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Newsletter from Kim Westerskov

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Newsletter #79 – August 2019

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2. Great new Lightroom/Photoshop tool
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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.



Guess

1. “REAL PHOTOGRAPHERS SHOOT IN MANUAL” [Really?]

You may have heard that “Real photographers only shoot in Manual” or similar. Ignore it. Forget it. Use whatever mode works best for you. It’s the results that count, not the mode you use.

So yes, some photographers do indeed shoot in Manual Mode. Including me.... sometimes. About 5% of my photography is in Manual Mode, which I used when photographing inside dark sea caves near Piha recently. Perhaps another 5% is in Bulb Mode which I use for night photos. The other 90% is all shot in Aperture Priority Mode [“A” on most cameras, “Av” on Canon]. All the accompanying photos were shot in Aperture Priority Mode.

It’s not just me. Most serious photographers, professionals and amateurs alike, shoot in Aperture Priority Mode. My good friends Yva Momatiuk and John Eastcott shoot in Aperture Priority Mode. Yva and John have been contributors to National Geographic magazine for decades and remain at the very top of their game:

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/contributors/m/photographers-eastcott-momatiuk/>
<https://www.momatiukeastcott.com/>

So, why do I shoot in Aperture Priority Mode and not in Manual Mode? Simple: because I’m after good photos [and hopefully great photos] I let my camera do technical stuff like focus and exposure which leaves me free to be more creative. My camera [like all good modern cameras] deals with focus and exposure faster and more accurately than I can. So why not let it? I’m after good photos, not the “He did it the hard way” prize.

With Aperture Priority, I nail the exposure every time. Always. Instantly. The camera makes sure every exposure is spot on.

But what about wildlife or sports photography? Shouldn’t we be in Shutter Priority Mode to make sure we freeze the action? Sure, if we want sharp photos, then a fast shutter speed is vital. So what do I do when I’m photographing sports or moving wildlife? I stay in Aperture Priority Mode and keep an eye on the shutter speed the camera is choosing. If I need a different shutter speed I change the ISO and/or the aperture to get that shutter speed.



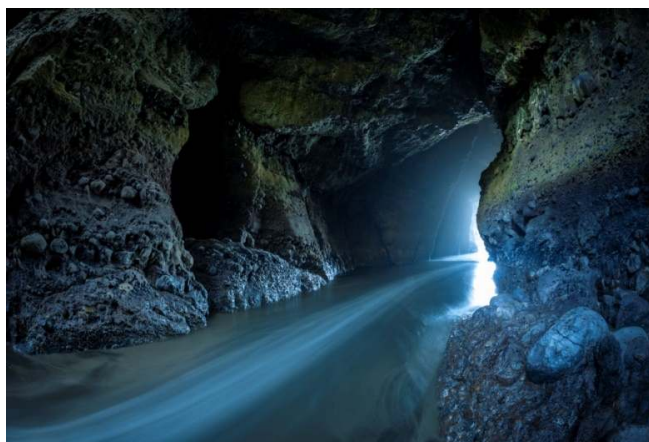
Whatever I'm shooting, I'm keeping an eye on all three corners of the Exposure Triangle: ISO, aperture [f-stop], and shutter speed. So in a sense although I'm in Aperture Priority Mode, I'm using it as though it were Manual Mode, but getting the huge benefit of "right every time" shutter speeds. Aperture Priority Mode is usually called a semi-automatic mode, but we could just as well call it a semi-manual mode.

There are times when I'm after a certain shutter speed, usually for blurred motion photos, but even then I stay in Aperture Priority Mode. Why don't I change to Shutter Priority Mode for those photos, and then change back to Aperture Priority Mode afterward? Because I typically forget to change back and then wonder "What's wrong with the camera/me?" until I finally realize that I've forgotten to change back to Aperture Priority Mode. So even when I'm after a certain shutter speed I just stay in Aperture Priority and adjust the ISO and aperture until I get the shutter speed I'm after. So, other than the occasional special occasion [e.g. inside caves or doing long exposure photography] if my camera is up to my eye, I know where I am, mode wise. I'm "home". I'm in Aperture Priority Mode.

So what mode do professional sports photographers use? The answer will surprise you, as it initially surprised me. Most shoot in Aperture Priority Mode. Depth of field matters to them too and, like me, they simply keep an eye on the shutter speed, adjusting aperture or ISO if they need to change it. Aperture Priority Mode allows them to shoot "wide open" at the maximum aperture of their lens [typically f2.8 or f4], allowing them to blur the background for less cluttered photos.

I tell many photographers, with a smile in my voice, that Manual Mode exists for two reasons:

1. For professionals and serious amateurs to use occasionally when it is needed.
2. To make the lives of countless amateur photographers miserable, especially if they are in camera clubs or groups where other members beat them over the head with "We must all shoot in Manual Mode!!" 😊



The fact that you CAN shoot in in Manual Mode is excellent - that you understand the Exposure Triangle of shutter speed, aperture, and ISO. Now try shooting in Aperture Priority with that knowledge.

If you're currently shooting in Manual Mode, maybe try doing what I do: go into Aperture Priority Mode, set ISO, set Aperture, and keep an eye on the shutter speed – checking occasionally that it is “about right”. Your good photos will come more easily and more often. You'll smile more.

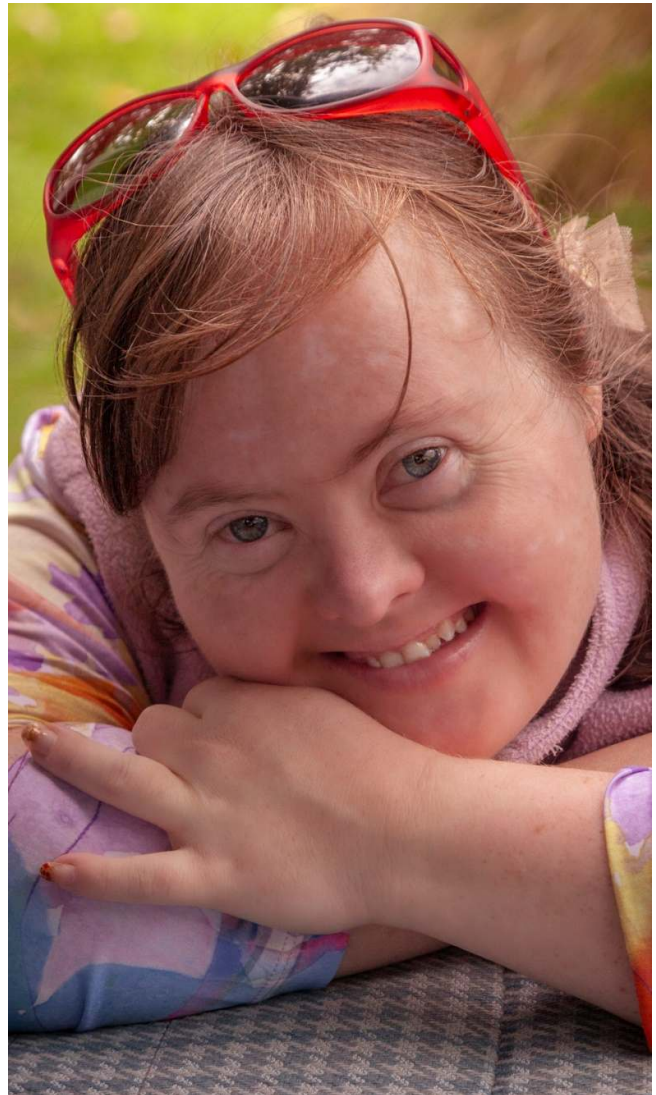
Finally, let's look at some common scenarios: photographing your kids or grandkids having a great time running around, inside or outside the house. Or a group of friends at a party or barbeque. Or a street scene with people constantly moving. Sure, you COULD shoot in Manual Mode, but you'd probably miss many good shots as people continually changed positions, moving from areas in good light to darker areas and back into the light again. You'd get some shots, but if you were in Aperture Priority [or even Auto for that matter], you could stop worrying about f-stops and shutter speed and ISO and simply concentrate on getting good photos. It's the good photos you're after, not an award for having got them the hard way ☺



<https://www.lightstalking.com/aperture-priority-most-preferred-shooting-mode-by-photographers/>
<https://digital-photography-school.com/what-mode-do-you-shoot-in-most/>
<https://www.lightstalking.com/aperture-priority/>



2. "TEXTURE" SLIDER – NEW IN LIGHTROOM/PHOTOSHOP



There are many ways of retouching portraits in Photoshop, but Adobe was asked for a simple, high quality way to smooth skin in Lightroom and ACR [Adobe Camera Raw, the room inside Photoshop where many of us do most of our image processing]. Previously, many photographers had used the Clarity slider, pulling it to the left for "pretty good, but not perfect" skin smoothing. "Texture" was developed to do better, and does. Initially in its development "Texture" was just "Smoothing", but later Adobe extended it in the other direction as well, eventually both enhancing texture when required, and smoothing texture when required.

Moving the "Texture" slider to the left smooths skin [and other surfaces] without removing fine details, resulting in natural-looking skin. Moving the slider to the right accentuates texture such as eyes and hair, somewhat like Sharpening or the Clarity slider moved to the right.

"Texture" can be used both as a global adjustment [over the entire photo] or a local adjustment. In the photo above of my DDD [Dearest Darling Daughter] Anne, the version on the left is with most other adjustments completed, but before using the Texture slider. In the version on the right, I've used an Adjustment Brush to "paint in" Texture of -70 over Anne's skin, smoothing it, and then a second Adjustment Brush to "paint in" Texture of +70 over her hair, making it stand out more.



TEXTURE -100



TEXTURE +100



TEXTURE = 0, CLARITY = 0



CLARITY -100



CLARITY +100

- <https://theblog.adobe.com/from-the-acr-team-introducing-the-texture-control/>
- <https://petapixel.com/2019/05/14/adobe-adds-texture-control-slider-to-lightroom-and-camera-raw/>
- <https://www.helmutsteiner.net/2019/05/15/difference-between-texture-and-clarity-slider-in-adobe-lightroom/>
- <https://blogs.adobe.com/jkost/2019/05/the-texture-slider-in-lightroom-classic.html>

3. “BLACK AND WHITE” PHOTO WORKSHOP – Sunday 11 August

“When you photograph people in color, you photograph their clothes. But when you photograph people in black and white, you photograph their souls!” Ted Grant

There’s something special about black and white photography. Good black and white photos have a classic, timeless quality. They often seem more “artistic” than colour photos. Some black and whites have an almost surreal or dreamy quality about them. And they often somehow look cleaner than colour images – although black and white can do “gritty” even better than colour e.g. photos of victims of war or famine or other misfortune.



“So what’s the big deal? Can’t I just select the black and white mode in my camera? Or just desaturate all the colour in Photoshop or Lightroom” Well, yes, of course you can, but you won’t get **good** black and white photos that way, let alone **great** photos. And this workshop is all about getting great black and white photos.



Most of the equipment and some of the techniques needed for good black and whites are the same as for colour, but there are important differences. Two of the biggies are [1] learning which subjects and approaches work well in black and white and [2] post-processing – the Photoshop/Lightroom bit. So we will look at both of these in detail.

My recommendation is that you do NOT use the black and white setting in your camera, but rather capture colour images and then convert these to black and white in post-processing. This can either be in Photoshop/Lightroom, or in standalone programs [or their Photoshop/Lightroom plugins]. We’ll look at both. You will end the workshop confident and with a level of competency in black and white that you’ll be pleased with.



We’ll cover not just pure black and white

photography but also toned black and whites - as well as monochrome photography. And we'll look briefly at infrared black and white photography too.

As photographers, most of us are looking for ways to make our photos stand out from the crowd. Black and white photography is one of the very best ways of doing exactly that.

The plan for the day is that we spend more time "hands-on" than other workshops. After lunch, we'll start the afternoon at a local park taking photos and then head back to the workshop studio where we will process our new photos into black and white. It should be a rewarding and fun day. Join me?

Sunday 11 August 9.00am – 5.00pm plus assignment and follow-up 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, Vivienne's yummy catering, assignment and follow-up - \$ 245. Fulltime students with ID \$145.

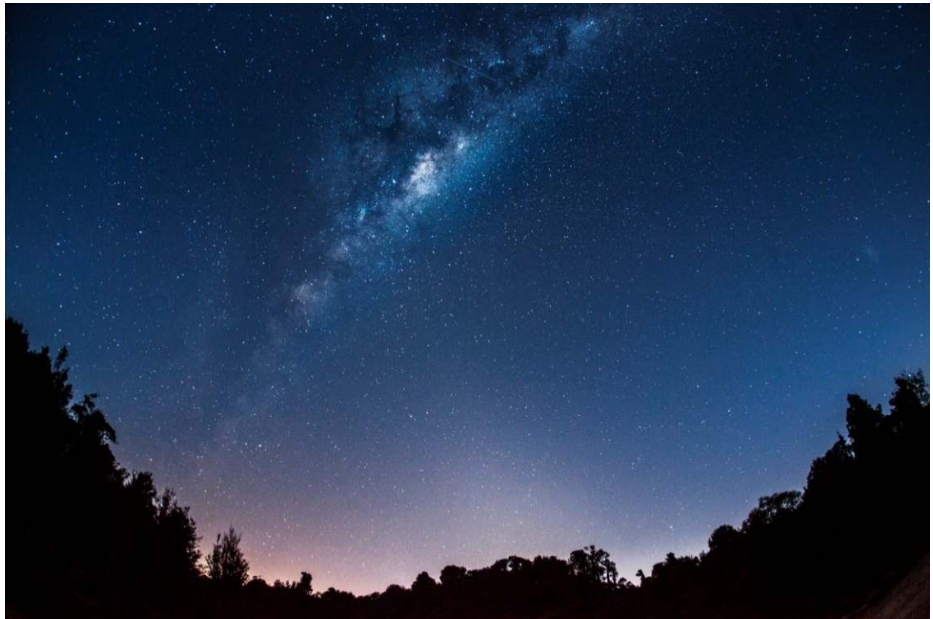


4. NZ GEOGRAPHIC PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR competition

Got some recent photos taken in New Zealand you're rather proud of? Entries are now open for the annual New Zealand Geographic Photographer of the Year competition, now in its 11th year. This is New Zealand's biggest and most prestigious photography competition. And the richest. There's \$5,000 in real hard cash up for grabs, as well as a \$34,000 voyage to Antarctica with Heritage Expeditions. Entries close 27th August. <https://www.nzgeo.com/photography/entry/>

5. MILKY WAY OVERHEAD

For those who like looking up at the stars on clear nights, the Southern Hemisphere is the best hemisphere to be in and winter is the best season. Right through winter, the brightest part of the Milky Way shines brightly overhead for most of the night. During August anytime from dusk [6 pm] until 1 or 2 am the Galactic Centre [the centre of the Milky Way, the brightest bit] is high above our heads. The planet Jupiter is there too, close to the constellation Scorpio and Saturn isn't far away in Sagittarius.



Every night before heading for bed I step outside and look up. Yes, some nights are cloudy but a surprising number of winter nights are clear, or at least partly clear. I always feel better having spent a minute or two gazing up at the night sky, with awe, wondering and pondering.

Those living in the Northern Hemisphere do see the bright centre of the Milky Way but never in its full glory - high in the sky - as we see it here.

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 is on Tuesday 6th August** starting 7.00pm. 18 Greerton Road, Gate Pa, Tauranga.

7. 2019 PROGRAMME

AUGUST

- Tuesday 6th August. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 11th August. “Black & White” photo workshop.** Full day plus follow-up.

SEPTEMBER

- Tuesday 3rd September. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 7th September. “People” workshop.** Portraits, kids, families, candid, travel, events, weddings. Full day plus follow-up.

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OCTOBER

- Tuesday 1st October. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Sunday 6th October. “Good photos, great photos – anytime, anywhere”** workshop. Full day plus follow-up.

NOVEMBER

- Tuesday 5th November. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.

DECEMBER

- Tuesday 3rd December. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.

Half-day workshops 9.00am – 1.00pm

Full day workshops 9.00am – 5.00pm

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

- **Half-day workshops:** \$135 – or \$115 for Early Birds if you register by 10 days before the workshop. Fulltime students with ID \$70.
- **One day workshops:** \$295 – or \$245 for Early Birds if you register by 10 days before the workshop. Fulltime students with ID \$150.

8. 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. Bring a friend if you wish - no extra charge.

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.

MENTORING: See the previous newsletter [#78] at www.kimwesterskov.com/newsletters

9. 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].

10. 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 12 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.