

## Document Citation

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T W E N T Y - N



U.S. PREMIERE

## Empty Quarter

France, 1985, 86 min.

In French with English subtitles

A journalist is in the north-east African town of Djibouti. He meets a young woman, is attracted to her, and asks her to accompany him on a journey across the desert to Alexandria. She has a manner like that of a slave, or a goddess. Thus the basis for an obsession and for this remarkable study in mood, infatuation, and voyeurism. Raymond Depardon's *Empty Quarter* is a film in which we hear this man's desultory conversation with the woman and his brooding analysis of their relationship, but in which he is very rarely seen. He lives behind the camera. In front of it here is the ochre vacancy of the desert and the woman, Françoise Prenant (also co-editor on the picture), who goes from seeming strange, aloof and awkward to gathering the allure of Dietrich in the Sternberg films, by virtue of being seen in a film that teaches us how to watch. It is half-photo-essay, half-interior novel. Yet the fascinating interplay of voices and observation in *Empty Quarter* is only possible in film.

—David Thomson.

Famed in Europe as a photojournalist, Raymond Depardon is perhaps best known in the U.S. for his documentary films *Reporters* (1981) and *Faits Divers* (SFIFF, 1983.)

Directed and photographed by Raymond Depardon.  
Produced by François Margolin, Pascale Dauman.  
Written by François Weyergans, Depardon. Cast:  
Françoise Prenant. Production Co.: Double D—FR3  
Films. Print Source: Nicole Jouve/Interama, NY.

S F FILM  
FESTIVAL

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TUES 3/25 WED 3/26