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Newsletter from Kim Westerskov

Email: kimsworkshops@gmail.com

Web: www.kimwesterskov.com

20 Greerton Road, Tauranga 3112, New Zealand

Phone 07-578-5138

Newsletter #64 – April 2018

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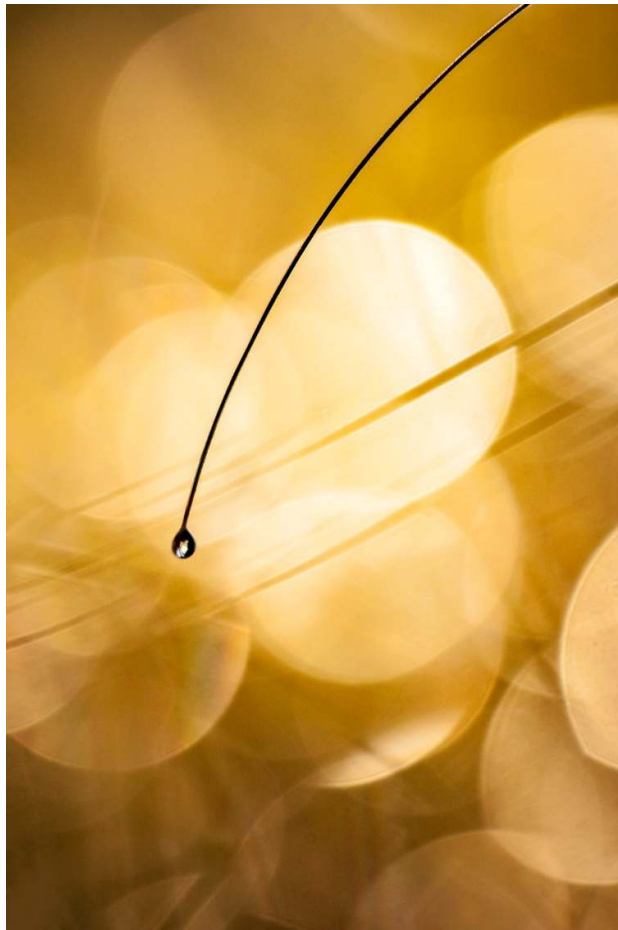
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This newsletter goes out to many photographers in New Zealand and overseas - and to anybody who asks to go onto the mailing list. If you know anybody who would like to be on the mailing list, please get them to email me. It's free and they can unsubscribe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



1. WHICH LENS SHOULD YOU USE?

So, you're heading off somewhere with your camera. You're in "I'm not sure what I'll be photographing yet – I'll wait and see what turns up" mode. Your camera is hanging around your neck or is safely tucked up in your camera bag.

So what lens should be on your camera body? If you have only one lens, the answer is easy, but most keen photographers have more than one lens. Some have many.

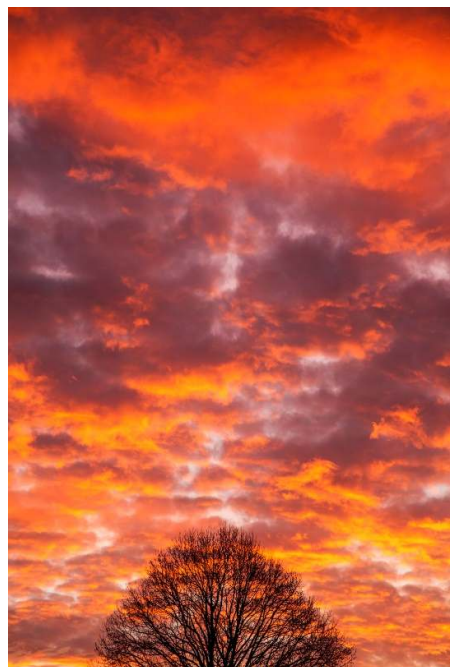
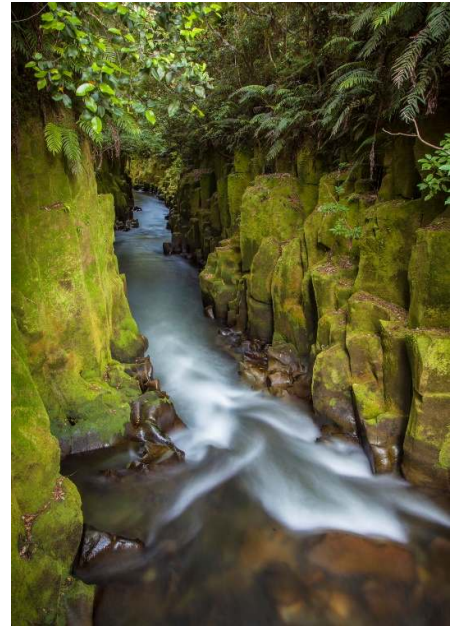
First of all, you never know when a good photo opportunity will present itself, and as some happen quickly, you should always have a lens on your camera [as well as the battery and memory card inserted and checked] and be pretty much ready to shoot. So – which lens?

My default lens – the one that's on my camera unless there's a good reason for changing it – is my Canon 24-105mm f4L IS lens, a cracker of an all-round, high quality lens. In your case, it would be whichever standard zoom lens you have, usually one that goes from somewhat wide angle through to telephoto, possibly the kit lens that came with your camera body.

As this standard zoom lens is the one that you will probably use much or even most of the time, it probably your most important lens so when buying a new camera or upgrading it's worth putting some real dollars into, and not just getting the cheapest kit lens that your camera shop offers you. Modern camera and lens design and manufacture is so good nowadays, that you'd be really hard pressed to find a "bad" lens. Pretty much every single lens you can buy is somewhere between "good" and "excellent". "Excellent" typically costs more, of course, but "good" is absolutely fine for most photographers.

So, you're now out on your photo walk, seeing some possibilities and wondering "which lens should I use?" My next workshop ["Wide Angle & Telephoto"] will cover this fully, but here's some of the main points:

We can divide focal lengths [and the lenses] into three main groups: wide angle, normal, and telephoto. Wide angle and telephoto are very different animals – they have different purposes, achieve different results, and have different rules governing their use.



Telephoto lenses are the simplest to use right. Everyone knows what they are for – to get close to your subject, whether lions & giraffes or seagulls here in NZ or distant players on a sports field or any subject you can't easily or safely get close to. Telephoto lenses have much narrower depths of field, which makes them ideal for making your subject stand out from the background, which typically is out-of-focus. Sharp subject, out-of-focus background. Nice. Easy. So telephoto lenses give you photos that look kinda similar: sharp subject, well-composed [because you put most of your effort into getting the subject looking "right"] and hopefully with a nicely out-of-focus background. With a telephoto shot, you're usually trying to eliminate everything not needed in the photo: it's just the subject [such as a Weddell seal pup] against a background that does not demand to be noticed. Simple, in theory at least.



Wide angle lenses are pretty much the opposite, as you're typically trying to get many different subjects or points of interest into the photo. Having many different components that all need to look in balance ["well composed"] is therefore more challenging, but when you get it right, the results make it worth the effort.

2. "DEHAZE" MOVED IN LIGHTROOM/PHOTOSHOP

One of the cleverest tools/adjustments that Adobe [the Photoshop people] ever came up with was the marvelous Dehaze adjustment. It's one of my main "go to" adjustments. It started out life in the "Effects" tab for some reason, though I always felt it belonged in the Basic tab. Other photographers must have told Adobe the same, as the latest release of Lightroom Classic CC (and Camera Raw) has relocated Dehaze from the Effects tab to the Basic tab, next to Clarity, which makes a lot of sense as they're kinda similar and are both highly useful adjustments.

3. YOUR PHOTOS – from the Field Trip + Critique day



Janet Keen
[left and right]



Raewyn
Adams [left]





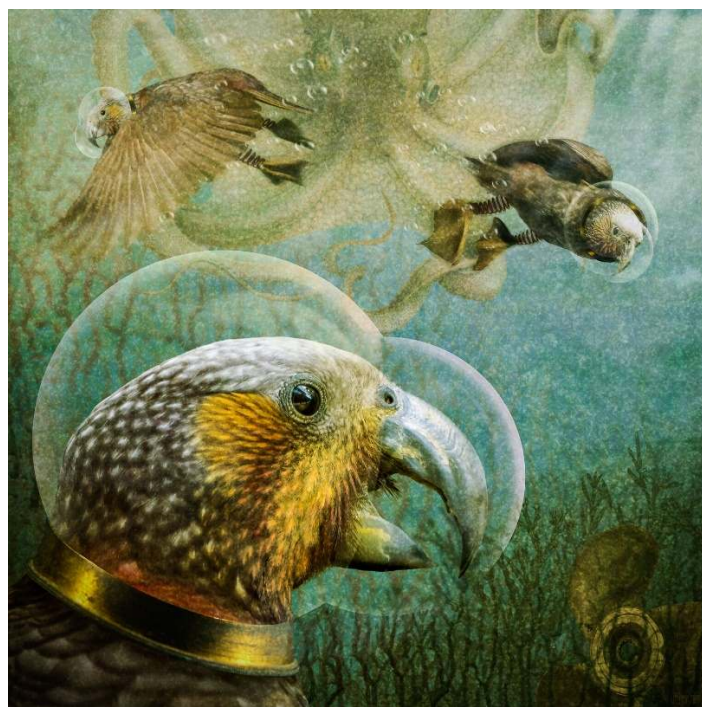
Linda Mannix
[left and right]



Sue Williams [lower middle and right]
Catherine Stewart [lower left]



4. FEATURED PHOTO-ARTIST – JUDI LAPSLEY MILLER



Uncharted Waters



The Bird Watcher

This month I'm delighted to introduce the photo-art of Wellington's Judi Lapsley Miller to you. I came across Judi's work a couple of years ago and was entranced by Judi's whimsical kaka series. There's so much to savour in these artworks that I'm showing two of them much larger than usual - they need to be seen big to appreciate nuanced details such as the man in the "man cage", book titles, the framed family portraits on the wall and much more.

Judi is many things – a scientist, photographer, conservationist [volunteering at Wellington's Zealandia wildlife sanctuary] and photo-artist. Competent wildlife photography and deep Photoshop skills are just part of what makes up these artworks. Add to that a genuine artistic ability [including her feel for light, colour, texture and balance] and – perhaps most importantly of all – a unique imagination for what might be possible, with a strong whimsical sense of humour.

<https://www.artbyjlm.com/>

<https://www.artbyjlm.com/blog/photoartistry-resources-my-top-picks> [Judi's resources]



The Scenic Route



Birds on a Wire
 a photo-artistic exhibition by
JUDI LAPSLEY MILLER

edges
 ART+FRAMING
 4 DONNELLY ST
 HAVELOCK-NORTH

WWW.ARTBYJLM.COM 9 - 30 APRIL 2018

5. FROM KIM'S FIELD DIARIES: DIVING IN ANTARCTICA

For many years two of my long-held dreams were to swim with Blue Whales [the largest animals ever to have lived on Planet Earth] and diving in Antarctica.

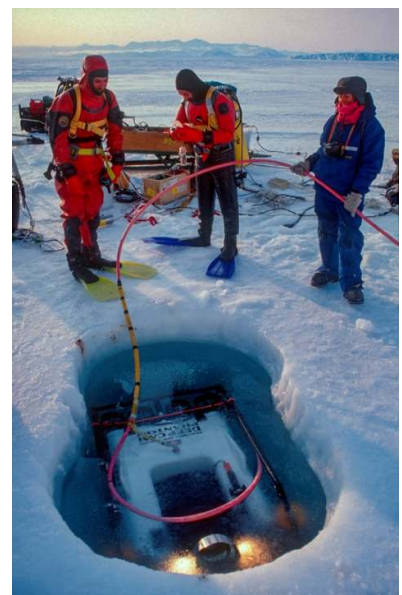
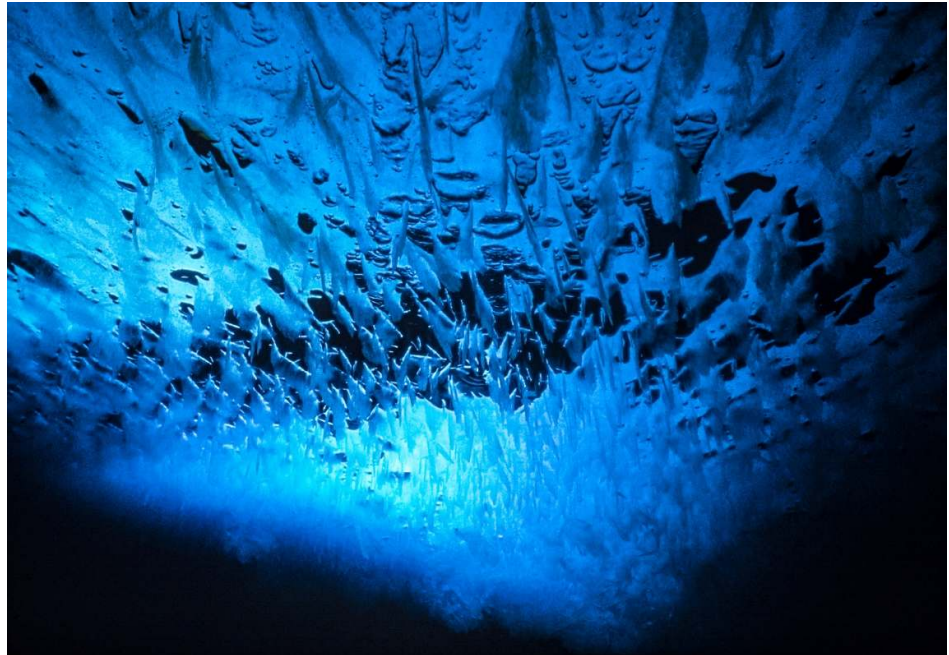
Although I've been close to Blue Whales many times, swimming with them never happened - though I've dived with Humpback, Minke, Southern Right, Killer and Sperm whales, so I'm not feeling too bad.

Diving in Antarctica was never going to be easy. My chance came when I was contracted to Christchurch International Airport Limited to get photos for the International Antarctic Centre being built near Christchurch Airport. This contract - a dream job really - was to spend half a year in Antarctica spread over three separate visits to get a long list of needed photos for the Visitor Centre.

Unfortunately for me, this long list did not include underwater photos. I knew that a film crew from Natural History New Zealand [originally TVNZ's Natural History Unit] would be diving while I was there, so I offered to see if I could join them to get an "under the sea ice" perspective. "Nope" was the short answer from Tim Hobson, project manager for the Visitor Experience. I asked again. I offered to pay all extra expenses [such as the \$3,000 dry suit I'd need] myself. I don't remember Tim's exact response, but it was basically "Oh well, all right, stop asking and yes, you can dive". Were my hard-won & rather expensive underwater photos later used in the visitor centre? Yup.

Yippee. Viking dry suit purchased. Training with the dive team completed [under a frozen Lake Alta in the Remarkables near Queenstown], camera gear readied. Westerskov ready.

By the time I joined the dive team I'd already had three months in Antarctica, photographing in blizzards, in temperatures down to minus



50°C, spent three days at the Cape Crozier Emperor Penguin colony, and watched every one of my four main cameras [all top professional cameras, all “winterized”] break down in the cold [they were subsequently repaired back in New Zealand at the end of my first visit].

The Natural History New Zealand dive team was camped out on the fast ice by the snout of the Erebus Glacier Tongue when I joined them. The Erebus Glacier flows down the slopes of Mt Erebus and when it reaches the coast it disconnects from the island and floats out to sea for 10-16 kilometres or so, the tip breaking off to form bigish icebergs every now and then [three times in the last century].

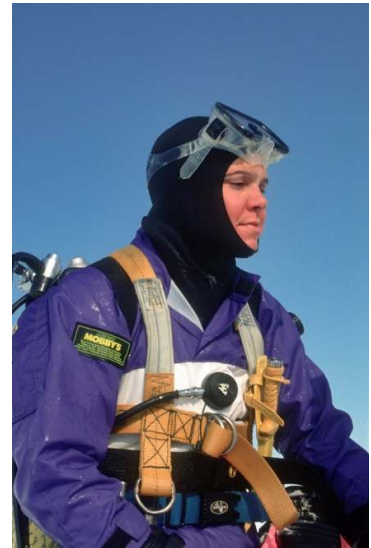
Fast ice is the continuous sheet of sea ice fixed to the land that forms a belt around Antarctica, anywhere from a few metres wide to many hundreds of kilometres wide. It is hard, stable, and does not move. You can travel safely over it. You can even land big planes on it. Beyond the fast ice is the pack ice, broken bits of sea ice [ice floes], moved around by wind and current.

Diving under the sea ice in Antarctica sounds cold [very cold], exciting and kinda romantic. And it is indeed all three. It also involves an awful lot of both stuff and stuffing around just to achieve those few precious minutes underwater. Apart from days when no diving was possible [snow falling, poor visibility above water, verging on “whiteout”], our entire day would be spent just preparing for the one dive that day, which eventually happened late in what would normally be the evening or even midnight [this was Antarctica, so the November sun was still in the sky at midnight].

My dive partner was Jeanie Ackley, still with her Canadian accent, though sounding more Kiwi every day. We dived through a hole shared at times with a big bull Weddell seal and the film crew’s ROV [remote operated vehicle]. Some helpful Americans from McMurdo Station had drilled two big holes through the fast ice next to each other so together they formed a figure-of-eight hole - big enough for divers, ROVs and Weddell seals, but not all three at once.

Not surprisingly, diving under the fast ice was like nothing I’d ever experienced before. Cold? Yes, that was a given. Seawater freezes at minus 1.8°C so that was the constant temperature under the sea ice. My Viking dry suit consisted of an outer skin of vulcanized rubber to keep the water out, and an inner bunny suit of snug insulation to keep me warm. The gloves also kept water out but were so cumbersome that it was impossible to manipulate all of my camera’s controls. The only bit of me in contact with the seawater were the parts of my face not covered either by my mask or the dry suit. So every dive there was an instant but brief hurt as my skin met water at minus 1.8 degrees. We were limited to 30-minute dives, at the end of which we weren’t exactly cold but weren’t exactly warm either.

Dropping down through our dive hole, I entered a world of cold, clarity, darkness - and wonder. The water under Antarctica’s fast ice from winter to early summer is possibly the clearest on Earth, but it was mostly so dark that it was like being suspended in liquid air on a dark night, unable to see much not lit either by our lights or by sunlight in places where sunlight was able to get through - cracks and holes in the ice and places where there was no snow covering the ice. A layer of snow on the sea ice effectively stops all light



getting through. But where the snow had been blown away [or scraped off] a beautiful blue light glowed, lighting the upside-down fairy castles of platelet ice that formed under the fast ice. Around our dive hole the underside of the ice was covered in a green scum of microscopic algae called diatoms.

As you probably know, krill [small shrimp-like animals] are the main food source in Antarctic seas for the baleen whales, seals, penguins, squid and many other animals. There's a lot of krill in Antarctic seas, over 300 trillion of them. Their combined weight is greater than the combined weight of all the 7,600,000,000 humans on Earth. The reason for telling you this is that the green scum of diatoms on and in the underside of the sea ice is what feeds the young krill over winter.

Where we were diving next to the terminal face of the Erebus Glacier Tongue the water was deep, hundreds of metres deep. Looking down, all I could see was blackness. Fish? None that I saw. Weddell seals? Not on the first dive, but on later dives. Anything else? Just a solitary jellyfish pulsing gently through the crystal clear dark water.

Cold? Very.

Clear? Possibly the clearest seawater on Planet Earth.

Somewhat weird? Yes.

Magic? Definitely.



6. "WIDE ANGLE & TELEPHOTO" WORKSHOP - Saturday 21st April

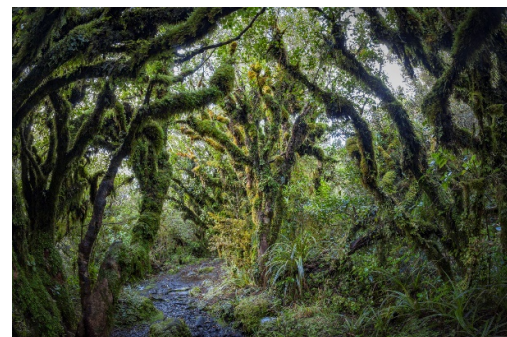
Have you ever wondered why some photographers are able to create such wonderfully diverse portfolios of high quality photos, with many different "looks", while your own portfolio may have some good images but perhaps not the diversity that you'd like?

There's probably a number of reasons, but one of the main ones is often a simple one – that these successful photographers use the lenses they have to full effect, that they've harnessed the power of varying their focal lengths. The different focal lengths from telephoto down through "normal" to wide-angle to super wide-angle and fisheye each have some things they can do and some they can't do. Each kind gives you a different look.

Imagine you are standing somewhere scenic [it doesn't really matter where: beach, mountains, city, village, London Bridge, Eiffel Tower, Serengeti savannah...], there isn't just one photo in front of you waiting to be lovingly captured by you and your camera – **there's probably several**. Knowing what the different focal lengths can and can't do allows you to capture more than one good image without even moving your feet. Quite possibly several. Knowing what your various lenses can and can't do will make you a much more productive [and therefore happier] photographer.

Sound good? If so, join me on Saturday 21st April and we'll spend the day exploring the many possibilities that open up when you fully harness what each of your lenses can do. Some of you tell me occasionally that you're feeling somewhat stale, photographically, and need some inspiration. For many of you this workshop could be the shot of inspiration that you need. No new gear needed, just new thinking and techniques. Leading to greatly improved portfolios.

Years ago I heard a story about how National Geographic chose their photographers from hordes that apply. I never found out if it was a true story or not, but it makes a lot of sense, so it might be. The story went that National Geographic didn't really want to see a portfolio where you showed say 30 good photos, each of a different subject or location. They were much more interested in



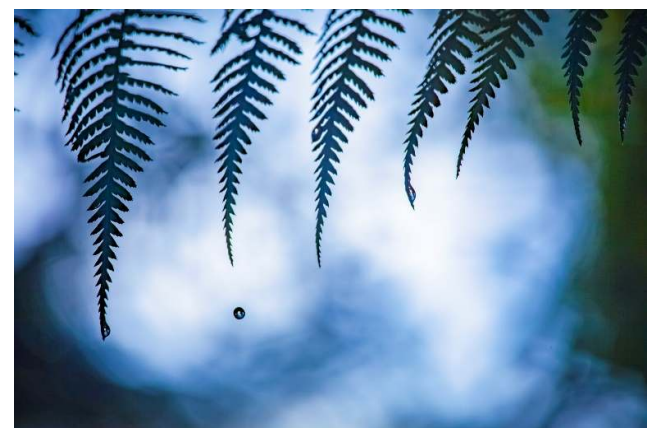
whether you could choose a subject or place and come back with 30 **different**, high quality photos of just the one subject or location. The latter takes considerably more skill than the first.

The reason for telling you this story is that good lens selection [when to use wide angle, when to use telephoto etc.] plus knowing how to use each lens type should be your ticket for a quantum leap to becoming a much more productive photographer.

I know that some of you have just the one lens, usually a zoom lens that goes from wide or semi-wide to telephoto. Rest assured, that's all you need, at least for the time being.

Join me?

Cost: The full course fee [which includes tuition, hand-outs, Vivienne's yummy catering, assignment and follow-up] is **\$295**, dropping to \$245 for Early Birds if you register by 13th April. Fulltime students with ID \$150.



7. 2018 PROGRAMME

APRIL

- **Saturday 21st April. "Wide Angle & Telephoto" workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

MAY

- Tuesday 1st May. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 20th May. "Photo Essentials" workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

JUNE

- Tuesday 5th June. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 9th June. "People" workshop.** Portraits, kids, families, street/travel, weddings. Full day plus follow-up.

JULY

- Tuesday 3rd July. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 8th July. "Landscapes" workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

AUGUST

- **Saturday 4th August. "Composition & Light" workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.
- Tuesday 7th August. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 25th August. "Getting started in Lightroom".** Half day.

SEPTEMBER

- Tuesday 4th September. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 23rd September. "Good photos, great photos – anytime, anywhere" workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

OCTOBER

- Tuesday 2nd October. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday-Sunday 13-14 October. "Great Photography Weekend" workshop.** Weekend + follow-up.

NOVEMBER

- Tuesday 6th November. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 17 November. "New worlds with your camera" workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

DECEMBER

- Tuesday 4th 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, assignment and follow-up evenings for full 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.

8. QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“...young people who are learning digital skills discover that the real challenge is coming up with an image that resonates, first of all, with yourself and hopefully, with an audience. They can learn all these new techniques and think that they’re easier to use, but **creating great images isn’t about the tools.**”

Jerry Uelsmann

<https://35mmphotographylover.wordpress.com/2013/04/10/jerry-uelsmann-the-legend-the-man-the-artist/>

9. PHOTOSHOPPING, PHOTO RESTORATION

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

10. INVITATION TO ALL CAMERA CLUBS & GROUPS

If your club or group might be interested in hosting one of my presentations [such as “The Power of Photography”, “Wildlife Photographer: Adventures from The Field Diaries”, “Whales, Sharks, Albatrosses & Other Friends”] - or workshops - or “Field Trip + Photo Critique” days, please get in touch.

11. COACHING, 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.

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 you have me for the whole day.

12. 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. I mentor both established professional photographers and amateurs.** Minimum of 6 months. Talk to Kim about what would work best for you.



Photos of Kim by Malcolm Macfarlane & Tony Whitehead

13. KIM’S PHOTOS & COFFEE EVENINGS

We meet on the first Tuesday of each month [every month of the year 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** [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 news ideas and tips.** There’s a wide range of interests and abilities – so for those of you who have not been before, you’re very unlikely to feel out of your depth. Bring photos if you wish, but there’s no obligation to bring any. Some people do, some don’t.

The next one will be on **Tuesday 1st May**, starting 7.00pm. 18 Greerton Road, Gate Pa, Tauranga. Free, but please book by email.

14. ABOUT KIM

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

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