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Newsletter from Kim Westerskov

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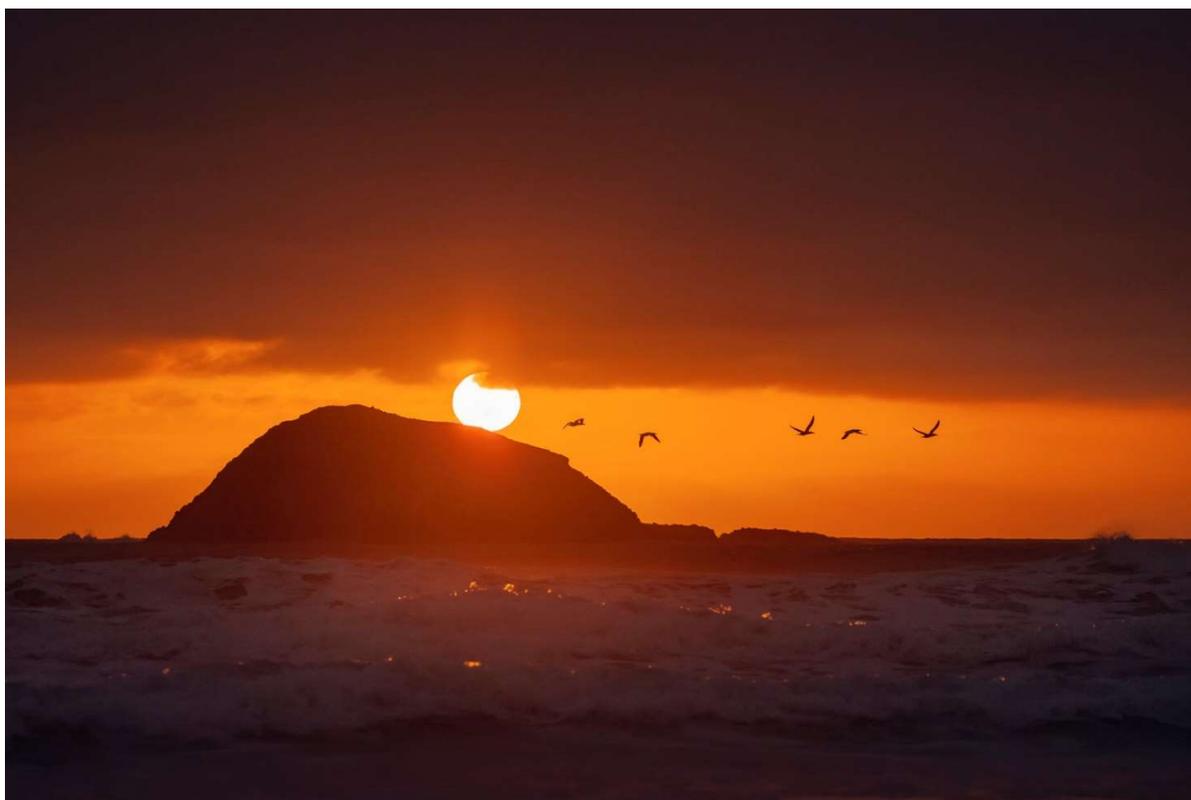
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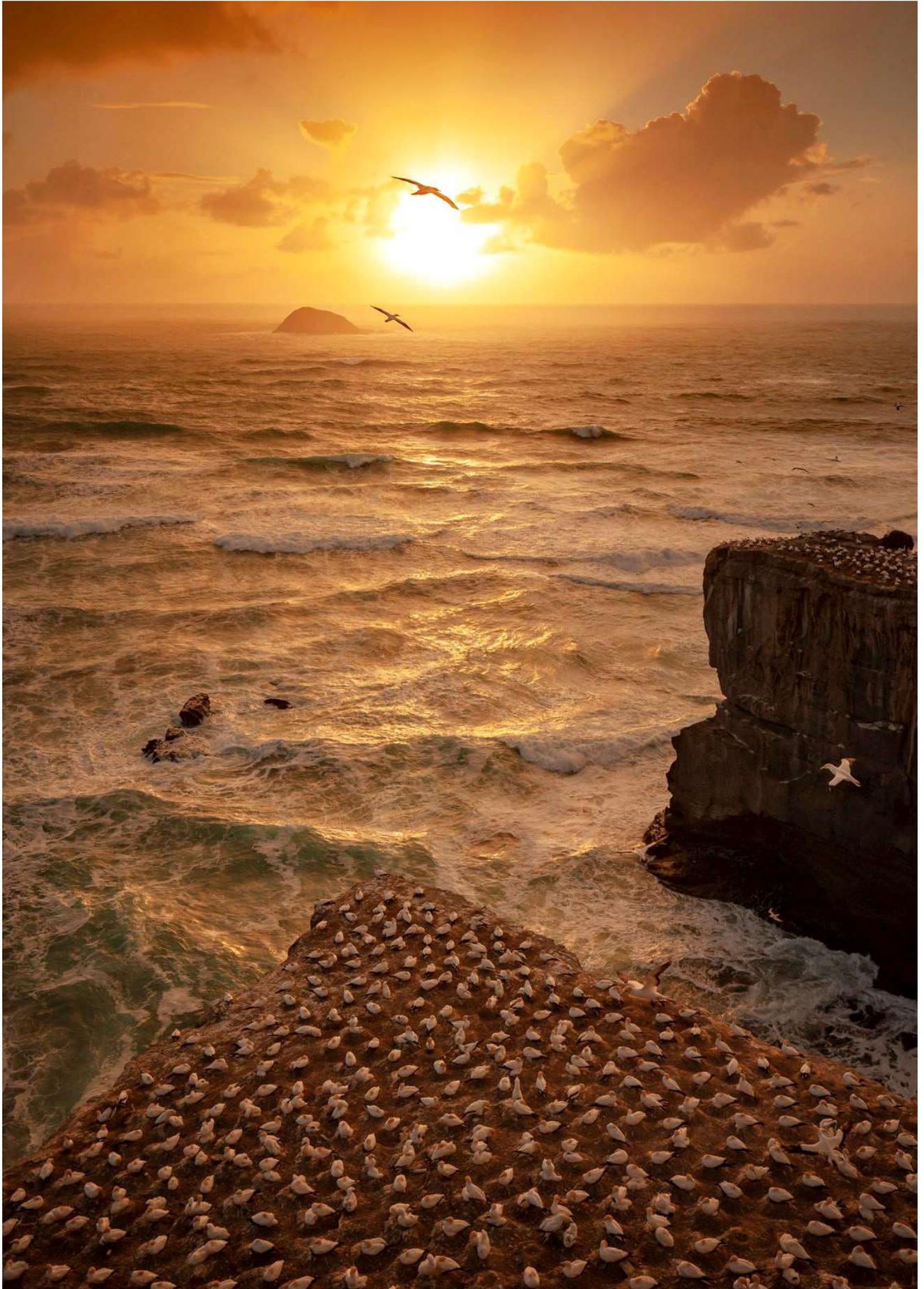
Newsletter #91 – February 2021

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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.



Gannets returning home to Muriwai at dusk. Oaia Island in background.



1. My “MURIWAI TURNER SUNSET”

Sometimes life is magic. Sometimes it all comes together, wonderfully. My “Muriwai Turner Sunset” was one of those times. As the sun sank lower and lower into a golden haze of sea mist and occasional cloud, the scene in front of me went from wonderful to something even better than wonderful.

Below me and to my right over a thousand gannet pairs were welcoming the next generation. It was the first week of December and some had young chicks tucked under them, others were still incubating their eggs. There’s a pleasing symmetry or pattern to gannet colonies as each nest is just a few centimetres beyond the pecking range of neighbours. Incoming gannets soared in, wheeled, hovered, and landed in the clear, fresh sea air. Beyond the gannet colony, a turbulent sea rolled, heaved and rumbled shoreward.

In the sundrenched distance, 1.6 kilometres offshore, lay Oaia Island, the original home of the Muriwai gannets. By 1975-76 they had outgrown Oaia Island and first nested on the flat top of Motutara Island [at the right in the photo]. At high tide, Motutara Island is indeed an island. At low tide, it’s a sheer-sided rock stack that you can walk around the base of.

I’ve been a photographer all my life, but also have a fine arts background and draw much inspiration from artists such as Vincent van Gogh and J.M.W. Turner, the English artist who became known as “The Painter of Light”. For Turner, his paintings were not just about the subject, but also about the light, the mood, the motion, the drama, the story. My kind of painter. He was well ahead of his time, eccentric and brilliant. Among his considerable output were deeply atmospheric sunsets, some made even more dramatic by an event on the other side of the world. When the Tambora volcano in Indonesia erupted in 1815, the volcanic ash and gas spewed into the atmosphere travelled around the world, scattering the sunlight and producing bright red and orange sunsets for the next three years. Turner was among the artists who painted dramatic sunsets during those years.

As the sun sank lower and lower in the hazy but vibrant air, I felt I was in a Turner sunset. But even better. My one had not only a brilliantly-atmospheric sunset and turbulent sea [Turner also painted many dramatic seas] but also thousands of gannets. “It doesn’t get any better than this” I realized.

2. 2021 – YOUR BEST YEAR YET?

There’s no good reason why 2021 can’t be your best photographic year ever – if you want it to be. Obviously, it won’t be the year you photograph the Pyramids or the Eiffel Tower or lions in the Serengeti, but so what? 2021 **can be** the year that you explore what is for many the very best country on Planet Earth – Aotearoa New Zealand. Middle Earth. Our place. Home. The country that – before Covid-19 – people flocked to from around the world because they had been told – or knew, or seen on the net – that it was one of the most photogenic [and friendly] places on Earth.

Apart from the opportunity to slow down and see our own country, what else is going to be good about 2021? For starters, the equipment is the best ever [the best quality, the widest selection, more affordable than ever], and the opportunities for learning new stuff are also the best ever [clubs, workshops, tuition, books, magazines, online]. And



there are great ways of sharing and showcasing your photos too, of connecting with like-minded souls and learning from them.

So as we dive headlong into the cool, fresh waters of 2021, how do we make it our best year ever? Longtime readers of this newsletter may have seen this list before, but even for them [and for me] it's well worth running through it again.

1. **Take photos** – lots of them, often.

2. **Learn new stuff** – any way that works for you [photo clubs, online, books, workshops, tuition, mentoring ...]

3. **Go to new places** with your camera. There isn't a better country on Planet Earth to explore, in my opinion. So go ahead. Explore it. Any bit of it – anywhere from your own garden to the other end of the other island. Or yes, even Rakiura Stewart Island [a wonderful place for those who love nature and wilderness].



4. **Revisit old places** with your camera. Get out there. Often.

5. Have your photos **critiqued** by people whose opinions you respect [and/or by yourself]. Ask “What worked? Why did it work? What didn't work? Why not? What can I learn from these photos?” Next time do better and try new ideas. Write it all down if it helps [I do].



6. **Photograph what you love.** Photograph what especially excites you, that which you are passionate about: your cats or roses or grandkids, birds, waterfalls, the beach, vintage cars

7. Give yourself **a project.** A Goldilocks one - not too easy, not too hard, something achievable and that you will feel good about. It doesn't really matter what it is, as long as it's something that will keep you interested for most of the year. One idea could be what I've done for the last three Christmases now - giving each family member a photo book I've created, with photos of our family. “Family, Friends & Moments” I call them. I know they will be treasured more and more as the years pass. You could do something similar. Or it could be on any other topic that interests you – your grandkids, your roses, the many moods of the beach, quirky letterboxes, native orchids, seabirds, black and white landscapes, blurred motion seascapes, city “candid” ...

8. **Do something with your best photos** [as well as enjoying them - which you're also allowed to do, of course]. Print and frame the best and hang them on your wall. Or give a framed/mounted print to someone special as a present. Or print a collection in a book [easy ... via Diamond Photo [NZ], Snapfish [NZ], Blurb, etc], enter a competition, offer good ones to a local newspaper, bring them along to show at a Tuesday night “Photos & Coffee”, share them on Facebook or among friends via email, use them to help promote some cause you're passionate about etc. **Get your best photos out there.** Show your family. Show your friends. Show me.

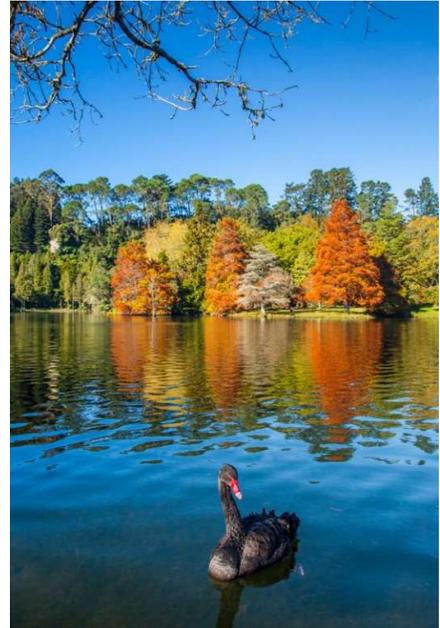
9. **Relax, smile, enjoy. We do this for fun, remember.** 😊

3. PHOTO WALK – McLaren Falls Park – 13th February – Free

So what are you doing Saturday morning, the 13th of February? Why not join me for a “Photo Walk” at McLaren Falls Park. A few years back, Matt at Carters Photographics [Tauranga] invited me along on a Photo Walk he’d organized for World Photo Day [and later brought me a large flat white and eggs benedict at a nearby café – thanks Matt!!]. A group of keen photographers [including Tauranga’s mayor] spent three pleasant hours at McLaren Falls Park, and I later thought “Maybe I should organize one of these for “my photographers”. So I did. Then another. If you’re keen, I’ll run some more.

We’ll meet at the café [next to the information centre] at McLaren Falls Park at 9.00 am on Saturday 13th February, and then spend the next three hours photographing and chatting [if you wish to chat]. We’ll finish at 12.00 noon, and then those who want a coffee or lunch [or both] plus a chat will descend on the café. During the walk, you’re very welcome - encouraged in fact - to ask me anything you like about photography, or just chat about your own photography, or whatever. It will be an informal, friendly few hours, with no formal structure.

It’s free [no charge], but please email me to let me know if you’re coming. See you there?



4. "BEACH MAGIC PHOTOGRAPHY" workshop – Saturday 20th February



Saturday 20th February 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.

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 lets 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 11th February]. Fulltime students with ID **\$150**.



Some unsolicited comments about previous “Beach Magic” 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**





5. Kim's 2020 PROGRAMME

FEBRUARY

- Tuesday 2nd February – the first “Photos & Coffee” meeting of the year. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- Saturday 13th February “Photo Walk” at McLaren Falls Park 9.00 am to 12.00 midday. Free.
- **Saturday 20th February. “Beach Magic Photography” workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

MARCH

- Tuesday 2nd March. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 21st March. “Close Up Magic” workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

APRIL

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

MAY

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

JUNE

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

JULY

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

AUGUST

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

SEPTEMBER

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

OCTOBER

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

NOVEMBER

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

DECEMBER

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

One day workshops 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. Bay of Plenty GARDEN & ART FESTIVAL 2020

This popular four-day event comes around every 2 years. In late November 2020, I gave four presentations at the festival hub “Bloom in the Bay” at the Tauranga Racecourse. After one of the presentations, I wandered around, soaking up the relaxed summery vibe, and taking a few photos.



7. 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 2nd March** starting 7.00 pm. 18 Greerton Road, Gate Pa, Tauranga.

8. 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.

9. PHOTOGRAPHING ARTWORKS PHOTOSHOPPING PHOTO RESTORATION

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

ABOUT KIM

- **Passionate about photography and equally passionate about inspiring, guiding, and supporting other photographers – all photographers whether beginners, professionals or anywhere in-between.**
- 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/Oscars 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