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Newsletter from Kim Westerskov

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Newsletter #20 - March 2013

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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. QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Whether I like or dislike the subject matter, I will not attempt to produce meaningful work with it if I am not moved by it. At best I could produce a good but meaningless composition, much like a grammatically perfect speech that says nothing. My photograph would have no internal conviction and I seriously doubt that it would stir much of a reaction in anyone else. It shouldn't, in fact!"

Bruce Barnbaum

2. CLOSE ENCOUNTERS – ORCA

Butler and I headed out of Tauranga Harbour towards Karewa Island. We'd heard there were Orca in the area and wanted to meet up with them if possible. I have a permit from DOC to

swim with whales and was considering – maybe – swimming with them. Halfway to Karewa Island we came across the group of Orca, swimming around in cruise mode. They certainly have a good turn of speed when needed, but typically they swim in a relaxed, unhurried way.

But did I really want to jump in the water with them? The statistics were certainly in my favour. As far as I know, no human has ever been killed by Orca in the wild. In SeaWorld-type situations yes, but never in the wild. So what does that say about us? Humans have killed and captured many Orca in many seas over the years, but Orca have never killed any of us [the SeaWorld situation is different – Orca are imprisoned there and are probably quite stressed – I know I would be if I was captured and stuck in a small room for the rest of my life!] Then again, Orca do kill many species of dolphins and whales - even blue whales - as well as seals, sea lions, and many other marine animals. And I'm about the size of a seal, as a whale expert friend of mine reminds me occasionally.

Still getting in the water seemed a pretty good bet, so in I went, some distance from the Orca. The sea was calm but not particularly clear, underwater visibility being maybe eight metres or so. I was snorkelling, treading water, waiting Nothing... more nothing...



Suddenly three dorsal fins headed straight towards me. I dipped my head underwater and soon I could see them underwater, still coming straight towards me. Underwater they looked huge – and formidable. It was as if the word “TOP PREDATOR” was writ big in flashing neon lights above each one! Closer, closer then veering away at the last moment, swimming past me so close I could almost have touched the nearest one. The wide angle lens on my underwater camera makes them look a few metres away, but in reality they were much closer.

Something white was hanging from the mouth of the nearest Orca. I didn't get a good look at it [I was concentrating on the Orca themselves and getting photos of them] but reviewing the photos later I could see it was a stingray, probably caught in nearby Tauranga Harbour. The Orca were carrying it around the way a cat carries a mouse or bird it has caught around for some time before eating it.

“Why are you shaking?” Butler asked me back on the boat. “I'm n-n-n-n-not shaking” I replied unconvincingly, noting that I was indeed shaking. The Orca had not behaved in any way aggressively, but they **were** big, fast and close.

I swam with the Orca several more times that day. I quickly became increasingly comfortable with them, and ended up feeling that they had a sense of humour and fun, sometimes seemingly playing hide and seek with me in the bubbles of the boat's wake. But I'm still not sure what to make of the sight of two Orca hanging motionless upside down in the water a little below the surface, each Orca holding on to the same fish, one by its head, one by its tail.

3. SOME GREAT ANIMAL PHOTOS

<http://www.wolfademeit.de/enjoy/>

<http://www.fubiz.net/2012/10/30/more-than-human/>

<http://www.buzzfeed.com/paws/beautiful-nature-photographs-captured-at-just-the>

<http://photography.nationalgeographic.com/photography/photos/best-pod-january-2013/>

4. DOLPHIN & SEA PHOTOGRAPHY

SEA PHOTOGRAPHY **Sunday 24 March**

2013. “Cap’n Butler/Dr Kim Marine Photo Field Trips” are long-time favourites. A full day is spent out at sea in the wonderful Bay of Plenty onboard Graeme Butler’s 18 metre motor ketch, a stable comfortable photographic platform. The day starts with an introductory talk [with hand-out summarising main points] about photography at sea. This is onboard “Gemini Galaxsea” at Tauranga Bridge Marina at 8.00am. At 8.30am we pull out of the marina, enjoying freshly-ground coffee and freshly baked muffins. The rest of the day is spent at sea. We normally anchor for lunch [bring your own] in a sheltered bay somewhere [typically Mayor Island or Motiti Island]. Kim’s expertise is available throughout the day, and Cap’n Butler’s seemingly endless treasure trove of stories [mostly true!] is available for your entertainment. Photographic subjects typically include **dolphins**, blue **penguins**, **seabirds**, **seals**, islands, seascapes, **albatrosses** [quite often] and possibly even **whales**.



Cost: \$150. To book:
Freephone 0508-BUTLER or 07-578-3197 or
Email taurangadolphins@clear.net.nz
Website: <http://www.swimwithdolphins.co.nz/>





5. “PHOTO IMPRESSIONISM” WORKSHOP

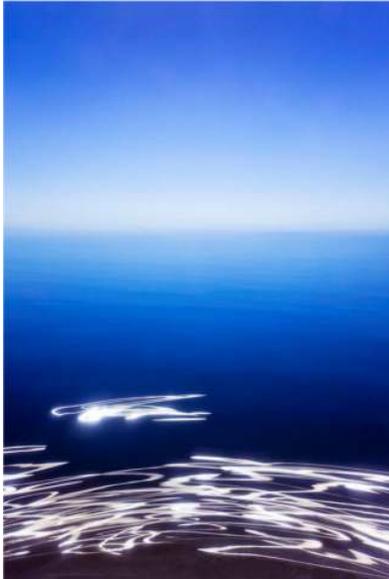
Creating art in your camera and in post-production. It’s easy – and fun.

Sunday 14 April A full day [9.00am to 5.00pm] at Kim’s workshop studio in Tauranga followed by an assignment and a follow-up evening a few weeks later [at a time that suits everyone]. Price includes workshop, follow-up, hand-outs, and Vivienne’s yummy catering. Cost: One day workshop + follow-up \$295 [or \$245 Early Bird – if you book before 4 April]. Fulltime students \$150.



I’m predicting that quite a few of you who don’t already know about Photo Impressionism will really like it. It’s liberating in many ways - it lets out your inner artist much more than normal photography allows. It’s fun! As photographers, you’ll know that there are many days and places where “nothing much is happening” photographically – the light is lousy, the day is grey [or even drizzling], there’s no





interesting subjects around The thing I'm noticing about Photo Impressionism is that on any such day I can easily create good impressionistic photos pretty much anywhere.

Photo Impressionism is an exciting area of photography, and one probably new to most of you. This is where photography meets art, where photography becomes art. This is photography inspired by Monet, van Gogh and the other wonderful painters of that time. These photos are more about feelings and emotions and ideas and colour and movement than the "normal" or "real" photos we're used to. I've learned and developed many techniques over the years, and I'll pass these on to you. Many are remarkably easy, once you know what to do and "get your eye in". You will very likely impress yourself! You'll almost certainly have fun. It's also rather addictive, as one keen photographer told me recently.

"Hi Kim, I LOVED the Impressionist Photo workshop and would recommend it to anyone wanting to have some fun and get creative with their camera. My family and friends were very impressed with my impressionist photos taken at Yatton Park and one friend even offered to buy one to put on a canvas to hang in her home!! The format was great and the notes too". Jan Gill

"I was thrilled with my photos thank you. It opens a whole new world!! The photo impressionism workshop was wonderful. We went to a bleak, midwinter park and created beautiful, colourful photos. Photos full of fun, imagination and mystery. Please thank Viv for the lovely food. See you again soon". Vicki Ostler

6. NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY WEEKEND

NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY WEEKEND 20-21 April

This is Numero Uno, **the biggest workshop I run**: a full weekend of workshops and field trips, followed by an assignment and an evaluation evening about 3 weeks later at a time that suits everyone.



- **Part 1:** Saturday and Sunday 20-21 April, 9.00 am - 5.00 pm. Both days will be based at Kim's studio but we'll also take some time to head out into the field [to a local park, wetland, or shoreline] in the afternoons. The main theme is **CREATING GREAT NATURE PHOTOGRAPHS**. A mix of modules with summary hand-outs, live demonstrations, screen-projected images, and questions answered.
- **Topics include** the equipment, techniques and approaches needed for getting great nature photos, landscapes and seascapes, wildlife photography [including birds], composition, telephoto vs. wide angle, dealing with scruffy foregrounds & problem skies, specialised techniques for night/dusk photography and aerial photography, "secrets of the pros" [yes, quite a few], "working a subject", digital workflow, introduction to Photoshop & Lightroom, photo impressionism, "soul" in nature photos, silky waterfalls, long exposure photos, and more.
- **Part 2:** Photo assignment – in your own time over the following 2-3 weeks.





- **Part 3:** Evaluation and critiquing of your photos [this can be done by email if you're from out of town]. We meet at Kim's studio again for a few hours at a time that suits everybody, probably an evening.
- **Cost: \$475.** The Early Bird special is **\$425** if you book before 10 April. Price includes the workshop, follow-up, hand-outs, refreshments and lunches [courtesy of Vivienne] on both days. Special rate for **fulltime students \$235.**

We put a lot of time and thought into preparing and running these workshops. Class numbers are small, allowing for considerable individual attention. For anyone living outside the Tauranga area, there are three motels within 5 minutes' walk of Kim's studio. The workshops are held at Kim's comfortable studio at 18 Greerton Road, Gate Pa, Tauranga.

7. UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

28 April "Waterfalls & Forests" – including creating silky smooth waterfall photos.

4 May "Landscapes & Seascapes"

18 & 19 May [two separate workshops] **"Amazing Liquids"** – high speed close-up water drop photography with Paul Oellermann. Specialist equipment provided.

25 May "Composition – Making Your Photos Sing"

9 June "Sunsets & Sunrises"

15 June "Photo Impressionism" – creating art in your camera and in post-production. It's easy – and fun.

22 June "Long Exposures" – creating magic photos of sea and sky using long exposures.

6 July “Stars & the night sky”

20 July “Lightroom Magic” – processing your photos in Lightroom.

Apart from the 20-21 April weekend, all workshops are one full day [9.00am to 5.00pm at Kim’s workshop studio in Greerton] plus assignment and a follow-up evening a few weeks later. Price includes workshop, follow-up, hand-outs, and Vivienne’s yummy catering. Cost: workshop + follow-up \$295 [or \$245 Early Bird – if booked 10 days or more in advance]. Fulltime students \$150.

8. MORE GREAT PHOTOS – NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/125/exploring-farthest-reaches/> I love photo number three – huge crystals dwarfing humans in a cave nearly a thousand feet under the ground. [Click on the “i” in a circle at bottom right of photo for captions]

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/125/the-new-age-of-exploration/>

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/125/exploring-the-deepest-recesses-of-the-planet/>

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/125/the-highest-points-exploration/>

9. KIM’S PHOTOS & COFFEE EVENINGS

These friendly, relaxed get-togethers are for those of you who have been to any of my workshops or field trips over the last couple of years [since the University of Waikato workshops finished] or are thinking about maybe coming on one. There’s no obligation of any kind. 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. No charge [free]. Supper is served. Please email me if you’d like to come and please only book up to one month ahead.

The next two are:

Tuesday 2 April 2013 – starting 7.00pm

Tuesday 7 May 2013 – starting 7.00pm

10. PRIVATE TUITION

I had a great day recently, all day teaching three photographers [in two separate sessions] how to get the best out of their camera, and covering specific techniques they were interested in. And later this week I will be teaching two more photographers, concentrating on the best organisation for their photo libraries, their workflow through Lightroom/Photoshop, and photography in general.

Topics covered can be anything from photography in general to specific techniques, computer workflow, Lightroom, Photoshop... each photographer determines their own agenda, and so each session is unique. All tuition so far has been one-on-one, but there's no reason why [if you'd like to bring a friend with similar questions] it couldn't be for two people at once [making it much less expensive for each person, of course]. Sessions are typically 2-3 hours. We cover a lot of ground every hour. My rates are designed to encourage repeat visits: First hour \$85, second hour \$80, third hour \$75, fourth hour \$70, fifth and subsequent hours \$65. So once you get to 5 hours [even if spread over several visits], from then on the rate is only \$65 per hour.

“What I learned in one evening with Kim would have taken me months to figure out by myself. Overall I found the session extremely worthwhile and consider it excellent value”.

Raewyn Adams

[Kim's] “support and encouragement has enabled me to understand my camera and how it works, and a lesson in Photoshop was amazing.”

Lyn Yates