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# Newsletter from Kim Westerskov

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## Newsletter #85 – June 2020

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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. HELLO AGAIN

Well, they were definitely an interesting few months, weren't they? Hopefully, the negatives were tempered by the positives many of us found, such as time to do those things we were going to do when we had more time, slowing down, family, home, baking [I had almost forgotten how good homemade wholemeal bread straight out of the oven tasted] ...

So, let's get going again with newsletters, workshops, and the "Photos & Coffee" evenings. I've rescheduled most of the initial 2020 workshop programme into the next five months, July to November. It will be a busy five months. But a good five months.

The photos on the first few pages were all taken over the last few months, mostly since the last newsletter.



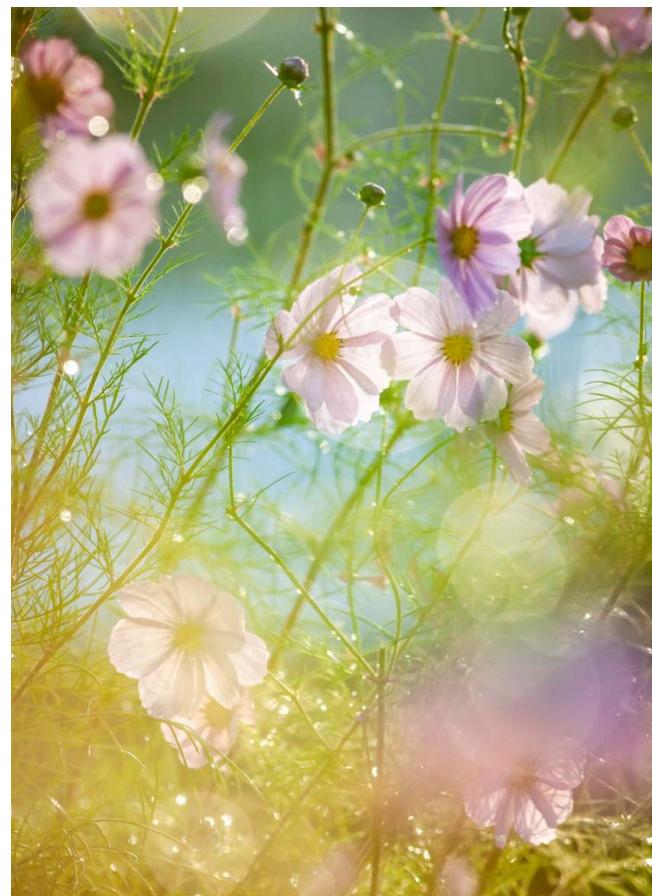
## 2. WHAT ARE YOU BRINGING TO YOUR PHOTOS?

Here's a good question for all us photographers: "What am I bringing to this photo?"

Pretty much everywhere there are good photos to be [1] found or [2] or created or [3] a combination of found and created. "Found" is OK but is usually only a start, if you want to be a creative photographer. A creative photographer finds something worth photographing and then goes about adding their own magic. Creating their version, their photo.

Nowadays it's hard to not get a halfway-decent photo every time you press the shutter. Even just Auto and Autofocus will give you good results – technically – pretty much every time.

And, secondly, Planet Earth is such an absolutely wonderful place that you don't have to put much effort into being "a photographer". Just point your camera in the general direction of something interesting, press the shutter, and .... Bob's your uncle ..... you will have a decently exposed, sharp photo. Not hard. Not hard at all.



So, if everyone with a digital camera or smartphone can take technically good photos – mostly because their camera does most of the work – then how are you and I going to stand out from the crowd? How are you and I going to make sure that we are not just one of the billions of people with good digital cameras or smartphones on the planet grabbing technically-reasonable photos?

It's certainly not hard for anyone and everyone to point their camera in the general direction of something interesting. On trips overseas, the incidence rises to plague status.

Can we do better than this? Of course. Obviously. Silly question, Kim! Should we? Of course.

Perhaps ask yourself these five questions before pressing the shutter:

1. **Best place?** Am I standing in about the right place for a good photo of whatever has taken my photographic fancy: those giraffes, the pyramids, the Eiffel Tower, a stained-glass church window in Estonia, that dramatic landscape?
2. **Best moment?** Have I got the timing about right? Would later or tomorrow be better? Just before sunset perhaps?
3. **Best focal length?** Have I got the right lens on for this particular photo [not just the lens that happens to be on]? Wide-angle? Telephoto?
4. **Best composition?** Have I composed it well? Am I making the main subject shine? Am I carefully leaving out those distracting rubbish bins or tourists or branches?
5. **Best camera settings?**

Are your answers to these five questions often “They’ll do – I’m in a bit of a hurry [I’m a busy person, you know!]. The subject is in the middle. Whatever lens is on will do. It’s on ‘Auto’ or whatever settings I used for the previous photo”. If so, can you really expect your photos to be great, or even good? The short answer has two letters and begins with “N”. The longer answer is “Not Really”.

So, what’s the takeaway from this? Simply ask yourself these 5 questions when you’re next about to take a photo. The list for really good photos is a lot longer than these five main points, but answer these five and you’ll be well on the way.



### 3. THE FIVE BEST QUESTIONS

So, to summarize, check these five before pressing the shutter:

- Best place?
- Best moment?
- Best focal length?
- Best composition?
- Best camera settings?



#### 4. PAM THOMSON – FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER



It's easy to tell that Pam Thomson is a people person. The people in Pam's photos look relaxed, natural, themselves. Not awkwardly-posed studio portraits, but living, breathing people, living their lives. Quiet and reflective, at ease, "themselves" - or revellers at music festivals - or anywhere in between. With the spontaneity, the "moment", of a candid but also with the technical qualities of a carefully composed studio portrait.

The deceptively-simple "candid" look of many of her photos probably comes from her easy rapport with people and her friendly manner. Pam's abilities, love of photography, and drive have enabled her to move from keen amateur to semi-professional with ease. "Before a wedding, I am nervous, but then I somehow just get in the zone and the day goes so quickly, and I get such a buzz out of it".



But it's not just people. Sunflowers, gannets, and landscapes are captured with the same enthusiasm and confidence that are the hallmarks of her people photos. Her best landscapes seem more like paintings from the romantic era of North American landscape painters than photos.

I've had a close involvement with Pam for some years now, mentoring her for the last two years. This involves time together in front of a computer screen, photography out in the field, phone calls [Pam lives in Te Awamutu and I live in Tauranga] and emails. Lots of emails. Pam's current record is eight emails in a day. Emails with questions, ideas, thoughts, and "What do you think of these photos I took today?" Pam's energy, commitment, and ability will take her a long way. It already has.



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Photographer/Pam-Thomson-Photography-106939990774015/>







## 5. Kim's revised 2020 PROGRAMME

### JULY

- **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July. "Close Up Magic" workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.
- Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July. "Photo Essentials" workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

### AUGUST

- Tuesday 4th August. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> August. "Slow, smooth & wonderful – long exposures" workshop.** Full day + follow-up.
- **Saturday 22 August. "Great people photos" workshop.** Portraits, kids, families, candid, travel, events, weddings. Full day plus follow-up

### SEPTEMBER

- Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September. "Photo Impressionism & Photo Art" workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.
- **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September. "Landscapes & Seascapes" photo workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

### OCTOBER

- Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October. "Composition & Light" photo workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.
- **Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> October. "Even more exciting new techniques" photo workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

### NOVEMBER

- **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November. "Good photos, great photos – anytime, anywhere" photo workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.
- Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.

### DECEMBER

- Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December. "Photos & Coffee" informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.

One day workshops are from 9.00 am – 5.00 pm

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

- **One day workshops:** \$295 – or \$245 for Early Birds if you register by 10 days before the workshop. Fulltime students with ID \$145.

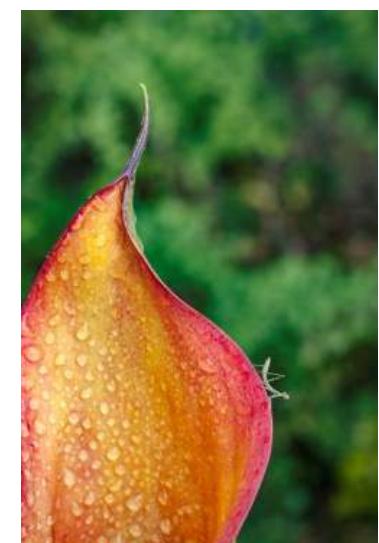
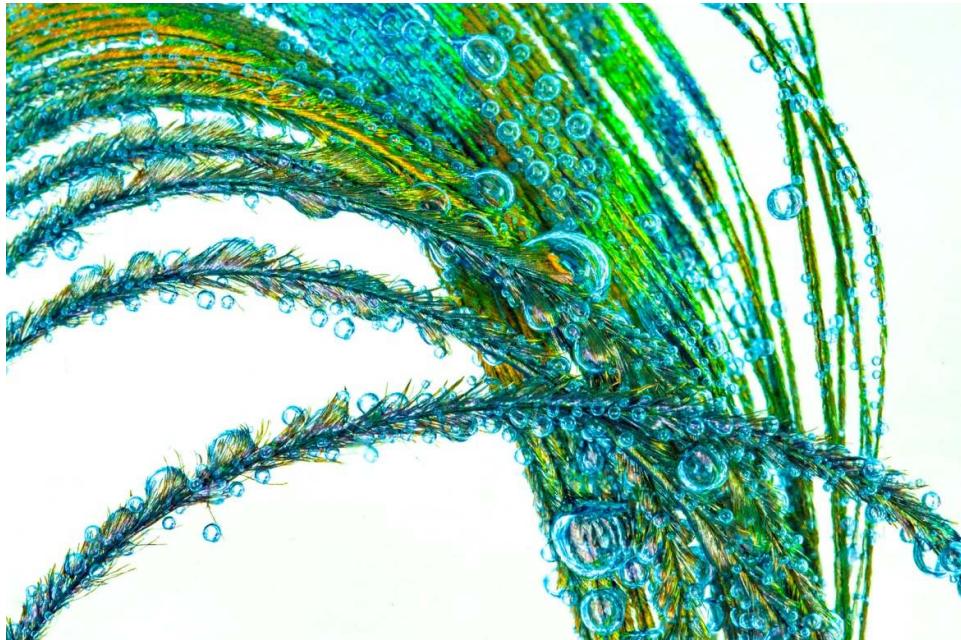
## 6. QUOTE OF THE MONTH

**"Photography is the tool I use to become a happier person"**

Anne McKinnell: photographer, writer, and nomad.

**7. "CLOSE UP PHOTOGRAPHY – WITH OR WITHOUT A MACRO LENS"**  
**Workshop - Sunday 12 July**

Intimate Encounters with our amazing world  
- finding magic, creating magic.



Many of you will really enjoy this workshop, I think. When I first ran it a few years ago I got very enthusiastic comments afterward. One of the photographers, Hazel Ellis, took the techniques she'd learned, found some flowering Cosmos [just like we'd been photographing in Viv's garden here], added a Monarch butterfly caterpillar, and the resulting photo earned her a Highly Commended in the world's largest and most prestigious plant and flower photo competition, the **International Garden Photographer of the Year** - run by Kew Gardens in London. Hazel's photo is here <https://igpoty.com/competition-entries/cewb-12341274/> Hazel told me: "If it wasn't for that workshop I would never have been crawling around inside the plants in my garden trying out all the things I learned with you".

A whole new world opens up for you when you & your camera get up close and personal with the world we live in. I've been exploring both documentary ["real"] and creative [artistic/impressionist] close-up photography for some time now. On March 29 I'll run the third "Close Up Photography" workshop. The good news – as well as the fact that it's rewarding and fun - is that you don't need to own a special "macro lens". For most readers, you already have lenses that can get close enough to enter the wonderful and exciting world of close up.

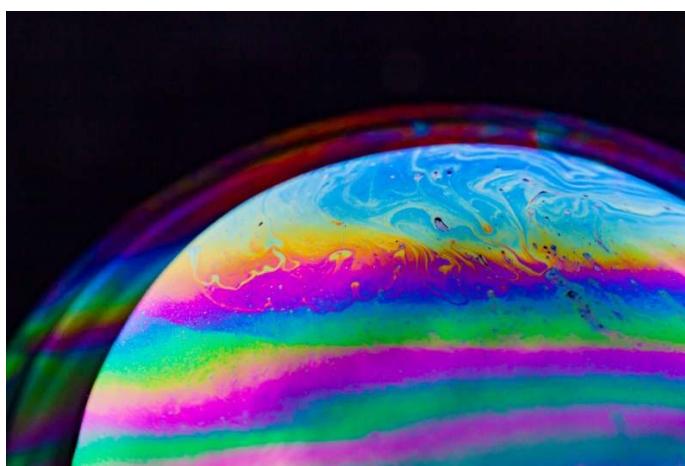
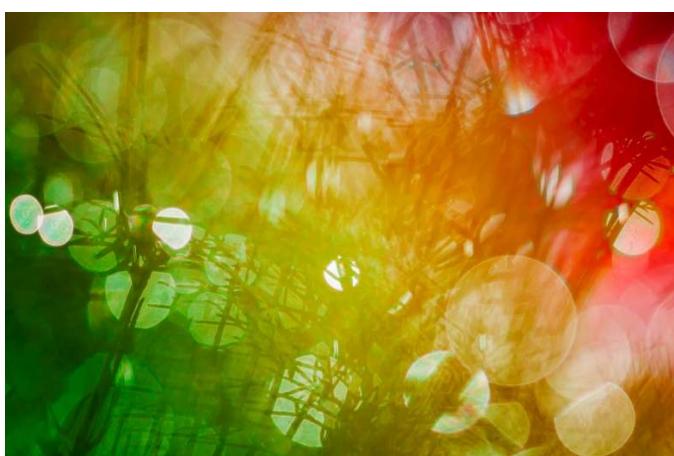
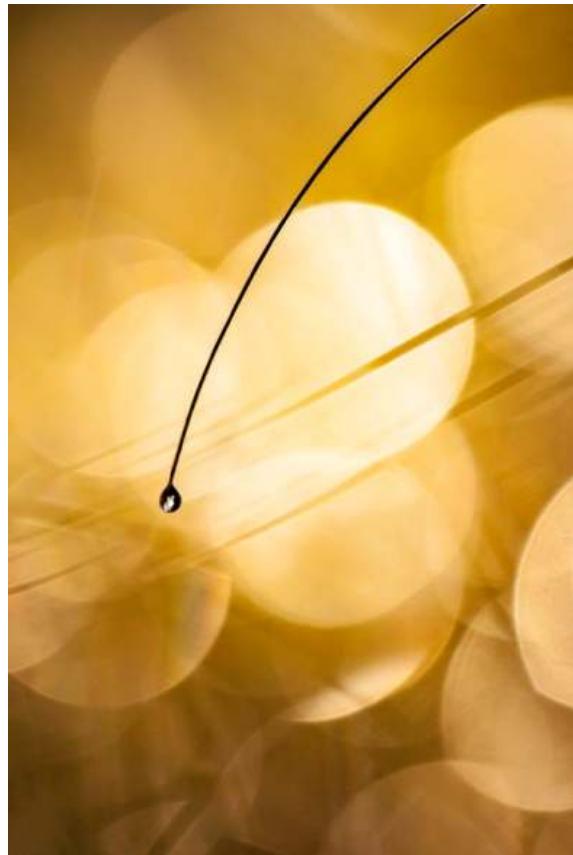
The workshop will, first of all, introduce you to the principles of close up photography – and to the technical stuff. Then we'll get on to finding magic and creating magic. **All of the accompanying photos were taken here on our property [where Anne and Gareth and Viv and I live], all within 20 metres of where you will be sitting – and photographing - in the workshop studio.** I will take you, step by step, through how I got these photos [and more] - and then in the afternoon, it will be hands-on. Cameras in hand, we will find magic and we will create magic. You will go home inspired and with your head buzzing with ideas and techniques. It should be a lot of fun.

"What level is this workshop for?" Any level. All levels.

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July** 9.00 am – 5.00 pm 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, yummy catering, assignment, and follow-up] **\$295** - or **\$245** for Early Birds if you register before 4 July. Fulltime students with ID **\$145**.





## 8. “PHOTO ESSENTIALS” Workshop – Saturday 25 July

- Just starting out?
- Still on “Auto”?
- Just got a new camera?
- Not getting photos you’re happy with?
- Been photographing for a while, but still not “on top of it”?
- Not very confident with your current camera?

If you’re answering “Yes” to any of these questions, then the “Photo Essentials” workshop is probably exactly what you need. Aimed at beginner and intermediate photographers, you’ll come away much more confident about your photography. For those of you who have been photographing for quite some time but never really felt you were “on top of it”, we’ll cover all the basics that you probably should have learned when starting but didn’t [or have since forgotten] - and then move on to making you a much more competent and confident photographer. You’ll finish the workshop a much better photographer. And a more relaxed, smiling one.



### Topics we'll cover include:

1. The myths about photography
2. The 4 things that hold most photographers back
3. Digital workflow
4. Composition
5. The different kinds of light
6. KIM’S TRIANGLE: Head, Heart & Technical
7. EXPOSURE TRIANGLE: Aperture, Shutter Speed, ISO
8. DEPTH OF FIELD TRIANGLE: Aperture, Distance, Focal Length
9. Lenses. Which is best for any particular subject/situation.
- 10 “Spot the shot”
11. Camera modes [Auto, Program, Manual, Aperture Priority, etc]
12. Introduction to travel, landscape and people photography

### Handouts:

1. “Before Taking the Photo – Checklist”
2. “Checklist for Critiquing Photos”
3. “Elements of a Good Photo”
4. Depth of field - the three amigos



**Cost:** Full course fee [which includes tuition, hand-outs, yummy catering, assignment, and follow-up] **\$295** - or **\$245** for Early Birds [if you register before 15<sup>th</sup> July].  
Fulltime students with ID **\$150**.



## **9. “MENTORING BY KIM”**

Mentoring individual photographers to the best of my ability is something I enjoy doing and take very seriously. However it is very time-intensive, so I’m only able to “officially” mentor a few photographers at any one time. I have just a few places still open for this year. For details, see [http://kimwesterskov.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Newsletter\\_83\\_9-March-2020\\_v3-.pdf](http://kimwesterskov.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Newsletter_83_9-March-2020_v3-.pdf) or contact Kim.

## **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. We would normally meet on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July, but I’ve had to change it to **14<sup>th</sup> July** starting at 7.00 pm. 18 Greerton Road, Gate Pa, Tauranga. See you then?

## **11. PRIVATE TUITION**

Yes, like you I’m usually busy doing “other stuff” too, but I can nearly always fit private tuition in, and I am very happy to do so. Two hours \$150.

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.

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.

## **12. 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].

## **13. INVITATION TO 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 13 years now
- Five First Prizes in the BBC “Wildlife Photographer of the Year” competition, the Olympics of nature photography worldwide.
- 18 books published [international distributions] – written and photographed by Kim.
- <https://www.sunlive.co.nz/news/220936-kim-westerskov-award-winning-photographer.html>
- [http://kimwesterskov.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/f11\\_Magazine\\_March-2015\\_Westerskov\\_2\\_4MB.pdf](http://kimwesterskov.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/f11_Magazine_March-2015_Westerskov_2_4MB.pdf)

