

Kanaani Kitten Haya Makes History at WCF Debut in Finland

Five-Month-Old Kitten Earns Two CACP Certificates and Becomes the World's Highest-Ranked Kanaani in Her WCF Category.



New York City, New York Aug 15, 2026 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Five-month-old Kanaani kitten Haya made history during the first official competitive World Cat Federation (WCF) appearance of the exceptionally rare Kanaani cat breed at the FenCat Jubilee Show in Vantaa, Finland, on August 8–9, 2026.

Officially registered as RavSalita Haya and representing the Salita Golden Line and the Kanaani Revival Program, Haya received outstanding evaluations during both days of competition.

HAYA'S HISTORIC WCF ACHIEVEMENTS

- 407 WCF Best Cat points
- Two Ex1 evaluations
- Two CACP title certificates toward Kitten Champion status
- Nominated for Best in Show on both show days
- Fifth place among 10 competitors in the WCF Kitten Ring
- Highest-ranked Kanaani worldwide in the Kitten/Junior category of the official WCF Best Cat 2026 standings as of August 11, 2026

Haya earned two of the three CACP certificates required for the official WCF Kitten Champion title, leaving her only one certificate short of becoming a champion. In the language of the Salita family's boxing tradition, she stood just one victory away from the feline equivalent of a WBC world championship belt.

Her mother, RavSalita Haifa, also contributed to the breed's successful debut. Haifa received an Ex1 evaluation and a CAC certificate from judge Clara Sébastien, as well as an Excellent evaluation from judge Cezary Springer.

With 240 points, Haifa is currently the highest-ranked adult Kanaani in the WCF Best Cat 2026 standings. Together, Haya and Haifa established the Kanaani breed's first official competitive record at a WCF show.

BLESSED BEFORE A HISTORIC JOURNEY

Before Haya travelled to Finland, Rabbi Mikhail Salita made a heartfelt request to Rabbi Zalman Liberov of Chabad of Flatbush in Brooklyn to bless the young kitten. Although the request was unusual, Rabbi Liberov graciously agreed.

Haya also received a blessing from Rabbi Nathan Arister before embarking on her historic journey.

For Salita, who serves as both a rabbi and an animal chaplain, these blessings reflected the spiritual dimension of his mission to protect and revive this exceptionally rare breed.

"Haya carried more than our hopes to Finland," Salita said. "She carried two blessings, a profound responsibility and the future of an extraordinary breed born in Jerusalem, in the Holy Land."

REPRESENTING THE UNITED STATES AND UKRAINE'S FAU

Haya is officially listed as representing the United States, where she is housed and where the Kanaani Revival Program is currently based.

Her participation in the WCF club system is conducted under the auspices of the Felin Alliance of Ukraine (FAU), a WCF-affiliated club. Mikhail Salita, a citizen of both the United States and Ukraine, proudly represents FAU in WCF competition while leading the breed's international revival from New York.

The project therefore connects several countries: a breed born in Jerusalem and developed in Israel, revived from the United States, represented through a Ukrainian club and introduced to official WCF competition in Finland.

MORE THAN A BREEDING PROGRAM

The Kanaani Revival Program is a conservation initiative rather than a conventional commercial breeding project. The seven Kanaani cats currently under Salita's care are not being offered for individual retail sale. They form the living foundation of a long-term effort to protect the breed's remaining genetic lines and establish a sustainable international population.

The program's broader vision is to develop responsible partnerships with governments, recognized institutions and qualified conservation breeders interested in establishing carefully supervised Kanaani

programs in different countries.

Inspired by the concept of “panda diplomacy,” Salita describes this international vision as “Kanaani diplomacy”—using one of the world’s rarest cat breeds to encourage international cooperation, cultural exchange and shared responsibility for animal conservation.

Future placements would be considered through structured conservation partnerships rather than ordinary private sales. Participating institutions would be expected to provide professional care, maintain accurate veterinary and breeding records, and contribute to the breed’s long-term survival.

ROOTS IN ISRAEL AND THE HOLY LAND

The Kanaani was born in Jerusalem and developed in Israel. Its history reflects its connection to the region’s feline heritage and to *Felis lybica*, the African wildcat from which domestic cats descend.

Haifa was herself born in Israel and is identified in her pedigree as imported from Israel. Her daughter Haya now represents a new generation raised in the United States while preserving the breed’s historic connection to Jerusalem and the Holy Land.

Their appearance in Vantaa marked the return of this rare Israeli-origin breed to genuine international championship competition.

AN INTERNATIONAL TEAM UNITED AROUND THE KANAANI

The preservation and international advancement of the Kanaani is a collaborative mission connecting Israel, the United States, Ukraine, Finland and experts from other parts of the world.

In Israel, Lyudmila Vlasova has played an essential role in preserving the Kanaani and sharing the knowledge and breeding foundation that helped make the present revival possible. Professional expertise and advice have also been provided by Angelina Koltsova and Anna Kalinichenko.

Alexander and Natalia Melnikov of the Felin Alliance of Ukraine have provided vital institutional support, professional guidance and access to the WCF club system, enabling the Kanaani to return to international championship competition.

The project has also received support from Abhay Kumar, a three-time Guinness World Records title holder in memory and mental calculation. Kumar provided guidance and assistance with the application submitted to Guinness World Records seeking official recognition of the Kanaani as the world’s rarest cat breed.

The application is currently under consideration, and no final determination by Guinness World Records has yet been announced.

“This achievement does not belong to one person or one country,” Salita said. “It is the result of teamwork among people who understand that preserving the Kanaani means protecting a living part of Israel’s heritage. Every person who offered knowledge, guidance or institutional support helped bring this historic moment to life.”

A DEBUT WRITTEN INTO FELINOLOGICAL HISTORY

The Kanaani's WCF debut became possible through the dedicated support of the FenCat organizers, including Melidana and her mother, Diana. Their kindness, assistance and personal involvement helped transform an ambitious international project into reality.

The judges, organizers, exhibitors and visitors who witnessed the event became part of a remarkable moment in international felinology: the first official competitive WCF appearance of the Kanaani breed.

Haya left Finland with two CACP certificates, two Best in Show nominations, a fifth-place WCF Kitten Ring finish, 407 ranking points and the position of the highest-ranked Kanaani in her category worldwide.

Representing the United States, competing under the auspices of the Felin Alliance of Ukraine and carrying the heritage of a breed born in Jerusalem, Haya is writing a new international chapter in Kanaani history.

A STORY WORTHY OF HOLLYWOOD

"This is a story worthy of Hollywood—yet it is not a story anyone invented," Salita said. "It was written by life itself and, I believe, guided by a blessing from Above. We are witnessing one of those extraordinary stories that unfolds only once in a generation—and it is happening in our own lifetime."



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