

TECHNOLOGY & VISION



32
EDITOR'S CHOICE

38
FIELD TEST

43
SHOOTOUT

48
D-SLR WORKSHOP

55
INSIDE
PHOTOSHOP

African wildlife, for all its threatened beauty, is one of the most overexposed photographic subjects on the planet. It is no mean feat to make pictures of lions, cheetahs, and chimps that elicit an "Oh, my." But the black-and-white wildlife images in **Nick Brandt's** *On This Earth: Photographs from East Africa* do that and more, with a dreamlike, elegiac beauty.

That quality has much to do with the sense of being physically close to Brandt's subjects, yet without fear. His serene creatures often fill the frame, but even when he shows them in context, as in this shot of a cheetah surveying the Kenyan plain, the images don't have

the telltale compression associated with a telephoto. In fact, Brandt shoots with a Pentax SMC 105mm f/2.4—the "normal" lens for his **Pentax 67II** 6x7cm SLR. "With a telephoto lens, the photographer is generally framing the animal against earth or scrub that has little poetry or beauty," says Brandt. "I want to see as much of the sky and landscape as possible."

In lieu of magnifying power, the photographer relies on camera-to-subject distance, adjusted on foot or by car. "I get as close as I can, inching my way forward, often to within a few feet of the animals," he says.

Though old-fashioned legwork and great patience

were key to Brandt's capture of the creatures in *On This Earth*, everything that followed was cutting edge. After scanning his Kodak T-Max 400 negatives, he worked on them in Photoshop, using a 9x12-inch Wacom pen tablet. He printed the results on Epson Stylus Photo 2200 and Stylus Pro 7600 inkjet printers.

But those are only tools, and Brandt, a former painter, came to photography as a way to express his passion for animals. "I could never figure out how to merge my love of them with my visual creativity," he says. "It was only when I visited East Africa that I realized the potential that was there." —RUSSELL HART