

# THE ARTISTS CORNER

DENNIS HOLT

WILDLIFE & SCENIC PHOTOGRAPHER

BY TETH BURNS



On the wall of the Morning Light Gallery, you will see a picture of a Masai woman who is dressed in tribal garb. Her age is undeterminable since there are no such things as birth certificates where she is from. Her face is aged by the sun and experience that is life in Africa, yet in her eyes you see a spirit of undying strength and tradition. In another frame, there's a picture of mother lion with her young cub as she nuzzles the top of its head as only a mother can affectionately do. On the easel in the back room, you can find a photo of an alligator resting on the shores of the Tensaw Delta, poised to jump in the water and swim off at a seconds notice. These are the images of Dennis Holt.

I met Dennis shortly after he opened his gallery on Fairhope Avenue. Being engaged to a photographer, I am always interested in seeing the styles and visions of other photographers. I was very impressed with the pictures that I saw, as well as with the man who had captured them. He is very friendly and you can tell by talking to him that he really loves what he does; and believe me, he's done a lot. Like what, you ask? Well for starters, he has two Emmys, which I think is pretty cool. He's done wildlife documentaries for The National Audubon Society, National Geographic and CNN, he's a seven-time recipient of the Sigma Delta Chi

Excellence in Journalism Award and his travels have included places like the Amazon River, several ecosystems in Africa and sailing expeditions on the Bering Sea in the straights of Russia. Impressed? That's just the tip of the iceberg.

"So how did you get your start?" I asked him. He grinned. "I guess it started in high school. I took a lot of pictures for the yearbook and school newspaper. When I was a senior, I started doing part-time freelance work for the Birmingham newspaper, then full time for a while after graduation. Eventually,

I went to Athens College where I majored in Psychology and minored in Biology."

Now, I don't know about you, but I thought that was a pretty interesting choice of study for an up and coming, award winning photographer. "And what exactly were planning to be with that degree," I asked. Laughing out loud,

Dennis replied, "Messed up!"

Born and raised in Birmingham, Dennis has been in Fairhope for about a year now. He was attracted here by the Tensaw Delta, which happens to be the subject of a coffee table book that he has been working on for the past ten years. Writer Sue Walker, a professor who is head of

the English Department at the University of South Alabama, is working with Dennis on this book. Sponsored by the Alabama Coastal Foundation, the book uses his photography to exhibit and discuss the wildlife and scenery of the Delta. "It's been





an ongoing project for me,” Dennis stated, “and now that it’s about ready for publication, I’ve been extremely busy with finalizing all of the details and making sure everything is perfect. We are hoping to have it in bookstores by the holidays.”

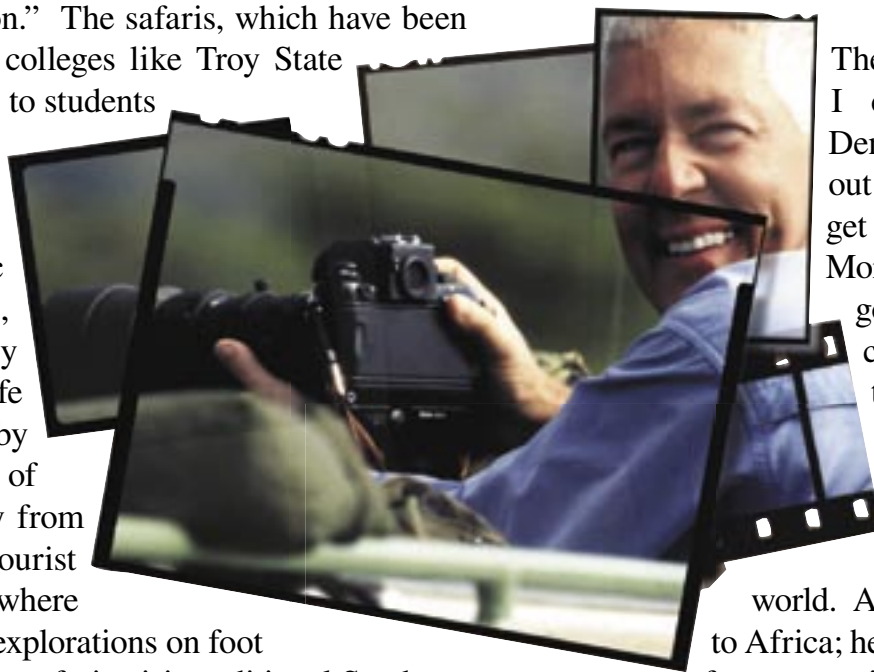
That’s not all this seasoned photographer has going on. Along with the book and running the Morning Light Gallery in Fairhope, he also leads Photo and Art Safaris to Africa twice a year. “We have two trips in the spring and one in the fall, but I’m hoping to have more soon.” The safaris, which have been often backed by colleges like Troy State and offers credits to students

who attend, are designed to provide unique photographic opportunity, particularly where wildlife is concerned, by going to areas of the country away from the normal tourist track to sites where night drives and explorations on foot are possible. The safaris visit traditional Samburu and Masai villages, as well as four other African habitats, each with its own spectacular scenery and unique animals. “Africa is just amazing,” Dennis exclaims. “I’ve seen (and photographed) some really breathtaking sunsets over there.” If they are anything like the pictures in his gallery, seeing them in person would definitely take my breath away.

Dennis has a vision for wildlife photography. He really knows how to capture life in the greatest of outdoors. Through his photography and art, he makes sure that he passes the quality of vision on

by using a fine art digital print process technique on each piece called Giclee, a French term for spraying of ink. The Giclee results in a beautiful print that is known for its deep saturated color and surface quality that retains minute details and subtle tints and blends that are known for their Archival quality.

Giclee prints are produced on Watercolor Paper, Canvas or Archival Enhanced Matte media, and elevate the image from a mere photograph to a ‘Work of Art’.



There is so much more I could tell you about Dennis, but I am running out of space so, when you get a chance, stop by the Morning Light Gallery or go to [www.dennisholt.com](http://www.dennisholt.com) and see for yourself the talent that he has with a camera; he’s really captured some amazing photographs from all over the

world. Ask him about the safaris to Africa; he’s got some great stories from past trips that would blow you away. Or, experience it for yourself; I think he still has some openings for the trip this spring. Either way, you have to check him out because no matter what your interest is in photography or art, there’s something for everyone in Dennis Holt’s work.