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# Beauty captured in eye of a lens

## **book** **Russell James**

**RRP \$280, Te Neues**

HE IS paid to travel to the most exotic locations in the world and take photos of supermodels.

He is one of the world's leading fashion and celebrity photographers, he is known for his work with Victoria's Secret.

Yep, Russell James is living the life. "I'm so lucky and I forget it," says the snapper.

So, how does this one-time garbage-can maker from Perth do it? "There is a huge trust factor," he says.

"I try to approach the photos with the idea that these are women at the height of their beauty. I'm looking for an image she will be happy with and proud of, one which will not exploit her or that she would be uncomfortable with."

James is in Sydney this week to launch his coffee table book, simply titled *Russell James*, launched on Monday night at

Customs House. The breathtaking retrospective of James's career features stunning photos of supermodels such as Heidi Klum and Gisele Bundchen, who graces the cover, as well as actresses Halle Berry and Scarlett Johansson.

Some of the images of Johansson find the actress in a suit with her hair slicked back, looking every bit the tomboy.

One even finds the actress (heaven forbid) smoking.

"That was a moment," says James. "She was just standing there smoking between shots and I said, 'OK, stand there'."

"It was one of those things you don't do with a lot of thought but sometimes they will make the best images."

A relatively late bloomer, James was in his late 20s – having already spent time as a metal worker and a police officer – when he told his parents he was going away for six weeks to Japan.

He has been living and working overseas ever since.

Although based in New York, James spends much of his time in various parts of the world on photo



**Impromptu: Scarlett Johansson**  
**Picture: Russell James**

shoots. What's his top spot?

"Iceland in the summer, but I was in the Kimberley region recently and I was thinking then, that this is the best place in the world," he says.

"I do go to the Caribbean a lot. Richard Branson's Necker Island does blow me away.

"I call it the sexiest location in the world and if I had to camp somewhere for the rest of my life, that would be it."

**Stephen Downie**



**Charmed: Australian ex-pat photographer Russell James has launched a retrospective book** Picture: Bob Barker