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# Newsletter from Kim Westerskov

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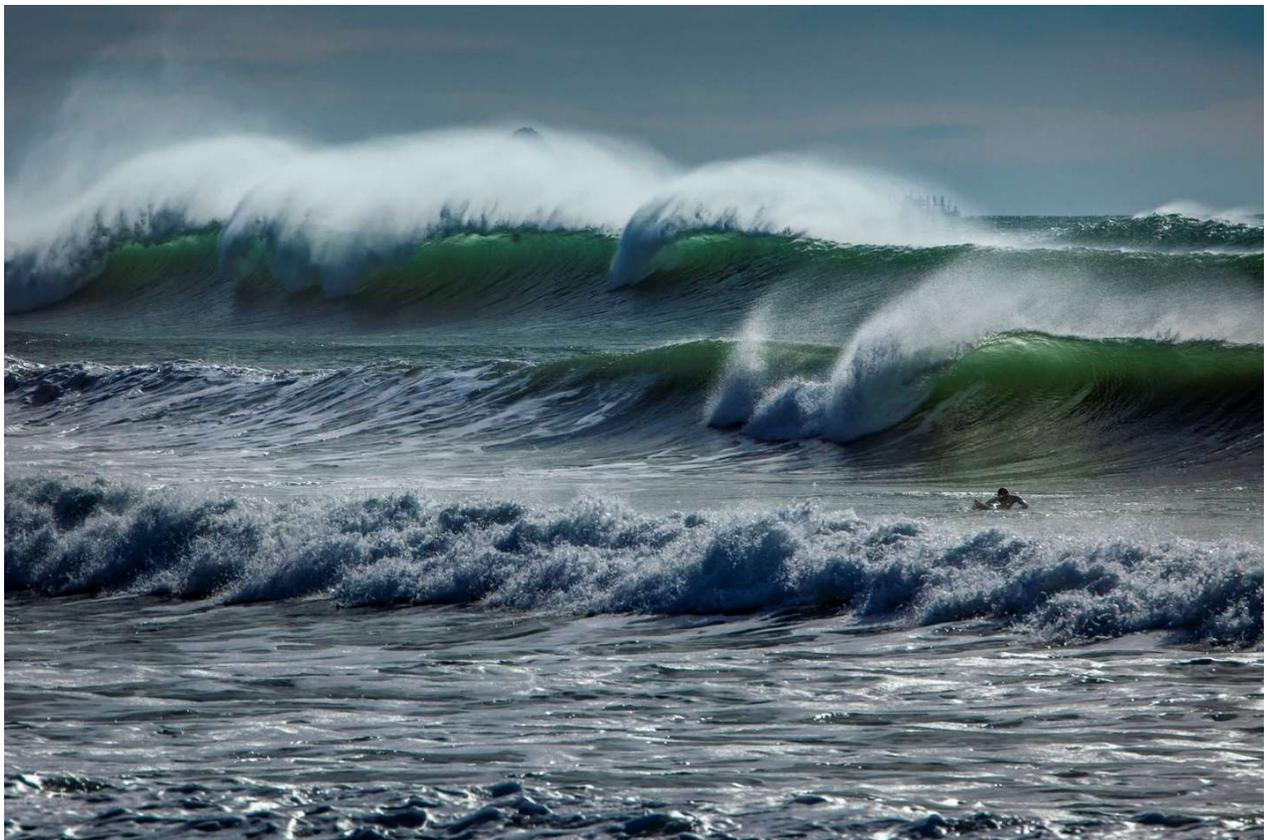
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## Newsletter #97 – July-August 2021

1. Maybe Plan "B" then
2. How did you get that photo?
3. "Soul in your Photography" workshop – 7<sup>th</sup> August
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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.



Mount Maunganui, 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021

## 1. MAYBE PLAN “B” THEN

It is often - though not always - a good idea to go out with clear photographic goals in mind. I quite often do. But I've also learned over the years that Plan B [or Plan C] often works better than Plan A. Two examples:

1. Many years ago, I bought a small house by the river at Brighton, a seaside town south of Dunedin, for \$1,200. The owner had wanted \$1,500 but we got on well and he said “\$1,200 will do”. Sounds strange to us in 2021, doesn't it? I sold it years later for a princely \$10,500. But back to the story. It was July. I'd figured out that a new moon would be just above the horizon at dawn with the sweep of Ocean View Beach in the foreground. I've never been a morning person, and this was midwinter in Otago. Still, there I was in the pre-dawn blackness [and cold], standing on Big Rock [a headland between the townships of Brighton and Ocean View] with camera and tripod. Plan A was the new moon in the predawn sky to the left of Blackhead and with the sweeping surf and beach as the foreground.

Plan A never happened. I never saw the new moon that morning. It was exactly where it was meant to be, but it was so thin that I couldn't see it at the time. Looking at my slides later, I did indeed find the moon, but as far as I was concerned, Plan A was not working at the time. No worry. The sky was clear, and as the sun rose over the faraway hills, it backlit a sea mist hanging over the sand dunes and coastline. Lovely. And there was no wind, so the ever-present Otago waves rolled in, blue and clean and lovely. A little later, a father and son walked along the beach towards me, well wrapped up against the winter morning cold. I waited until they were in just the right place and pressed the shutter. That photo has been used many times over the years and is still one of my favourites.



So there never was any formal “Plan B” [the photo above] or “Plan C” [Father and son]. They just evolved. Life and photography are like that, if you keep an open mind, enjoy whatever is unfolding in front of you, and grab whatever serendipity sends your way.



2. Pam contacted me two weeks ago, asking “Can we go and do some street photography? What about Mount Maunganui? I’m heading to Rarotonga next week and want to practice street photography, photographing people I don’t know. We could go to the CBD, but we can do street photography at the Mount as well as visiting the beach, can’t we? I love going to the beach” Sounded good to me. We drove slowly along the main street of Mount Maunganui, noting that there were indeed lots of people and lots of street photography possibilities, and kept driving. Let’s check out the beach first.

So if street photography was Plan A, then we never achieved Plan A. Plan B [the waves, the surfing] looked far too good. A serious swell was rolling in, mostly smooth and glassy, caressed by an offshore wind. Three hours later we were still there. You can do street photography any day of the year, but waves this good only come along occasionally. If the waves were Plan B, then flat whites and a very late eggs benedict at a nearby café was Plan C. Plan A? Another time, perhaps. [Canon 5D Mark 2, 300mm lens, handheld, motor drive, image stabilizing on, ISO 320-400, f9 and f13, Aperture Priority, 1/2500 – 1/5000 second].



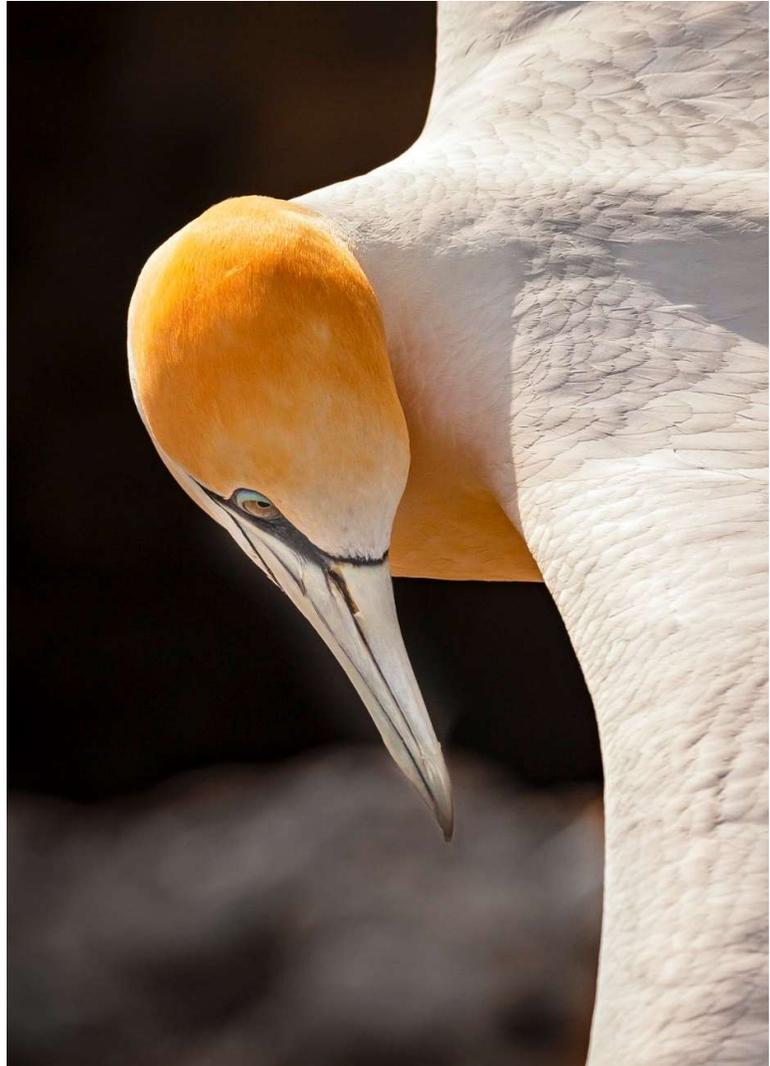


## 2. HOW DID YOU GET THAT PHOTO, KIM?

I'm always happy to hear from readers, including getting ideas for future newsletters or workshops. Keith contacted me a few weeks ago, asking "How did you get that photo of the gannet looking over its shoulder?"

It's a photo I like a lot, and I'm happy to tell you how I got it. I'll tell you in bullet points [probably quicker that way 😊]:

- Be somewhere with lots of gannets. Muriwai, in this case. Not in winter [they are not there then]
- Spend a lot of time there. Not a hardship, as it's a wonderful place, not only for the gannets but the surrounding cliffs and beaches. An excellent motor camp too – nice, new and welcoming.
- Don't arrive planning to just get one kind of photo. Have all your lenses, all your options.
- Use your telephoto lens, autofocus, image stabilization, motor drive, follow lots of gannets coming in, hovering, landing, greeting each other, bickering, taking off ...
- Take lots of photos. Lots.
- As always, pick out the best ones later.
- Don't be afraid to crop strongly. Our cameras are so good nowadays that any sharp photo can be cropped strongly and still look fine. I did not take this photo as a vertical. It's a horizontal [landscape] photo that I cropped to vertical later.
- As always, backgrounds matter. A lot. They can – and often do – make or break a photo. At Muriwai, you usually have the options of using the sky or sea as background - or the shadowed cliffs of nearby Motutara Island. The shadowed cliffs are what this photo uses as a background. Dark, not quite featureless and black, but nearly so. Pretty much perfect.
- As always, this photo [and every other one] goes into Photoshop [or Lightroom, Luminar, ON1, etc.] for cropping and tidying up.
- So why was this gannet looking "over its shoulder"? Its nest, partner, and egg were down there somewhere. It was quite possibly looking down at them. Or at something else that took its attention. Who knows? I'll take it. Wildlife photography is often like that. You can research and plan all you like [never a bad idea], but always stay open to whatever else is happening that you might not have been expecting.
- So, that's pretty much all there is to it, really. Simple. Thanks for asking, Keith.



### 3. “POWERFUL PHOTOGRAPHY, GREAT PHOTOGRAPHY – SOUL IN YOUR PHOTOS” workshop – Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August

Some years ago, a photographer put this to me: “There’s something missing in my photographs, Kim, but I can’t put a finger on it. What is it that’s missing and what can I do about it?” I thought about it for quite some time and eventually came up with the idea that good photography – as with the best examples of other arts – has what I call “soul”.

*Do all great photos have ‘soul’? “Yes, I think so”.*

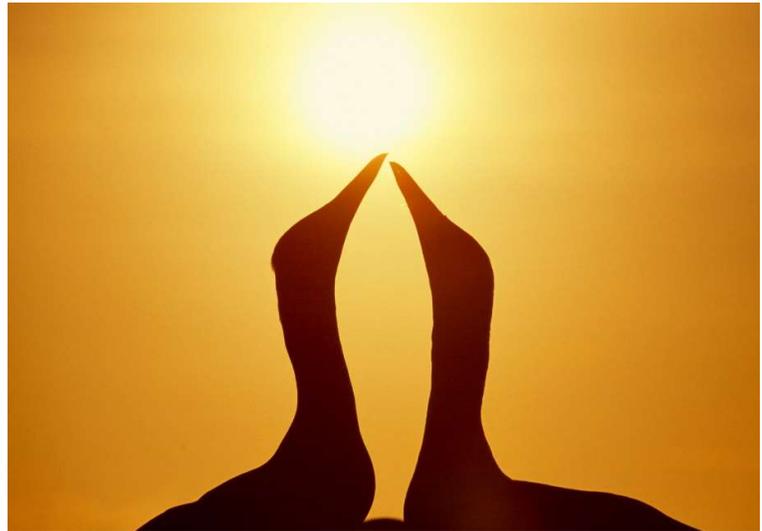
*Is that what makes them great photos? “Yes, I think so”. Fine. In that case, what is soul, and how can I get soul into my photos?*

*“I’m glad you asked” [the same stalling-for-time answer that politicians use when asked awkward questions.*

I then pondered this for a long time. Eventually, one morning, as sleep slowly gave way to waking, the following came to me: In a photographic context, “soul” is the indefinable essence at the centre of great art, at the centre of great music, at the centre of great photography, an elusive something that causes the photo to elicit an emotional response in the viewer, a connectedness, an “Ah-hah!” of recognition, of familiarity, of “Yes, that matters!”. The world [or at least some aspect of it] suddenly looks clearer, brighter, fuller, richer. Connections new and maybe deeper are apparent.

Yes Kim, fine, but what about technique? “That helps, but soul trumps everything”.

This workshop is the result of those three years leading up to the first “Soul Workshop” plus everything I’ve learned since. It is an exploration of what soul in photography is and – importantly - how to get it.



I don't think I've ever met anyone who didn't want some magic in their photos. Sure, we all take normal ["real"] photos, but we also want to take or create photos with that something extra that sets them apart from the rest, something that gives them an emotional or personal connection, that makes you smile or makes other people go "Wow!" Images that stay in your mind and heart. The ones you want to hang on your wall.

But how to get such photos? That's what this somewhat unusual workshop will explore. I've only ever run it once before, back in 2014, and it was the best-attended workshop to date – we had a full house! "So why haven't you run it since then, Kim?" I'm not sure, but in August I'll run it for a second time. It is the least technical workshop of the many I run but for many people it's possibly the most important. There won't be much about f-stops, aperture, or histograms - but there will be a lot about what makes GREAT photos.

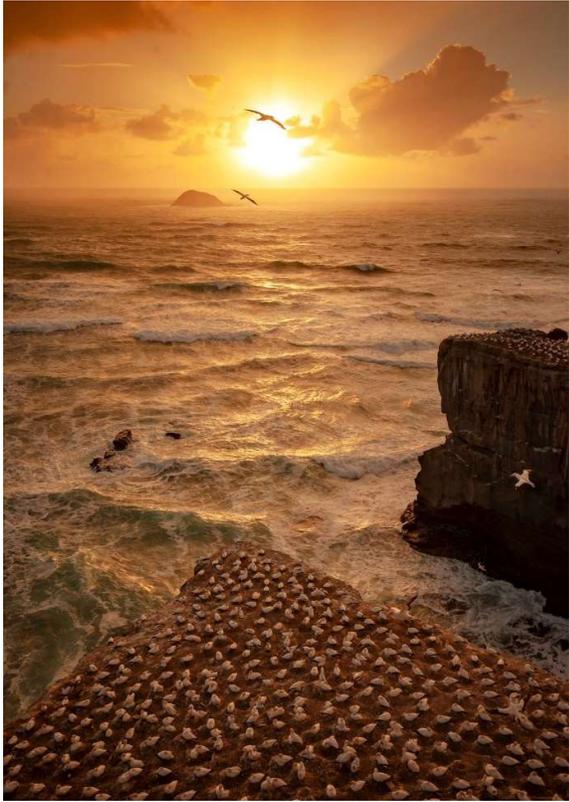
We will examine in detail several important topics, each closely related to the others:

- \*\* Great photography, powerful photography. What it is. How to achieve it.
- \*\* Soul and emotion in photography.
- \*\* "Seeing" photos - "How to see the photographic possibilities in what's in front of me?"
- \*\* Creativity. What it is and how to tap into it.
- \*\* Atmosphere/mood in photography. This will include some technical stuff, but not too much

**Part 1:** Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August 9.00 -5.00 pm. Workshop  
**Part 2:** Assignment – in your own time over 3-4 weeks.  
**Part 3:** Evaluation and critiquing of your photos. We meet again for a few hours at a time that suits everybody.

**Cost:** Full course fee [which includes workshop, follow-up, hand-outs, and yummy catering] \$295 [or \$245 Early Bird – if booked by 31 July]. Full-time students with ID \$145.





## 4. "EXCITING NEW TECHNIQUES" photo workshop Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September

Is your photography in a bit of a rut? Would you like to create some new and different "Wow!" photos? Would you like some clever new ideas to get "Honours" at your camera club? Want to try some new techniques? Want to lift your photography to a new level?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then this is the workshop I've designed for you. In fact, I've been working on it for several years now: researching &, looking for new "Wow!" ideas that you might like. And then experimenting, testing the ideas, and their potential for a workshop.

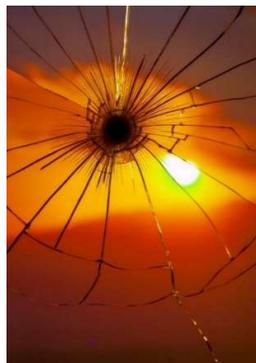
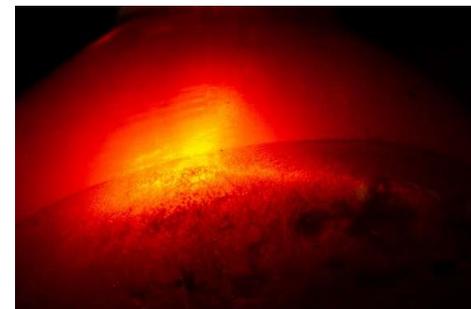
We'll explore the exciting possibilities of using frozen floral, botanical, and other subjects, out-of-focus "how on Earth did you get that??" photos using unexpected materials and techniques, mirrors [broken and unbroken], crystal glass balls, soap bubbles, effervescence, bokeh from fairy lights, and many more ideas. All you need to do is bring yourself and your camera. I've already got the frozen flowers, the unexpected materials, the fairy lights, prepared the broken mirrors and gathered together the other stuff we'll need: the crystal glass balls [flown in from USA], a variety of mirrors, special soap for bubbles [also flown in from USA], effervescence [from my local supermarket], feathers, and more.

This workshop will be very different from my other workshops. We'll spend some time looking at a variety of good and great new ideas and techniques for you, and then - much earlier in the day than usual - **I'll set up the equipment and you'll bring out your cameras and get photographing.** You'll go home with your memory card full of exciting new photos. Promise!

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September. 9.00am – 5.00pm.**

**Cost:** Full course fee [which includes tuition, hand-outs & yummy catering - **\$295 or \$245 Early Bird if you book before 2<sup>nd</sup> September.** Full-time students with ID **\$145.**

"Will this be that same workshop as last year?" I hear some of you asking. Answer: It will be a mix of brand-new techniques plus tried and true ones from last year.



## 5. Kim's 2021 PROGRAMME

### FEBRUARY

- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February – the first “Photos & Coffee” meeting of the year
- Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> February “Photo Walk” at McLaren Falls Park 9.00 am to 12.00 pm
- **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> February. “Beach Magic Photography” workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.



### MARCH

- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 28<sup>st</sup> March. “Close Up Magic” workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

### APRIL

- Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April. “Slow, Smooth & Wonderful – Long Exposures” workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.



### MAY

- Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May. “Good photos, Great Photos – Anytime, Anywhere” workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.



### JUNE

- Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> June. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June. “Photo Essentials” workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

### JULY

- Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> July. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> July. “Photo Impressionism & Photo Art” workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

### AUGUST

- Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 7<sup>h</sup> August. “Soul in your Photos” workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

### SEPTEMBER

- Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> September. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September. “Exciting New Techniques” photo workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

### OCTOBER

- **Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> October. “Great People Photos” workshop.** Portraits, kids, families, candid, travel, events, weddings. Full day plus follow-up.
- Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.

### NOVEMBER

- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> November. “Black and White Magic Photography” workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

### DECEMBER

- Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.

\*\* One-day workshops 9.00 am – 5.00 pm

**\*\* COST: One-day workshops:** \$295 – or \$245 for Early Birds if you register by 10 days before the workshop. Full-time students with ID \$145. Course fees **include tuition, detailed hand-outs, yummy catering, plus [for most workshops] an assignment and follow-up evening.**

## 6. 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 will be on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August**, starting at 7.00 pm. 18 Greerton Road, Tauranga.

## 7. 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 is the most popular option. It 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.

## 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].

## ABOUT KIM

- **Loves photography and loves inspiring, guiding, and supporting photographers.**
- Over 30 years as a professional photographer and teaching photography for 14 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>
- [https://b29454bb-bd92-42b1-ae8-30f256446a3e.filesusr.com/ugd/337e9d\\_1a35f441345e4c4fb57d03976cdc88ca.pdf](https://b29454bb-bd92-42b1-ae8-30f256446a3e.filesusr.com/ugd/337e9d_1a35f441345e4c4fb57d03976cdc88ca.pdf)