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... and, of course, if you'd prefer not to receive future newsletters from Kim, please just "Reply" with "Unsubscribe please" as the subject. Thanks 😊

# Newsletter from Kim Westerskov

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## Newsletter #73 – March 2019

- 1. Black & white photography**
- 2. Get the Nik Collection for free**
- 3. New sharpening program uses AI**
- 4. "Silky seas, waterfalls, ferns & forests" workshop - 17 March**
- 5. "Sea, surf, shore & seabirds" workshop - 6 April**
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*This newsletter goes out to many photographers in New Zealand and overseas - and to anybody who asks to go onto 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. BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

There's something unique about black and white photography. Words like "soul" and "timeless" are often used to describe what it is that is special about it. Good black and white photos have a classic, ageless quality. They often seem more "artistic" than colour photos and can have an almost surreal or dreamy quality to them. And they often somehow look cleaner than colour images – although black and white can do "gritty" even better than colour [e.g. photos of victims of war or famine or other misfortune].

There are many ways of creating black & white photos. These include, starting with the simplest:

1. Set your camera to "Black & White JPEGs"
2. Converting your colour photo to Black & White in one of the free converters available [Google "black and white converter" or "convert image to black and white"] or use Picasa, also free [Picasa was retired by Google but can still be downloaded].
3. In Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, or Lightroom: desaturating the colour image and then using the normal Develop/Adjustments tools: Exposure, Contrast, Highlights, Whites, Blacks etc. These will often give you a good result. **Most of the accompanying B+W photos, including the sand dune photo on the previous page, were processed this way.**
4. In Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, or Lightroom: "Channel Mixer". Tick "Monochrome" and play with Red, Green and Blue sliders until you get a look you like.
5. In Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, or Lightroom: "Black and White". Play with the sliders until you get a look you like. If you then tick "Tint" and use the two bottom sliders, you can create a toned monochrome image e.g. sepia look or blue look.
6. In Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, or Lightroom: Download and install Silver Efex Pro 2, part of the Nik Collection. "Creative" [different] results will often come from using this, or similar programs such as Topaz Black and White Effects.





My recommendation is that you do NOT use the black and white setting in your camera, but rather capture colour images and then convert these to black and white in post-processing. This can be done in Photoshop/Lightroom, or in Photoshop/Lightroom plugins, or their standalone versions. See the short article on Silver Efex Pro below.



## 2. GREAT BLACK AND WHITE PLUGIN - FREE

If I can't achieve the B+W [black and white] look I'm after using the standard sliders and tools in Photoshop/Lightroom, I turn to **Silver Efex Pro**. Originally developed to digitally recreate many of the classic B+W and toned monochrome looks from the days of film, Silver Efex Pro was probably the best B+W conversion program for many years. Superb, but expensive. The Nik Collection of seven plugins that included Silver Efex Pro cost you USD 500. In 2012 Google brought the Nik Collection, initially reducing its price to USD 150 and then in 2016 giving away free. In 2017 the French photo company DxO brought it from Google and updated it so it's now fully compatible with 64-bit Mac and PC platforms as well as with Adobe Lightroom Classic CC, Photoshop CC 2018, and Photoshop Elements 2017/2018. This updated version of the Nik Collection costs USD 69. Good value. Even better value for as long as it works on your computer, the full 2012 version of the Nik Collection can be downloaded free from the DXO website. It's not guaranteed to work on all modern computers and is no longer supported, but it still works fine for me.

<https://nikcollection.dxo.com/nik-collection-2012/>

## 3. NEW SHARPENING PROGRAM using ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Do you ever get photos that aren't quite sharp? Slightly out of focus, or with motion blur – where the camera wasn't held carefully enough, or the subject moved too fast? No, me neither 😊 But just in case it ever happens to “a friend” of yours, here's some very good news.

On 28<sup>th</sup> February, Topaz released **Topaz Sharpen AI**. This program was trained with millions of blur-sharp image pairs to learn the difference between detail and noise. It then enhances just the detail and not the noise, even synthesizing convincing details that didn't exist in your photo [!!]. It deals impressively with camera shake, motion blur and even focus issues, correcting up to 10-15 pixels of focus blur.

A must-have program? Yes, it probably will be for many photographers. You can use it as a standalone program or as a Photoshop/Lightroom plugin. There's a free 30-day trial. It costs USD 80, though if you get in before 15<sup>th</sup> March there's a 25% discount. And it will only get better, as it will get updated at intervals.



Left: original photo crop.

Middle: Photoshop Smart Sharpen Filter.

Right: Topaz Sharpen AI

<https://topazlabs.com/let-ai-sharpen-your-photos/>

<https://topazlabs.com/sharpen-ai/>

<https://help.topazlabs.com/hc/en-us/articles/360024353312> [Operating System requirements]

Then Google “Topaz Sharpen AI reviews” for independent reviews.

## 4. "SILKY SEAS, WATERFALLS, FERNS & FORESTS" workshop

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March



There's something magical about waterfalls, something that draws us to them, to admire them and to photograph them. You could spend every day of the next 12 months chasing waterfalls around New Zealand without running out of new ones to visit next, ending up with enough photos for THE book about New Zealand waterfalls [no, it hasn't been done yet as far as I know - got for it!]. You'll need a helicopter to get to many of the remote waterfalls but fortunately, there's a large number you can drive and/or walk to.

Capturing on camera the magic you felt standing in front of the waterfall needs some techniques and a tripod. Getting great photos of waterfalls is largely a matter of timing [the weather, the time of day, the amount of water flow, and - most importantly - shutter speed. I've carried out various tests of shutter speeds at waterfalls and found that there are four quite different "looks" I can achieve, depending on the shutter speed I've chosen.

It's not rocket science, in fact, it's rather simple once you know the techniques [I dislike the word "rules" so I'll use "techniques"]. The best "look" is where your shutter speed has allowed enough water flow to achieve a silky, ethereal look, while still



leaving some detail in the water. I'll run through these techniques at the workshop and then later in the day we'll find a tame waterfall to practice these techniques on. You'll need a tripod, but other than that, whatever camera and lenses you have will do just fine.



This brand-new workshop is in two main parts. The first part is largely about capturing the magic of moving water. Waterfalls are one obvious subject, but coastlines with waves are at least equally good ..... maybe even better, as you're not limited to the finite number of waterfalls found here in NZ - or whichever country you've travelled to.

Coastlines, especially rocky ones, offer an almost limitless number of spots for you to place your tripod to commence capturing some of the magic. The techniques for shorelines are similar to waterfalls [though with some differences] which is why I've lumped them both together in this workshop.



The second part of the workshop is largely unrelated, except when you find waterfalls surrounded by native forest or other native vegetation, which fortunately is quite often. We have wonderful native forests here in New Zealand, though you probably don't need me to tell you that. However, capturing some of the magic of standing inside a tall forest with the green canopy far above, the call of kaka or kakapo echoing in the cathedral-like stillness, the smell of recent rain on the vegetation, the clarity of the air, the lushness of all that is growing and photosynthesizing - is not at all easy.

Taking "snaps" is easy, of course, but snaps never capture any of the magic. Forest snaps are either somewhat disappointing or highly disappointing. I've spent 25 years working on how to photographically capture the magic of our native forests. Over that time I've developed techniques and approaches that work pretty well, and I'll be sharing these with you.



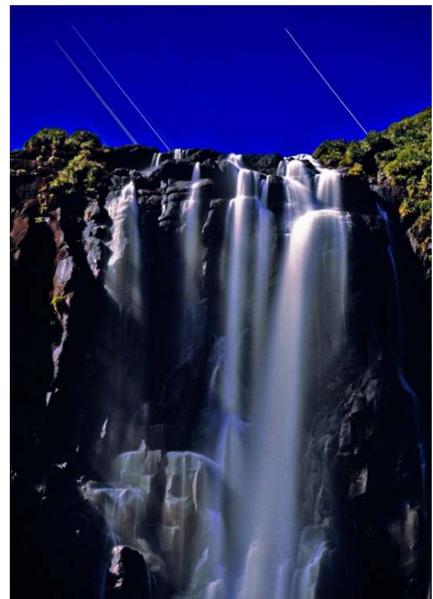
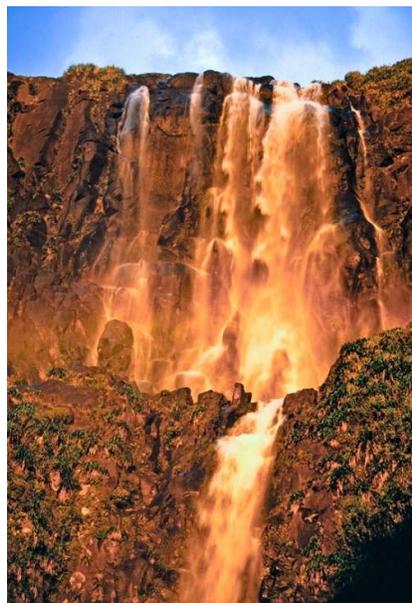
One of the techniques I've developed that make forest interiors "work" is to incorporate ferns, which is why they are part of this workshop. Not only do they help lift forest photos, but they are also equally impressive as subjects in themselves.

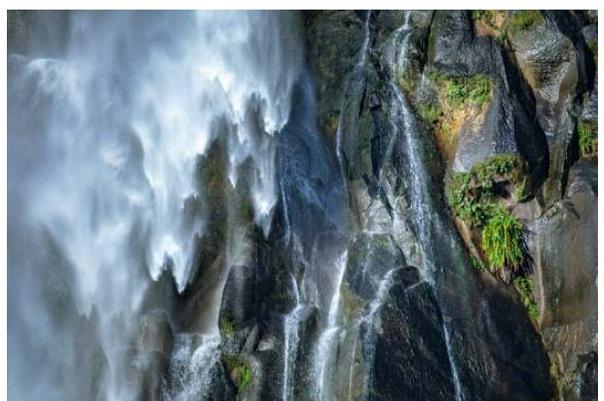
Years ago I liberated some dozens of young ferns [including tree ferns] from pine plantations and planted them here in our garden down around my office. Some now tower high above me in the clear Tauranga air, and they have been a great source of photographic inspiration. I now have enough photos for a book featuring a photo-artist's approach to our tree ferns, though I'm not expecting book publishers to be knocking on my door anytime soon 😊. As with waterfalls and waves, it's easy enough to take photos that freeze all motion, but when the wind is moving the treefern fronds back and forth in a graceful dance, then a new world of magic opens up. I'll share these techniques too. Care to join me?

**When:** Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March, 9.00 am to 5.00 pm.

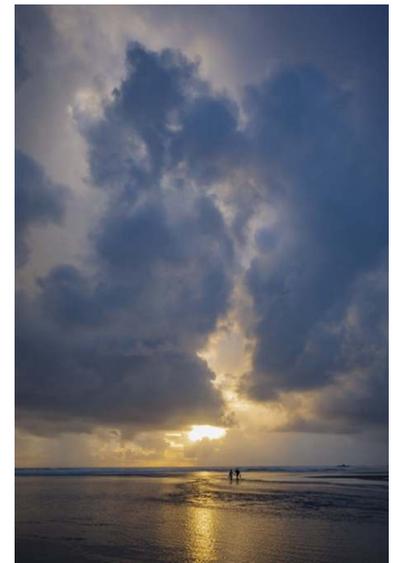
**Where:** Kim's workshop studio, 18 Greerton Road, Gate Pa, Tauranga.

**Cost:** Full course fee [which includes tuition, hand-outs, Vivienne's yummy catering, assignment, and follow-up] **\$245**. Fulltime students with ID **\$125**.





## 5. “SEA, SURF, SHORE & SEABIRDS” workshop Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April



Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April 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.

Aaaaaah, summer and autumn and the beach! I find beaches - sandy beaches, rocky beaches, harbours, ANY shorelines - to be some of my greatest sources of photographic inspiration. And most of us live close to some wonderful beaches. Part of why the beach is such a favourite of mine - and of many other photographers - is how it's always changing. The possibilities are essentially endless. And as we all know, the beach is a great place to go anyway - with or without your camera. This workshop will show you the equipment, techniques, and approaches for getting great beach and rocky shore photos, including long exposure “silky seas”. Lots of tips and tricks. Will you have fun? I'm afraid so.

One of the reasons this workshop worked so well in previous years was that I went to the beach at Mount Maunganui the day before the workshop at the same time of day that we would be coming 24 hours later, taking hundreds of photos and then showing these at the workshop. This let everybody see the possibilities that I had seen, to which they could then add their own vision. We'll do the same this time.

**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 before 27<sup>th</sup> March]. Fulltime students with ID **\$150**.

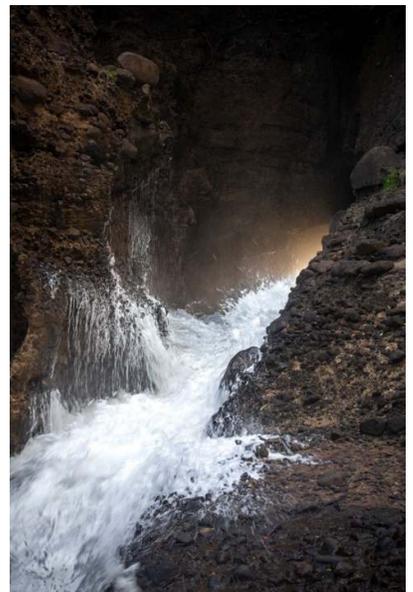
Some unsolicited comments about previous workshops:

“Thanks Kim. The workshop was great. I especially liked the approach of looking at your photos from that spot, then going back to the same spot. Thanks very much”. **Raewyn Adams**

“Thanks Kim - the workshop was great, informative and fun”  
**Hazel Ellis**

“Thank you so much for a very enjoyable and informative day. I was sorry when it ended and we had to leave. I have just gone through my photos and am pleasantly surprised at the results! All thanks to your workshop”. **Sue Davies**





## 6. "MENTORING BY KIM"

Mentoring individual photographers to the best of my ability is time-intensive, so I'm only able to mentor a few photographers at any one time.

"Mentoring by Kim" is for serious photographers who want to get better, much better, to make more compelling images, and who realize that great photography is not something that you can spend a few hours on and "have it sorted" by 7 pm tonight.

How good do you have to be? It absolutely doesn't matter, truly. I'm just as happy mentoring keen beginners who know nothing much more than where the "Auto" button is as I am mentoring successful professionals. The kind of camera and lenses you have don't matter either. All that matters is that you are keen and willing to put in some effort learning and trying. It's a journey, and for that reason "Mentoring by Kim" is for a minimum of 6 months. After that, you can choose to finish or to carry on.

So what happens during that time? Whatever is needed to make you a better - and happier - photographer. "Mentoring" is the ongoing process of inspiring, advising, guiding, teaching, critiquing ... whatever is needed for your ongoing development as a photographer. It's one-on-one, so it's different for each person. One day it may be about equipment or Photoshop, next week 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?"

Do you need to live in Tauranga or travel to Tauranga for mentoring? Not really. Face-to-face time every now and then is great, but most mentoring can be done by email or over the phone [or Skype]. One photographer I've mentored for some years lives in Dunedin and although we're in contact often, I see him only once every few years. Another photographer lives an hour's drive from Tauranga and comes over for a full day with me once every month or so. Between visits, we're regularly in contact, often daily.

For a very reasonable \$450 per month you get access to me pretty much whenever you want. But most importantly, it's whatever works best for you. I take the mentoring seriously and I'm there for you. I want you to succeed.

If you don't need the full mentoring program, a second option is "Mentoring Lite". For \$225 per month, you get a "light" version of the mentoring program.

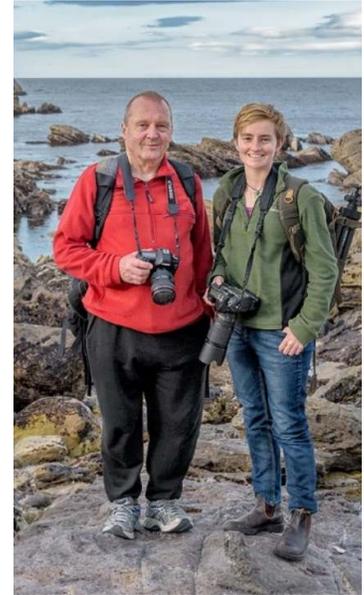
Here's what two of the photographers I've been mentoring have said:



**Pam Thomson [Te Awamutu]:** “I have been mentored by Kim for about 5 months now, and have wanted to do it for a couple of years. I wish I had done it sooner. Kim is a wonderful Mentor, gives great encouragement, and has so much knowledge to share... He gives very honest, thoughtful, critique. The Mentoring is lead by you”.

**Derek Morrison [Dunedin], 2018 New Zealand Geographic Photographer of the Year:** “Kim is, without doubt, one of the best – he is proactive, really knows his stuff and genuinely drills into the creative process, pain and dreams... I wanted a raw and unfiltered appraisal of where I was at and where I wanted to go. I got that with Kim”. Was there any connection between the mentoring and your NZ Geographic Photographer of the Year win? “Of course”.

Photos of Kim by Tony Whitehead, James Frankham, Malcolm Macfarlane. & I’m afraid I don’t remember who took the photo at McLaren Falls.



## 7. QUOTE OF THE MONTH - David duChemin

Focus on the long, slow, game of becoming the kind of photographer that will one day make masterpieces: a master.

Mastery is not, and has never been, gained through more stuff or gimmicks or shortcuts.

Read fewer articles that talk about tips and tricks.

Spend less time on Instagram, make more photographs.

Learn fewer things (just one is probably enough) but learn them deeper.

Print your work and study it.

Fall in love with the work of the masters.

Don't forget to breathe.

## 8. 2019 PROGRAMME

### MARCH

- **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March. "Waterfalls, Ferns & Forests"**. Full day plus follow-up.

### APRIL

- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> April. "Sea, Surf, Shore & Seabirds" workshop**. Full day plus follow-up.
- **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April. "Travel" workshop**. Half day.
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### MAY

- Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May. "New Photo Techniques" workshop**. Full day plus follow-up.

### JUNE

- Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June. "Photo Essentials" workshop**. Full day plus follow-up.

### JULY

- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July. "Photo Impressionism" workshop**. Full day plus follow-up.

### AUGUST

- Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> August. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August. "Black & White" photo workshop**. Full day plus follow-up.

### SEPTEMBER

- Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September. "People" workshop**. Portraits, kids, families, candid, travel, events, weddings. Full day plus follow-up.
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### OCTOBER

- Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October. "Good photos, great photos – anytime, anywhere" workshop**. Full day plus follow-up.

### NOVEMBER

- Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.

### DECEMBER

- Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.

Half-day workshops 9.00am – 1.00pm

Full day workshops 9.00am – 5.00pm

**COST:** Course fees include tuition, detailed hand-outs, yummy catering, plus [for most full-day workshops] an assignment and follow-up evening.

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

## 9. 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. Think not just about cost, but "value" – it's one-on-one with an experienced photographer and teacher and we cover a lot each hour. Bring a friend if you wish - no extra charge.

Or – for just the cost of a full-day workshop [with Early Bird discount] - \$245 – you get my full attention - one-on-one - for 4 hours. This can be out in the field or at my studio, looking at your photos on my computer, going over your camera functions, looking into specific techniques, or all of the above and more – whatever you want to do. I'm here for you. For only \$475 I'm yours for the whole day.

## 10. KIM'S PHOTOS & COFFEE EVENINGS

We meet on the first Tuesday of each month [except January], chat 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** [it's not a big room so I need to keep an eye on numbers]. These evenings are always fun and friendly - there's usually many smiles and laughs. 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 new ideas and tips**. There's a wide range of interests and abilities – so you're very unlikely to feel out of your depth. Bring photos if you wish, but there's no obligation to. Some people do, some don't. The next one is on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April starting 7.00pm. 18 Greerton Road, Gate Pa, Tauranga.

## 11. 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 get a lot done each hour].

## 12. 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.

## ABOUT KIM

- **Passionate about photography and passionate about inspiring, guiding, and supporting photographers.**
- Over 30 years as a professional photographer and teaching photography for over 10 years now
- Five First Prizes in the BBC "Wildlife Photographer of the Year" competition, the Olympics of nature photography worldwide.
- 18 books published – written and photographed by Kim. Five are currently "in print".