



The Joy of Seeing

A Mindful Photography week at Manzac d'en Bas

with Ken Scott ARPS MBPsS

Our aim this week is to help you to reconnect with the world around you, using your camera to help you to see with fresh eyes.

When we take the time to encounter every moment for what it is, without judgement or other thought, suddenly the familiar becomes extraordinary.

How many delights we miss in the rush of life.

The great American social photographer Dorothea Lange said *"The camera is an instrument that teaches people how to see without a camera."*

Our Approach

My personal approach to photography is underpinned by many years of responsiveness – both to the mountain landscapes and light, which became my trademark style, and to everyday moments of seeing.

At the end of 2017 I will pass ten consecutive years of making at least one photo every day. A daily project reveals patterns of mood and awareness that would otherwise go unnoticed. Aside from the practice in using the camera, daily photography is practice in seeing everything around us, and in responding to and interpreting the resulting images, making connections and creating unique insights.

Above everything else, I have learned that creativity happens when we least expect it, at times of good flow and at times of frustration alike. When we are mindful of our mood and we are tuned in and fully aware of our surroundings, photographs come to us naturally.

Allowing ourselves to experience the place fully and creating the right conditions for this flow to happen is the key to our workshop style.

It is about letting go of expectation, about acknowledging and nurturing your own unique way of seeing the world around you. It is about you investing in your creativity, finding in yourself what you want to express right now and learning how to find that repeatedly into the future.

Invest in this YOU time, share with new friends, learn and be inspired by each other. Rediscover the joy of seeing.



Ken Scott Photography
Touching the Light^{TTL} / Photov8
www.touchingthelight.co.uk / www.photovate.co.uk
16 Towers Road, Upper Beeding, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3JL

Are there any pre-conditions?

As we will work with your individual needs there are no preconditions except for your willingness to come with an open mind – both for the approach and for the images that you and your companions will make. Nothing is off limits except being closed to possibilities.

- If you are a beginner then it will be helpful to know your camera and to have some knowledge of the core principles of exposure, and depth of field. If you don't, no worry; we will introduce some simple and essential tips for you.
- If you are a seasoned enthusiast, then maybe a change of scenery and a fresh outlook could be the catalyst for a whole new phase in your creative work. Our approach could be just the perfect creative tonic.

Having the confidence to express how you see and respond to the world in your own unique way is perhaps the final test of an artist.

What photographic equipment should I bring?

Any kind of camera will be fine along with your usual lenses and accessories. We will be encouraging spontaneity and lightness of approach, so you may find that a compact camera gives you the freedom to travel and work light.

If you bring an SLR camera, prime or zoom lenses in the 18-55mm and 70-300mm ranges will be most useful. The more you are weighed down by equipment and choices, the less mindful your photography is likely to be.

You are very welcome to use the camera in your phone too, but we will be encouraging you to see directly rather than through apps, so your phone should not be your only option.

Don't forget:

- Storage cards and spare batteries
- Your charger and plug adapters
- Your camera manual – !Important
- A notepad and pen for making your own notes.

How do we share images?

Several times through the week, we will share and critique each other's images.

At Manzac we have access to a 40" widescreen digital screen for our use, which can connect directly via USB memory or HDMI. Please ensure that you bring a USB memory device.

We will also have a card reader for downloading your images centrally.

However you may find it useful to have your own device on which you can sort and view your images for yourself - a small laptop or tablet computer e.g. iPad, is ideal. Make sure you have the requisite cable connections between device and camera and also that you are familiar with how to download and sort your files quickly and efficiently.

As at our other venues, we like to encourage a 'screen free' ethos at all times when socialising in communal space, except when working and sharing images with each other.

When choosing images for sharing, please resist the need to process them, either via apps or Photoshop. Getting things right in camera is one of the core skills we will explore, as is being able to quickly discern the images you like.

If you usually shoot RAW files, then do set up your camera to record a JPEG in addition, to avoid your having to spend additional time in post-processing. In any event, we will help you to make sure your camera is set up correctly at the start of the week.

Should I bring a tripod?

In some conditions of low light a tripod will be essential. But you will find that it restricts spontaneity of seeing, so for most of the time we will encourage you to perfect your hand holding and to work in a responsive way.

About our Accommodation and Transport

Manzac d'en Bas is a beautiful converted traditional French farmhouse with gîtes situated high above Daumazan-sur-Arize in the Ariège region of southwest France, with expansive views south towards the Pyrenees mountains. Our hosts for the week are Giles and Louise Nevill, who have lived here for fifteen years.

Booking

As Manzac d'en Bas is a business registered in France, accommodation has to be charged in Euros, separately from the tuition portion, which is payable directly to the tutor.

Therefore, please make your initial enquiry or booking with us and we will pass your details to Giles and Louise, who will forward their accommodation booking details.

The cost of the Manzac d'en Bas part of the holiday includes everything throughout the week (accommodation, food, drink and transport – airport transfers and locally) less two visits to local restaurants.

The two visits to the local restaurants should amount to about €55 - €65 per person in total and are payable at the time.

Transport to and from Manzac

Guests travelling to France by air should aim to arrive in the evening at Toulouse airport at around 5.00pm on the start day of the holiday and depart in the early afternoon on the last day at around 2.00pm. This should be easily possible for guests coming from southern England using Easyjet from Gatwick and Bristol.

The choice for guests coming from elsewhere in Britain is more limited. When booking your accommodation, Giles is happy to advise and will make the necessary recommendations as appropriate to coordinate airport transfers to Manzac.

Meals and Dietary Requirements

All meals are included, except for two meals taken out at local places, one in the evening and one at lunchtime, usually.

- Breakfast each day is a self-service continental selection with cereals and bread, seasonal fruit, tea, coffee and juices.
- Lunch and dinner is provided either at home at Manzac or as a picnic / BBQ. Do ensure when booking to advise Louise of any special dietary requirements both in advance and if anything changes (See below).
- Beers and wine, along with tea, coffee and fruit juices, will be freely available throughout. Manzac d'en Bas is licensed to serve wine and beer and we provide this as part of the all-inclusive package. This offer of inclusive wine and beer relates to a 'reasonable' quantity at meal times and pre-dinner drinks only. Wine and beer consumed outside those times will be charged separately. No spirits are offered.

Most dietary requirements including vegetarian or minor intolerances (e.g. gluten or lactose) can be catered for but regrettably those with vegan needs or severe nut allergies cannot be accepted at Manzac owing to the nature of the business and the almost inability of French restaurants to cater for this.

Other Travel Essentials

How much walking is involved?

We will not be mountaineering! However, the Ariège is hill country and there are some jewels to be found off the beaten track. There is some steep ground in some villages and at waterfalls and especially the Cathar castles. But for the most part our excursions require no more than a few minutes walking from our vehicle.

Please let us know if you have any difficulty with walking.

Do bring walking shoes or light boots and a rucksack that will hold your photography kit and a few essentials. Bring a water bottle too – a 1L sports or mineral water bottle will be perfect.

Clothing

The climate in the south west of France can be changeable under influence of the Pyrenees. Temperatures can vary between the low teens and high twenties centigrade in May so do come prepared for all seasons.

A packable rain jacket will be useful, as will a travel umbrella that you could use when working. Yes we will work in most weathers!

What to bring:

- comfortable clothing for walking and working on warm days – t-shirts, shorts
- walking shoes or light boots plus flipflops, sandals or house shoes
- sunglasses and sunhat
- rain jacket and warm fleece

Bathing and Swimming

It is possible that the pool will be usable in the May but we cannot guarantee it. Bath towels are provided but please bring your own towel for the pool.

Travel in France

Do check out the recommended travel advice for France before you travel:

- <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/france>
- <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/countryguide/Pages/healthcareinFrance.aspx>

Medical

You should carry a valid EHIC card and your travel insurance documents, of course.

We would also advise that you pack a small first-aid kit for your own use. If there is any medical condition that we should know about, please let us know in complete confidence.

Sun and Insect Protection

The sun will be strong and warm at times so sun protection lotion and a protecting lip balm are essential.

Insects are not generally a problem even in high summer, but the occasional night-time mosquito can find its way in. Some insect repellent and an anti-histamine or bite-relief cream might be useful.

Electricals

France has a 220v electric supply with two pin plug sockets. Bring a European lead for your electricals and / or a universal plug adapter. There is WiFi freely available in the gîtes.

Essential Numbers:

Office: +44 (0)1903 812834 | Ken: +44 (0)7958 984378 | Carolyn: +44 (0)7958 984377