

A group of indigenous men, likely from the Torres Strait Islands, are shown from the chest up. They are wearing traditional headbands and have their faces and bodies painted with white and black pigments. The men are looking directly at the camera with serious expressions. The background is dark and out of focus.

# ART WOLFE

*DIE JAGD  
NACH DEM  
PERFEKTEN  
BILD*

MIT EINER  
EINLEITUNG VON  
ROB SHEPPARD

FREDERKING & THALER



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November 1983

## Arctic Fox

Ellesmere Island, Nunavut, Canada

Nikon F3, Nikkor 300mm F2.8 lens, f/5.6 for 1/60 sec., Kodachrome 64

Though this image of an arctic fox was shot with a film camera nearly twenty-five years ago, it still remains one of my favorites, simply because of the uniqueness of the situation. The image comes from the northernmost place I've photographed, a small Canadian weather station on the north side of Ellesmere Island, which reaches as far north as land can in the Northern Hemisphere.

In the shot, an arctic fox comes close to the weather station and stands on a little rise, catching the setting sun in the month of November. November that far north is basically winter, with temperatures well below zero. I suspect the people at the weather station tossed food scraps toward this little creature, which brought it close and kept it unafraid of human contact.

In his winter coat, the fox caught the pink glow of the setting sun. I love the contrast of the deep blue hues around the fox with the pastel pinks, which resulted in a memorable color palette. The scene and colors were very calm and relaxed, and I tried to capture that in the photo. I manually metered my exposure by reading off the muted pinks of the fox's winter coat.

A pack of arctic wolves also hung out near the weather station and had killed the weather station's dogs over the previous six months. But this little arctic fox had successfully negotiated living in a world of larger canines. That gave me a lot of respect for this little fox.

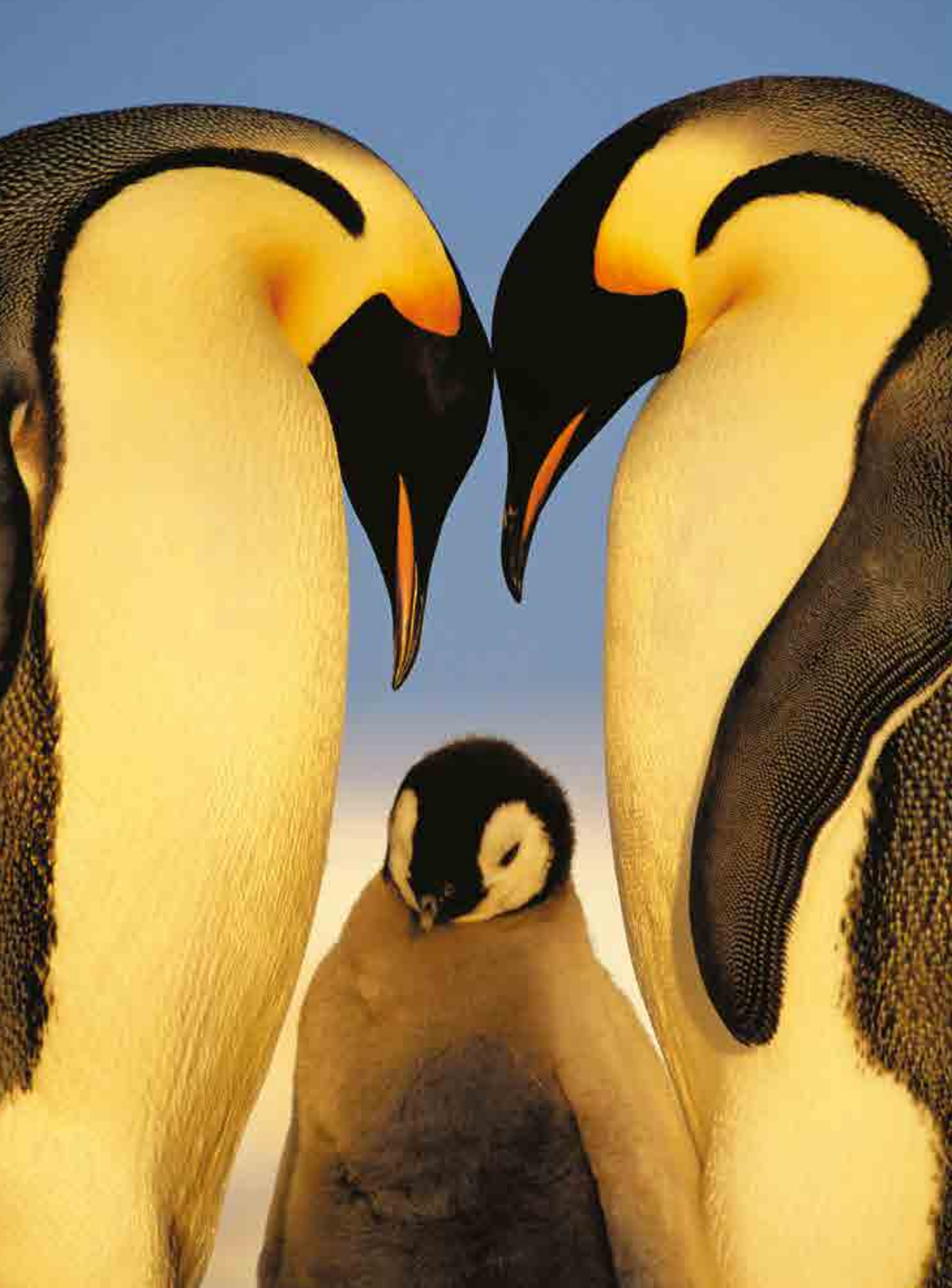
### The nature of the photo

The arctic fox is a little smaller than the common red fox of the continental United States and is close to the size of a large cat. It is highly adapted to the harsh cold of the Arctic with fur on the bottom of its feet, short ears to lose less heat, and a short muzzle for the same reason. It changes color in the summer to a brown or gray to blend into the tundra.

### Photo tip

This photo is as much about color as it is about the fox. Art could have shot a tighter image and shown much less of the bluish colors around the fox, but he wanted the color. If you really want to learn to work better with color, try going out and photographing color first, subject second.





# November 1992

## Emperor Penguins

Weddell Sea, Antarctica

Nikon F4, Nikkor 80–200mm F2.8 lens, f/8 for 1/60 sec., Fujichrome Velvia

I had been approached by friends of mine, Shirley Metz, the first American woman who actually ventured to the South Pole on foot, and Peter Harrison, a renowned ornithologist and explorer, to join an exploratory trip to the Weddell Sea. We flew up and down the coast looking for emperor penguin colonies, and eventually found one. We spent five days there photographing these emperors. We had very bad weather; however, one evening the weather cleared in the middle of the night. I was the only one that got out of his sleeping bag and marched the two kilometers across the ice to the emperor penguin colony. I was rewarded for my effort with two hours of sublimely beautiful golden light and ten thousand emperor penguins all to myself.

During the session, I had to monitor light and weather conditions. Should clouds or fog have developed quickly, I could have become rapidly disoriented. If I missed where my camp was, there was a good chance I would perish.

In this photograph, a pair of emperor penguins arch their heads and their necks over their single offspring. For this shot, I lay on my belly so that I could fill the frame with just the adults and the baby. One of the most difficult things about photographing these penguins was their curiosity. Often I would be shooting and suddenly the entire frame would go white. I would pull my head away from the viewfinder only to find an emperor penguin towering over me, pressing its feathers into the front of my lens.

### The nature of the photo

One thing that can't be captured in a still photo is the beautiful forlorn call that adult emperor penguins make over their babies. They put their heads straight up and then slowly arch down toward the baby with a trumpeting call. With ten thousand identical-looking birds, it's the individuality of the call that allows the baby to know which are its parents.

### Photo tip

Ground animals and plants are frequently photographed from a 45-degree downward angle. This is easy to achieve because it means the photographer can shoot standing up, or at most, kneeling. However, it might not give the best photos. Animals and plants both often look their best when you shoot at their level, not yours.





February 2005

## New Year's Celebrations

Labrang Monastery, Gansu Province, China

Canon EOS-1Ds Mark II, EF70-200mm F2.8 lens, f/18 for 1/60 sec., ISO 400

(pages 108-109)

## Monks and Unfurled Thangka

Canon EOS-1Ds Mark II, EF70-200mm F2.8 lens, f/25 for 1/2 sec., ISO 400

(opposite)

Gansu is a region of the eastern Tibetan Plateau, though it is in China and not technically a part of Tibet. The Labrang Monastery is one of the largest monasteries in the area and sits high in a mountain valley.

I traveled there several years ago to photograph the New Year's celebration that occurs every year toward the early part of April. Buddhists hold New Year's celebrations at different times depending on the culture and tradition of the area. Here, it occurs on the day of the first full moon of April.

In the large, horizontal image, monks carry a very large tapestry called a *thangka* uphill to place above the monastery. I love the colors, as the red interplays with the yellow of the tapestry and the blues of the shaded snow. The composition also creates a dynamic look for the action because of the way the straight diagonal of the monks carrying the tapestry through most of the image interacts with the other monks at the bottom of the image.

In the vertical, you can see part of the tapestry now hung for display. I framed up the monk in the foreground to give context to the tapestry as well as create some interesting color contrasts.

### The nature of the photos

Labrang Monastery was founded in 1709 and includes six institutions of learning. At its peak, four thousand monks lived here, but the Chinese Cultural Revolution forced them out and into the villages they came from in order to work. The monastery was reopened in 1980, and now about fifteen hundred monks live there.

### Photo tip

High angles can help the photographer in three ways: (1) restricting foreground emphasis, (2) gaining a perspective on a scene that shows relationships among pictorial elements, and (3) simplifying a composition by reducing or removing background distractions.







## Die Geschichte hinter den Bildern

Der legendäre Naturfotograf Art Wolfe gewährt erstmals intime Einblicke in sein Schaffen. Er fotografiert seit über 40 Jahren überall auf der Welt Natur, Tiere, Menschen, Kulturdenkmäler und Feste verschiedenster Nationen. Seine besten Werke sind in diesem Band versammelt, begleitet von kurzen Texten zur Entstehung der Fotos, zur Ausrüstung und zu den Techniken des großen Künstlers sowie von Profi-Tipps.

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Art Wolfe  
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Auf der Jagd nach dem perfekten Bild  
288 Seiten; ca. 200 Abbildungen  
Format: 19,3 x 26,1 cm; Hardcover mit Lesebändchen  
€ [D] 29,99 [A] 30,90 sFR. 41,40

ISBN: 978-3-95416-320-5  
WG: 3509 Auslieferungstermin: Mai

FREDERKING & THALER

