Eventually, as we got ever closer, the moose bounded out of the lake with great fanfare giving me my first action shots as well. I was hooked! I knew this was the life for me. The animals that inhabit South Georgia Island do not see many visitors and thus do not fear you when you. A fun memory came when I was photographing an elephant seal in the shallow water. My main concern at the time was for my wide-angle lens as the seal was so curious it inched its way closer, seeing its own reflection in the glass. What I didn't see coming, however, was the young weaner southern elephant seal that was scooting along the beach headed straight for me. I was lying on my stomach with my legs stretched out behind me when I first felt his presence. I was then surprised when it paused half way across my legs, changed directions and began crawling up onto my back. After a few minutes it was clear, it wasn't just trying to get by, it was looking for a softer place to take a nap and thought I'd do just fine! That's a lot of blubber pinning you to the ground when one of these decides to use you for their futon.

"Both my parents were wedding photographers, in order to keep a roof over our heads; however, it was my mother's passion for all things artistic that impressed upon me the most. It was her constant experimenting without boundaries or borders that I hold on to today – there is no subject off limits for me. I will have over two dozen different projects in my mind at any given time. Anything can be a potential subject (except weddings, of course!). I am constantly experimenting and changing the way I photograph, pushing the boundaries, returning to old subjects to see them in new ways, just as my mother would in her own way. I have shot photographs in the last year that I never would have seen just five years ago. In the coming years with advances in technology, I will be shooting images I never would have believed possible before." ■

www.artwolfe.com