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Newsletter from Kim Westerskov

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Newsletter #57 – June 2017

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This newsletter goes out to many photographers in New Zealand and overseas - and to anybody who asks join the mailing list. If you know anybody who would like to be on the mailing list, please get them to email me. It's free and they can unsubscribe at any time, of course.



1. "BUT THERE'S NOTHING TO PHOTOGRAPH!"

"But there's nothing to photograph!" Really? Most readers of this newsletter live in New Zealand. Now if I lived in some other country, New Zealand would be the country I would be trying the hardest to get to. With my cameras, lenses, tripod, hopes, dreams, maps and a long list of places to visit. And I'd stay as long as I could.

Most of us Kiwis know that we live in a “pretty good” country, and fortunately a highly photogenic one. Peter Jackson helped to dispel any lingering doubts. Could his “Lord of the Rings” and “Hobbit” trilogies have been so wonderfully filmed in any other country? I doubt it. Certainly in no other small country. But it’s only a “sortof” recognition of just how lucky [if that’s the right word] we are. Familiarity breeds blindness to what’s special.



Of course, we all have many days where we’re nowhere particularly special [at least on a grand landscape level], and there’s always some days when it’s raining or the cloud cover makes for dull light.



If 20 photographers were all taken to the same place [doesn’t really matter where] and were told [1] don’t move more than 100 metres from here for the next 2 hours [2] find and take as many different photos as you can during those two hours, the results would probably be interesting. I’ve never actually tried it, but I’m pretty certain I know what would happen. A few photographers would complain “That was a waste of time Kim, there was nothing to photograph. Can I go home now?”. But a few others would find or create many different photos and return with a variety of quality photos featuring different subjects, compositions and techniques. And most would be somewhere between those two extremes.



Think about it: same place, same time, same light, same opportunities. So what’s responsible for such a wide variety of outcomes? The photographers who found nothing much worth photographing would say: wrong place, wrong time, wrong light, not the right camera equipment etc., perhaps not yet having noticed that many of the other 20 had indeed found valid subjects and created good photos.



So it comes back to the individual: their skill set, their imagination and creativity, their enthusiasm, and - at the rear of the field - their equipment. Good photographers can create good photos pretty much anywhere, anytime, even with “bad” equipment. Have a look at a few of the cheap/crappy camera challenge videos from DigitalRev TV for confirmation. And for some clever ideas.

Here’s a link to the “Pro Photographer, Cheap Camera Challenge” Series by DigitalRev
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL7ECB90D96DF59DE5>

So how do we get better at “seeing photos” - seeing photographic possibilities wherever we are? I’ve been teaching photography formally for over 10 years now and I ponder this question regularly. There’s many answers and part answers, but one very good answer is to tap into the creativity of other photographers. Have a look at what the photographers you are with are getting. If you’re going to Paris, Google “Paris photos”. If you especially love birds in flight Google “birds flying photos”. Check out websites or books or magazines specialising in whatever you’re most interested in.

Even if there's no subjects that seem worth photographing, here's three ideas that usually work: **impressionism, macro, and people**. There's always someone there, even if it's only you. How can you photograph others or yourself or part of you in an interesting way? [I have a collection of photos of my feet and lower legs with small foamy waves brushing against them at the beach]. Selfies definitely get overdone and most have little artistic merit – so ask yourself “How can I take a selfie in a creative or different way?” **Macro or close up**: if there's no big subjects, what about little ones? Flowers, leaves, insects, textures [paint, rust, rock, sand, concrete ...] **Impressionism**: If there's enough light to photograph, then there's **always** something in front of your camera that can be turned into Photo Impressionism. And I almost forgot **clouds**. I live in Tauranga, and every day [and most nights] I look up at the sky to see what's happening. I'm often amazed at how many wonderful cloud formations and types I see over Tauranga. Often with exquisite textures. It's probably the same wherever you live or are visiting. A polarising filter comes in handy with clouds, making them stand out more dramatically from the blue sky.

2. “THE POWER OF PHOTOGRAPHY” - Tauranga presentation by Kim - 19th June

Illustrated Talk: “The Power of Photography – the light and the darkness”

Speaker: Kim Westerskov

Date: Monday 19th June 2017

Venue: Tauranga Yacht & Power Boat Club, 90 Keith Allen Drive, Tauranga.



Time: 7:00-9:00pm. Doors open at 6:30pm for 7pm start.

Cost : Door fee \$5 to cover venue, drinks and nibbles.

Bookings: Please register through the link below so the organisers [Café Scientifique] can account for numbers attending. Note: there is no need to print a ticket.

“Afghan Girl” photo by Steve McCurry



“The power of photography – the light and the darkness” shows us the many and varied roles photography plays in our lives, from powerful world-changing photography to the personal and intimate. With just 80 carefully selected photos - a mix of my own and other people's photos - I covers a remarkable variety of subjects, places, emotions and photo styles: photos that started wars, photos that stopped wars, photos of both world events and private moments, photos of places we could never get to [and often wouldn't want to get to], both here on Earth and beyond. We also swim with whales in the tropics, meet penguins in Antarctica, watch the sun rising over Tauranga, fly over the Rena oil spill and follow the progress of Rena's oiled penguins. There's wildlife, astronomy, art, music, & the human condition. Powerful photos and gentle photos, ideas and subjects relevant to us all, from our place in the universe to life here on Planet Earth, to our homes and families and friends.

To register: <https://www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/cafe-scientifique-the-power-of-photography-the-light-the-darkness-tickets-35159695596?aff=mcivte>

3. TE AWAMUTU CLUB IMPRESSIONISM

Last Sunday I ran a private workshop on Photo Impressionism for the Te Awamutu Camera Club who came over to Tauranga for the day. For an hour in the afternoon we went outside into the clear autumn air for everyone to try the techniques I'd been talking about. Back inside I downloaded everybody's photos and processed a good number of them in Photoshop, an essential part of the process. I was so impressed with what had been achieved by the Te Awamutu Camera Club members [and one from the Matamata-Tirau Camera Club] that I thought I'd share them with you. Enjoy.



David Peake



Graham Davies



John Halliday
[both]



Pam Thomson



Tess Smith

4. 2017 PROGRAMME

- **Saturday 24th June. “Slow & Smooth – Blurred Motion” workshop.** Full day.

JULY

- Tuesday 4th July. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 16th July. “Photo Impressionism” workshop.** Full day.

AUGUST

- Tuesday 1st August. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 5th August. “People Photography” workshop.** Full day.
- **Saturday 26th August. “Making your photos look great in Lightroom or Photoshop”.** Half day.

SEPTEMBER

- Tuesday 5th September. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 10th September. “Good photos, great photos – anytime, anywhere”** workshop. Full day.

OCTOBER

- Tuesday 3rd October. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday-Sunday 14-15 October. “Great Photography Weekend” workshop.** Weekend + follow-up.
- **Saturday 28 October. “Photography 101” workshop.** Half day.

NOVEMBER

- Tuesday 7th November. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 18 November. “Close-up Magic – with or without a macro lens” workshop.** Full day.

DECEMBER

- Tuesday 5th December. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.

Half-day workshops 9.00am – 1.00pm

Full day & two-day workshops 9.00am – 5.00pm

COST: Course fees **include tuition, detailed hand-outs & yummy catering, plus assignment and follow-up evenings** for full day and two-day workshops.

- **Half day workshops:** \$135 – or \$115 for Early Birds if you register by 10 days before workshop. Fulltime students with ID \$70.
- **One day workshops:** \$295 – or \$245 for Early Birds if you register by 10 days before workshop. Fulltime students with ID \$150.
- **Weekend workshops:** \$475 [\$425 Early Bird]. Fulltime students with ID \$235.

5. "MOTION MAGIC – BLURRED MOTION" WORKSHOP – Saturday 24th June



BLURS: silky, slow and smooth. Turn your local beach or river or waterfall or sky or road - or even wildlife - into an artwork. Long exposures create magic out of what is often "nothing much", photographically. Turn scruffy choppy seas or cloudy days into satisfying art. Successful blurs need a handful of techniques. I've been developing and using these for decades, and have recently come back to explore them further. I love the results. You will too.

Are they easy? Yes, the basic techniques are easy, or at least not hard.

Do I need any special equipment? No, not for most of the techniques. I'll show you how to get good long exposure photos with just your normal camera [and tripod usually], nothing else needed. One advanced technique [still not too hard] need a strong neutral density filter [8-12 stops] and ideally a shutter release cable. But don't worry if you don't have a strong neutral density filter – I have three that I'm happy to lend you for the afternoon. **First in, first served – book yours now.** They are 77mm filters, but I have step-up rings that allow these filters to be used on lenses with filter sizes of 52mm, 58mm, 67mm & 72mm, and I'm happy to lend these as well.



Cost: Full course fee [which includes tuition, hand-outs, Vivienne's yummy catering, assignment and follow-up] **\$245**. Fulltime students with ID **\$150**

6. "PHOTO IMPRESSIONISM" WORKSHOP – Sunday 16 July

Photo Impressionism is an exciting area of photography. It releases your inner artist. It creates images filled with colour and movement and texture and feelings and emotion. It allows you to get really good photos when other photographers are complaining that "there's nothing to photograph" or "the light is lousy". I've learned and developed many techniques, tips and tricks over the years, and I'll pass these on to you. Many are remarkably easy, once you know what to do and "get your eye in". You will very likely impress yourself!



Sunday 16 July 9.00am – 5.00pm plus assignment and follow-up evening 2-3 weeks later for assignment evaluation [at a time that suits everyone]. The follow-up can be by email. **Cost:** Full course fee [which includes tuition, hand-outs, Vivienne's yummy catering, assignment and follow-up] **\$295** or **\$245** for Early Birds [if you register by 6th July]. Fulltime students with ID **\$150**



- "I was thrilled with my photos thank you. It opens a whole new world!! The photo impressionism workshop was wonderful. We went to a bleak, midwinter park and created beautiful, colourful photos. Photos full of fun, imagination and mystery."
- **Vicki Ostler**
- "Hi Kim, I LOVED the Impressionist Photo workshop and would recommend it to anyone wanting to have some fun and get creative with their camera. My family and friends were very impressed with my impressionist photos taken at Yatton Park and one friend even offered to buy one to put on a canvas to hang in her home!!"
Jan Gill
- "I found the photo impressionism workshop very exciting as it allows me to pursue my more artist/creative side, the techniques we learnt have opened up a whole new world for me." **Lynda Farnworth**





7. QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Photography is a way of feeling, of touching, of loving. What you have caught on film is captured forever... It remembers little things, long after you have forgotten everything.”

Aaron Siskind

8. PHOTOGRAPHING ARTWORKS, PHOTOSHOPPING, PHOTO RESTORATION

As well as teaching photography and mentoring a number of photographers, I also offer photo restoration, Photoshopping, and “Photographing your Artworks” services. \$50 per hour [we usually get a lot done each hour].

9. INVITATION TO ALL CAMERA CLUBS & GROUPS

If your club or group might be interested in hosting one of my presentations - or workshops - or “Field Trip + Photo Critique” days, please get in touch.

10. MENTORING

“Mentoring” is the ongoing process of **inspiring, advising, guiding, teaching, critiquing** ... whatever is needed for the ongoing development of a photographer. It’s one-on-one, so it’s different for each person. One month it may be about equipment or Photoshop, next month it may be “I just want my photos to have more ‘Wow’ in them”, the following month it may be about exhibitions or “Should I go pro?”. **Who is mentoring for? Anybody. At present I’m mentoring both established professional photographers and amateurs.**



Photos of Kim by Malcolm Macfarlane & Tony Whitehead

1. At least 90 minutes [probably more] of my time every month. \$115/month.
2. At least 3 hours of my time [probably more] every month. \$165/ month.
3. At least 4 hours of my time [probably more] every month. \$200/ month.

Your mentor [me, Kim]:

- Over 30 years as a professional photographer
- Five First Prizes in the BBC “Wildlife Photographer of the Year” competition, the Olympics [or Oscars] of nature photography worldwide.
- 18 books published – written and photographed by me.
- **Passionate about photography and passionate about inspiring, guiding, and supporting photographers.**

11. KIM’S PHOTOS & COFFEE EVENINGS

We meet on the first Tuesday of each month [except January], chat informally about photography, and view some of the recent photos we’ve taken. It’s **free [no charge], supper is served**, and there’s no obligation of any kind. **Please email me if you’d like to come.** These evenings are always fun and friendly. It’s a great way of meeting up with like-minded people, **being inspired by the creativity of our group of photographers, and coming away with news ideas and tips.** Bring photos if you wish, but there’s no obligation to bring any. The next one is on Tuesday 4th July, starting 7.00pm. 18 Greerton Road, Tauranga.

12. PRIVATE TUITION

Yes, like you I’m usually busy doing “other stuff” too, but I can nearly always fit private tuition in, and am very happy to do so. First 2 hours: \$80 per hour, after that \$70 per hour. If you come again, it’s \$70 per hour right from the first hour.

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