

YARROW

DUNE

KANAAN DESERT, NAMIBIA - 2024

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WORDS BY DAVID

As my quest to tell layered stories has evolved, I have a firmer understanding of how a weak layer can kill an image of mine. I look back at some work and wince. I have kept hunting in my creative process for clues as to what I am striving for and I guess that the journey of discovery never ends. It is the journey itself that is the purpose of all the effort and drive.

Namibia is the cheetah capital of the world. Since 1990, smart conservation efforts have resulted in the population in the country growing from 1500 to 2500 – that's one third of the planet's total. We have long worked with the acclaimed cheetah conservationists Rudi and Marlice van Vuuren who founded the Naankuse Sanctuary nearly 20 years ago and they partnered with us on this project in the Kanaan Desert.

This photograph in the dunes of the Namibian desert, was taken in September 2024. I first photographed in this desert over 14 years ago and I hope I have learned a great deal since then. All the layers in this image: the textural sand, the central characters, the desert mountains and the clouds coalesce as one.

My camera metadata tells me that it was taken long before most people are out of bed and yet we are a long way from the nearest building. But no one in the crew had a problem with that. There is a visual overload from these dunes at sunrise to match any location on the planet.

Shanina Shaik looks sensational and elevates a photograph of a cheetah in the desert into something a little more special. I felt that it was vital that we could see both her eyes and that dictated

my camera position in the dunes and her body angle. The moment came and it was just a glimpse, but that is all you need. She is smart as well as beautiful.

I like the cinematic proportions of this photograph - it helps to tell the story.

STANDARD

32" x 77" Unframed
47" x 92" Framed
Edition of 12

LARGE

42" x 103" Unframed
57" x 118" Framed
Edition of 12

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