



"Lyme Hills Trip—Fog"

Digital Photograph

By Thomas C. Monego

"Photography to me is an artistic medium," says Thomas Monego, "but I think to the outside world photography is not always interpreted in that way." He believes that's "because of the mechanical nature of the medium," especially since digital photography has added "another layer of mechanical interface. . . . But in many ways an image is just that. I have far more control over especially my color images in the digital workspace." The photograph above, of a cornfield near Monego's home in Thetford, Vt., is a scene he sees often. On this particular morning, he was moved by "the quality of the light . . . the soft tones." Most of his images are, like this one, what he calls "grabbed shots . . . being in the right place at the right time." Monego spends his days as an implementation coordinator on Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center's Clinical Transformation Project, working on the transition to a new electronic medical record system; previously, he was for many years an ophthalmic photographer at DHMC—capturing images of patients' eyes. His own eye for compelling images has become well honed over the years. He's been doing photography for 45 years, ever since a friend recruited him to work on his high-school newspaper. For many years he used large-format film cameras, but about 10 years ago he started shooting digitally, though he also continued to shoot a lot of film. Then four years ago he switched to shooting almost completely digitally, with a Nikon D200. "Digital photography is seductive in [its] simplicity," he observes, but "difficult to get right. . . . I still have my large-format film cameras that I keep telling myself to use, but film processing has become such a hassle." Ironically, it was the processing that drew him to photography. "I became fascinated with mostly the darkroom work," he recalls. "An image coming up in a developer is always magic." Rather like an early-morning fog rising up over a cornfield, a river valley, and distant hills. ■