

EDGEMAG.

ISSUE 1

THE LAND OF WHISPERS.

EDITORIAL

The „Edgemag.“ is a publication that deals with the frontiers of contemporary photography in a critical, documentary and artistic way. It happens to be a platform for extraordinary projects which confronts us with facts that are usually concealed in our society.

This magazine curates unique people who see things differently and who are brave enough to show us their individual way of thinking. Through their eyes we get the opportunity to critically focus on hidden issues. Therefore photography seems like the perfect medium to push boundaries into different directions.

Issue 1 provides us insight of a country which is separated from the rest of the world. Most western people barely know anything about circumstances in North Korean everyday life. „The land of whispers“ illuminates several perspectives who have dealt with interdependence of North Korean society. This takes us on an unexpected journey to gain knowledge from unknown terrain.

There are four printed releases of „Edgemag.“ every year that you can order online. Visit www.edgemag.com where you can also get a handpicked selection of additional information to each available issue.

And now sit back and enjoy!



Milan Soremski



◀ **Milan Soremski**
Concept and Editorial Design
My name is Milan Soremski, 23 years old and I'm passionate about photography and design in general. Currently I'm working on my Bachelor degree at the Fachhochschule Salzburg, Austria.



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THE LAND OF WHISPERS.

The world's most dangerous and most militarized border on earth. Ever wonder what it's like to visit the DMZ? Text by Lonleyplanet

There is quite simply nowhere on Earth like North Korea. Now on its third hereditary ruler, this nominally communist state has defied all expectations and survived a quarter of a century since the collapse of the Soviet empire. This is your chance to visit the world's most isolated nation, where the internet and much of the 21st century remain unknown, and millions live their lives in the shadow of an all-encompassing personality cult that intrudes on all aspects of daily life.

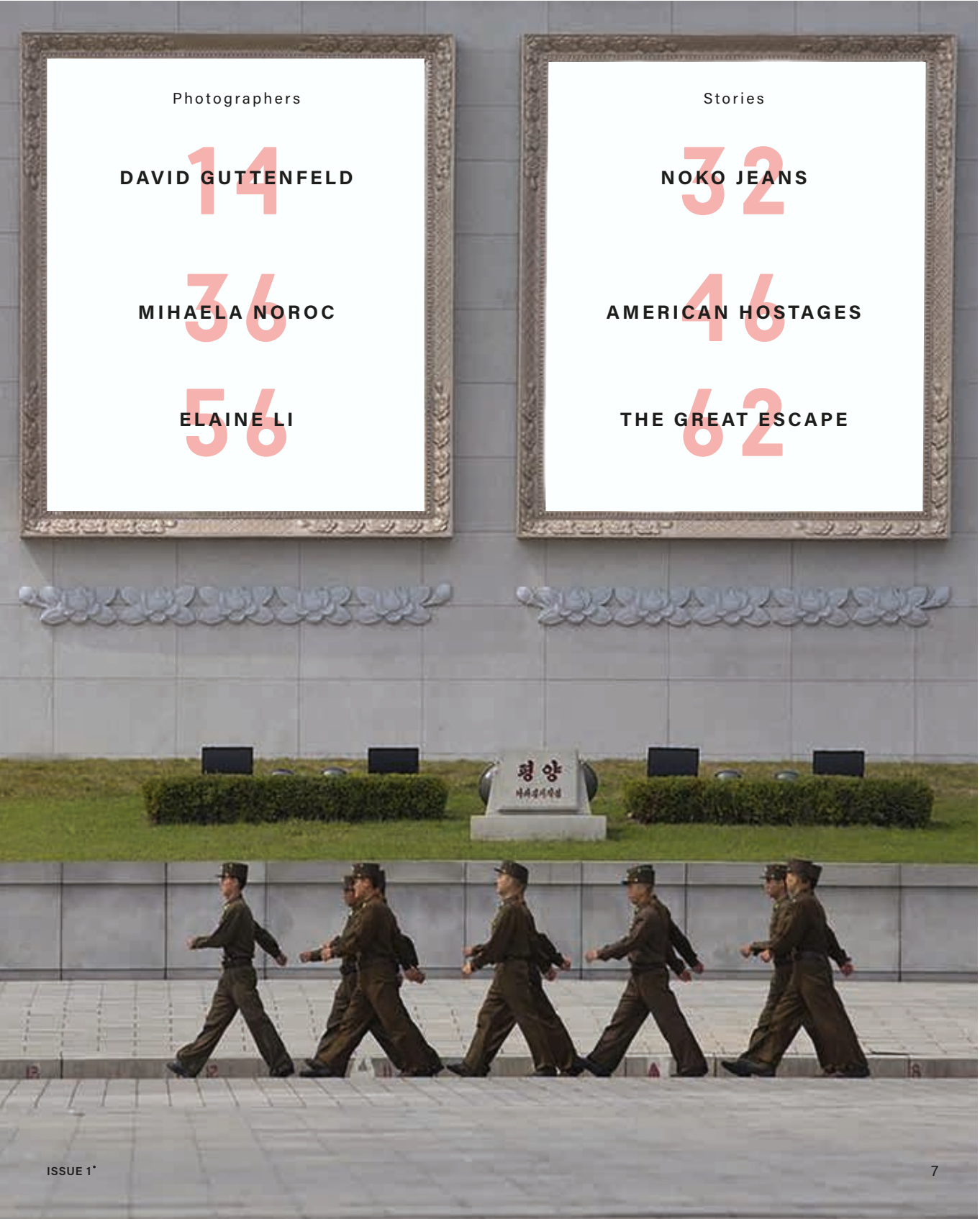
Few people even realise that it's possible to visit North Korea, and indeed the compromises required to do so are significant. You'll be accompanied by two state-employed guides at all times and hear a one-sided account of history. Those who can't accept this might be better off staying away – but those who can will be able to undertake a fascinating journey into another, unsettling world.



The men behind the sadness ▲
Kim Jong-un became North Korea's Supreme Leader following the death of his father Kim Jong-il on 17 December 2011. He took over his father's duties of looking at things but also oversaw increased tensions with South Korea and America.

CONTENT

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INTRODUCTION



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#Nkorea

David Guttenfeld is a National Geographic Photography Fellow focusing on geopolitical conflict, conservation and culture. Guttenfelder has spent the past 20 years as a photojournalist and documentary photographer based in Nairobi, Abidjan, New Delhi, and Tokyo covering world events in nearly 100 countries. In 2011, he helped the AP open a bureau in North Korea, the first western news agency to have an office in the otherwise-isolated country. Guttenfelder has made more than 40 trips to North Korea.



36 **MIHAELA NOROC**
The Atlas of Beauty

I'm a 30 years old photographer from Bucharest, Romania but I spent most of the last 3 years traveling in different countries of the world. When I was 16, I discovered photography but, unfortunately, in the next years I couldn't make a living with it, so I had to work in other fields, where I could earn a decent income. Traveling during vacations as a backpacker, in different parts of the world, made me discover the diversity of our planet. So when I was 27 I decided to quit my ordinary life in Bucharest and put all my efforts and savings into travel and photography.



56 **ELAINE LI**
Inside North Korea's metro system

Hi! I'm Elaine, a Hong Kong-based art director and photographer. I was born and raised in Hong Kong, and have spent time in Melbourne and Chicago. After living abroad for 7 years, I'm now back in my hometown, working as an Art Director in 4A advertising agency Ogilvy & Mather.

POPULATION
24,052,231



▲ Patrolling in high heels
In early 2015, the North Korean government decided to make military service mandatory for all women living inside the country's borders. The intention is to improve the country's dwindling military forces. For women ages 17 to 20 that have graduated from middle and high school, enlistment is now a requirement.

THE LIFE OF THE WOMEN ARMY

An insight into female soldiers in the Korean People’s Army, where lack of personal hygiene and objectification are major women’s issues.

Text by Lee, Chulmu

There are about 12,000,000 military officers in North Korea at present. Of them, 40% are female. Men must commit to the military for twelve years, and for women, seven years. Female soldiers receive the same training as their male counterparts. While this may seem fair, women also suffer disproportionately, because their health and safety needs are not met. For example, in times of crisis, male soldiers usually look for shelter among the area’s residents. Women, on the other hand, rarely do this, usually because they don’t believe that it is safe. In an attempt to avoid sexual harassment or assault, they must stay at supply centres that are guarded by higher-up authorities. Female soldiers have appealed for better conditions in the supply headquarters, but with little success.

One defector, An Jung-ran (31) was a previous captain of the 7th general department situated in Pyongyang, before escaping to settle in South Korea. She said, *“The life of a woman in North Korea is already so chaotic. Female soldiers in particular will find, upon defection, that their basic women’s rights were violated on a regular basis.”*

Commenting on the issue of women’s health, An testified that, *“Firstly, supply bases lack the things that women need the most for their basic health and hygiene. In fact, some supply basis don’t lack these things at all – we are simply denied access to them. At these times, many women wish they had not been born female. It is because that we are female that we experience this type of discomfort.”*

“But on the other hand, some female soldiers receive special treatment from the higher-ups, and upon entry to certain privileged supply bases they are given free access to goods and supplies.”

While this sounds good for some, what An wishes to stress is the underlying issue of female objectification within the military. *“Military elites have ulterior motives when giving certain female soldiers special treatment.”*

In a country where the women’s rights record is sub-par, there is little that women can do except go along with it. This becomes somewhat an issue of women’s agency in North Korea: *“Some female commanding officers hear that a higher-up military elite will be visiting their base. At these times, the commanding officers only dispatch the most attractive female soldiers to work in the sentry, dining area, and infirmary. They post these soldiers*

in places that are typically visited by elite officials. In some special cases, detailed instructions as to how to speak to or act in front of the officials are given, depending on the official’s personal taste. Commanding officers even bribe officials to somehow bring better-looking soldiers to their bases. A few days later, the conditions at that base may change dramatically. Supplies could start flooding in without the need to appeal for resource replenishment.”

The commanding officers know that they are using the male objectification of women to get what they need. But if at least one conventionally beautiful women is present at an all-female base, the fate of that base could be changed dramatically, making life a little easier for the others.

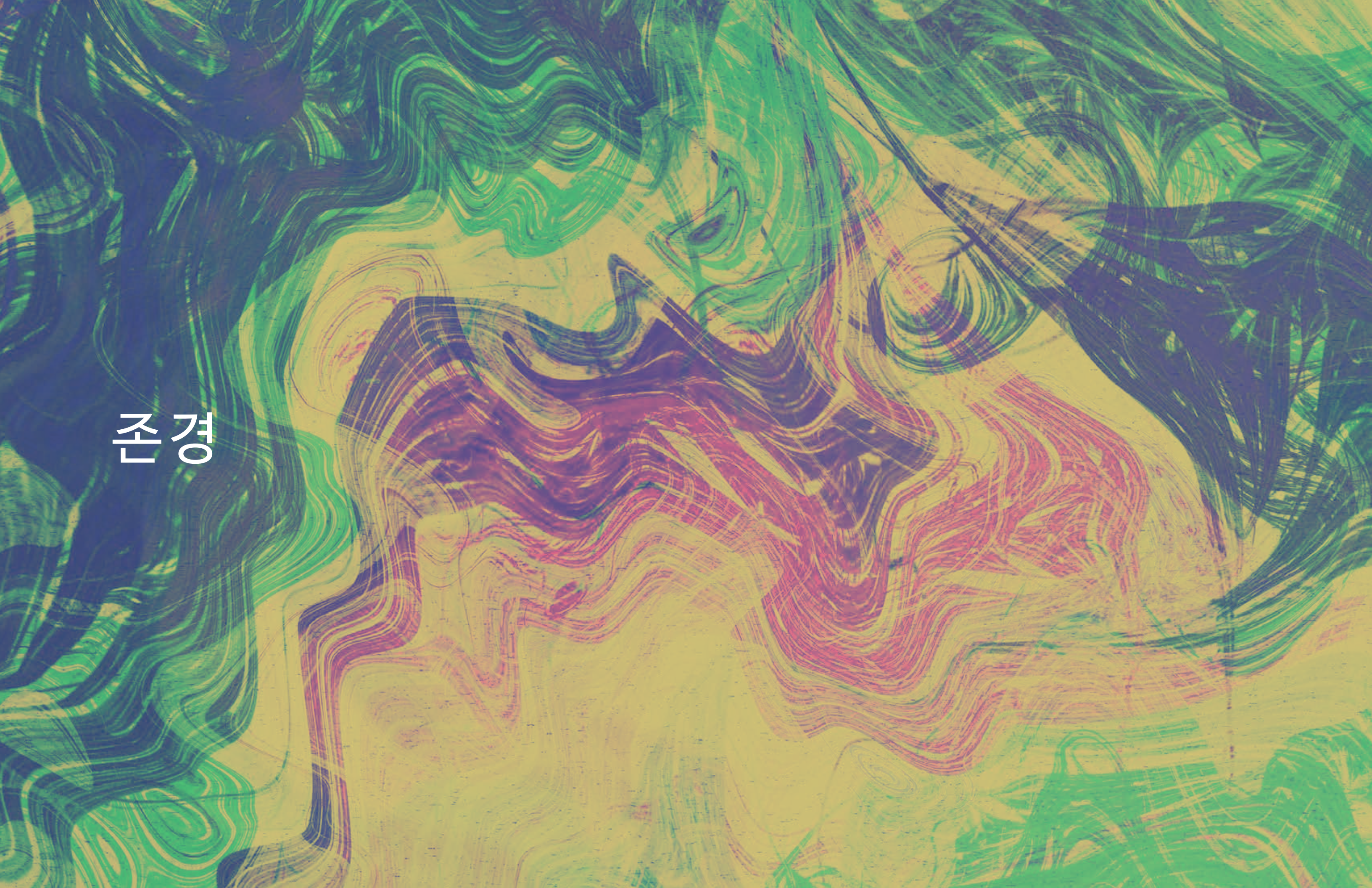


Military walk ►

Each of the women has their hair cut to the same prescribed length, while the mini-skirted uniform is completed with short socks over flesh-coloured tights.



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DAVID GUTTENFELDER

Photojournalist David Guttenfelder helped the Associated Press open a bureau in Pyongyang, and has made more than 40 trips to North Korea over the years.

In 2013, for the first time, North Korea allowed foreigners to carry mobile phones into the country and connect to their Koryolink network. Using Instagram from inside North Korea proved to be an powerful, new way to photograph, map, share and open a window to the otherwise-isolated country. TEXT by Phil Bicker

Since the 1948 creation of separate governments for North and South Korea after World War II, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) in the North has remained behind an iron curtain, an isolated and secluded state. Our image of the country has been pieced together from pictures taken across the border at the DMZ, photographs provided by government news agencies or unauthorized surreptitious photographs taken by western photographers inside the country until now.

WIn January, the Associated Press opened a bureau in Pyongyang for full news coverage within North Korea. AP’s Chief Asia Photographer David Guttenfelder who first traveled to North Korea as a pool photographer in January 2000 to cover the visit of Madeline Albright has made a dozen trips to the country over the past 18 months as part of the negotiating team and on reporting trips with Jean H. Lee, AP bureau chief for the Koreas, taking photos each time. Guttenfelder’s approach to showing North Korea to the world has been shaped by his long and prestigious career with the AP.

Guttenfelder has just received two honors from the Overseas Press Club, which announced their annual awards this morning. The Olivier Rebbot Award for best photographic reporting from abroad, in magazines or books, and the Feature Photography Award for best feature photography, published in any medium on an international theme, recognize his recent work from last year’s Tsunami aftermath in Japan and his work inside North Korea. In 1994, Guttenfelder traveled to the former Zaire to cover the Rwandan refugee crisis as a freelance photographer. “I thought if I ever wanted to do something more serious, this was it,” he says. Guttenfelder stayed in Africa for five years, stringing for the AP, among other outlets, and eventually became an AP staff photographer. He hasn’t lived in the States since. In the ensuing years, he has worked all over the world, from Kosovo to Israel and Iraq to Afghanistan. In 1999 he became AP’s Chief Asia photographer and moved to Japan.

Guttenfelder says when he first worked in Asia he wondered if he had made the right decision. “In the beginning it was really hard, I’d only ever covered conflict and had not done anything else,” he says. One of his first assignments was covering family reunions between North and South Koreans in Seoul. “I wasn’t used to taking photographs in an organized event surrounded by other photographers in such a modern context,” he says. “Now I look back and it was really important work. I only really spoke one language at that point fighting, refugees and hard news so it was an important transition for me.”

Fittingly then, when Guttenfelder was in Iraq during the U.S. invasion, he focused on trying to cover the Iraqi side of the war rather than embedding with U.S. troops. “I always thought of myself as the guy on the other side of things,” he says. Then, a year later, when Baghdad fell, Guttenfelder found himself confined to the Palestine Hotel and his role and means of covering the conflict changed again.

“We needed local photographers to cover the streets, someone who could bring back regular pictures of normal people’s lives”

He solicited photographers, but found that they needed extensive training. Although the people Guttenfelder worked with barely knew the fundamentals of photography and worked with primitive equipment including a camera that used floppy disks they produced important work. Several of the regional photographers that Guttenfelder and his AP colleagues trained, Khalid Mohammed, Samir Mizban and Karim Kadim, became Pulitzer-Prize winning photographers when AP received the award for breaking news photography in 2005.

Iraq was not the only place Guttenfelder worked training and developing regional photographers; he also did so in Afghanistan, Israel and Palestine. His work in Afghanistan, which he considers the most important of his career, included the recruitment of Farzana Wahidy, the first Afghan woman to work as a news photographer after the fall of the Taliban. Between 2001 to 2010 Guttenfelder made at least 20 trips to Afghanistan, staying for as long as six months to a year at a time. Early on he covered the first election, and projects on the Afghan civilian side of things. But from 2007-2010 Guttenfelder focused on embeds and did multiple military trips including a stint in the Korengal Valley and was part of all of the major U.S. Marine operations into Helmand. Guttenfelder eventually moved back to Japan in 2006, and he still lives there today. His first news photography in Japan came in March 2011, in the aftermath of the tsunami. Although his work there is highly regarded, he says he feels that his photographs could not capture the magnitude of what he saw.

Still, his experience with being dropped into a new place and quickly capturing the sense of its culture proved invaluable. “There is a known language to disaster pictures; you see the same things, people reaching through chaos, people reaching for food, a lot of emotion. Photographers were trying to find those pictures that existed in other places. It’s just not like that here. That’s just not

how it is in Japan,” he says, noting that the emotionally moving picture embedded here, of a woman, on her knees, caressing and singing to her mother’s body, would seem subtle in another place but is a very “loud” picture for Japan.

Although he continues to be based in Japan, Guttenfelder has spent much of the past year in North Korea in preparation for the new AP bureau, which opened in January. Guttenfelder has been part of the negotiating team at meetings that have taken place in Pyongyang and New York over the last eighteen months.

“At the first meeting, we left with an agreement that we would hold a photo exhibition and workshop and work towards an AP office in the country,” he says. The joint exhibition, Window on North Korea, on view earlier this month at the 8th Floor Gallery in New York, featured images from both AP and the KCNA archives and a workshop held in North Korea offered an opportunity for KCNA photographers get technical training, for the AP to recruit staff and for the two parties get to know one another.

“We are starting from zero in a system that is so different from anything we’ve done before”

WWThe photo exhibition and workshop were an overture to build trust and collaborate on something, and Guttenfelder has already begun working with a regional photographer, Kim Kwang Hyon. But the most interesting result of the collaboration is the opportunity it has afforded for Guttenfelder to photograph inside North Korea.

Although he is accompanied by a guide wherever he goes and has to request in advance where he wants to go, the daily life photographs that he has taken—often one-off shots made on the

way to or from an event provide a stark contrast to the highly orchestrated government news-agency photos that are more commonly seen out of North Korea. Despite the normalcy portrayed in these photographs, Guttenfelder says they are actually the most important images because they paint a picture of a place that has been hitherto a mystery. And that can open the window for understanding in both directions. “At the beginning I would take a picture in the street of people standing waiting for the bus. I could tell they didn’t really understand and thought it looked bad, looked poor,” he says. “I would spend a lot of time explaining that people wait for the bus and commute to work everywhere in the world and that someone beyond North Korea could make a connection that picture breaks down barriers.”

Recently, a select group of photojournalists from western agencies have been allowed into North Korea to cover the celebrations of the birth of the country’s Eternal President Kim Il-sung and a missile launch. How long they will be able to stay is in question, but Guttenfelder and AP are committed for the long term.

“It’s a really good time to have an office here and to see how things evolve,” he says. “I feel a huge responsibility because this is the first time the country has allowed this much access to one of us.”





◀ **Sunset through hotel window**
For the few foreign journalists who have had repeated access to the North, the views from the window become vital, offering counterpoints to the cascade of officially arranged scenes.







Living room ►

When only the exceptional is publicized, the everyday details become the most intriguing — the stories of 25 million lives, unabstracted by politics. They are the mysteries most worth revealing.





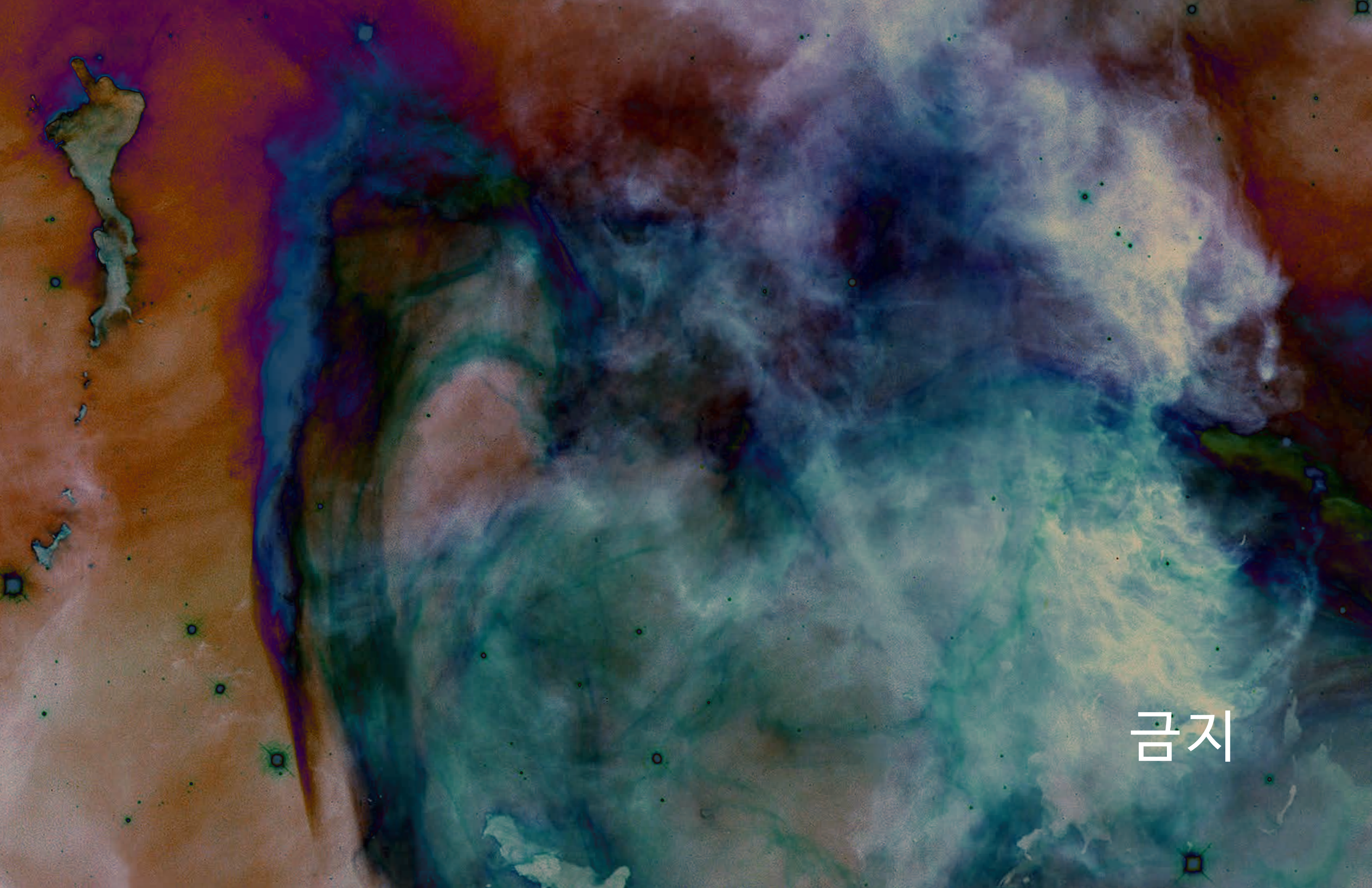


▲ Visit the Countryside

North Koreans have very little free time; most of them work six days a week. And they also have very little control over how they use their time outside of work.







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NOKO JEANS

It was an idea born out of a late night of drinking, but it quickly became reality. Three Swedish men have established a line of jeans made in North Korea and sold in Stockholm. But they weren't prepared for the criticism their pants have produced. Text by Sandra Schulz

They were three young, hung-over Swedish men who had been out drinking the night before to drown their sorrows -- and they had an idea. They sent an e-mail to North Korea. The subject line read: „*Investing in the Democratic People's Republic.*” More than two years later, a shipment of 1,100 designer jeans arrived in Stockholm.

This is the story of an experiment. How does one gain access to one of the most sealed-off countries in the world? In the digital age, North Korea is the last remaining bit of terra incognita in the Worldwide Web. Whereas Jakob Ohlsson, 23, Tor Rauden Källstigen, 24 and Jacob Aström, 25, spend a lot of time online, and they are never without their laptops.

On that July 20, 2007, the three Swedes were skimming North Korea's „official Web page” and discovered a new button, titled „Business.” After only two mouse clicks, they found themselves looking at a list of possible North Korean export goods: cosmetics, trucks, marble, weapons, mineral water, fire extinguishers and -- jeans. They wrote to the contact address, claiming that they were import-export managers for a fictitious company, and they waited. Less than 24 hours later, a friendly Mr. Sapmak wrote back and thanked them for their interest. It was the beginning of „Noko Jeans.”

In November 2007, the three Swedes made their first telephone call to the North Korean Embassy in Stockholm. Ohlsson said: „*I'm calling from Stockholm.*” The embassy spokesperson replied: „*That's nearby. We also live in Stockholm.*” Ohlsson: „We have started this company „ Embassy spokesperson: „*It'll be Christmas soon.*” Otherwise, the North Koreans promised the Swedes whatever support they could provide. The three Swedes brought along Ohlsson's father, a suit-wearing dentist, to their first meeting to add an aura of credibility.

There were two models „Kara,” a slim fit, and „Oke,” a loose fit and they were made in Pyongyang.

In December 2007, they gave a North Korean delegation two sample pairs of jeans, including a used pair owned by one of the three Swedes, for inspection at a textile factory in Pyongyang. In the spring of 2008, they sent the North Korean Embassy a wish list for their upcoming trip to the North Korean capital: a visit to a computer center, meetings with ordinary young people in Pyongyang and „mass games,” a North Korean specialty which sees huge numbers of performers take part in highly choreographed spectacles.



▲ Jacob Aström



▲ Tor Rauden Källstigen



▲ Jakob Ohlsson



▲ **Fashion Shooting**
Designer jeans labeled „Made in North Korea“ will go on sale this Friday at a trendy department store in the Swedish capital, marking a first foray into Western fashion for the reclusive communist state.
The jeans, marketed under the „Noko“ brand, carry a price tag of 1,500 Swedish crowns (\$215) and will share shelf space at Stockholm’s PUB store with brands such as Guess and Levi’s.



MIHAELA NOROC



THE ATLAS OF BEAUTY

The Atlas Of Beauty is a project about our planet’s diversity shown through portraits of women. Since almost 3 years ago, I travel around the world with my backpack and my camera. In this journey I photograph natural women surrounded by their environment. Text by Sian Ranscombe

These photographs are part of a project by 30-year-old Romanian photographer Mihaela Noroc, who has so far covered 37 countries as part of her project, titled The Atlas of Beauty. Noroc, from Bucharest, most recently visited North Korea in an effort to capture the beauty of the women native to a nation largely still shrouded in secrecy. On her Tumblr blog, she says *“Beauty means diversity and I travel the world to discover it. From Western Europe to African Tribes, and from Rio de Janeiro to China, I try to capture in my photos, natural and diverse faces.”* She says staying true to one's culture and origins is the meaning of true beauty, an opinion well illustrated in the photo series so far. *“Maybe in 50 years all women from all around the world will dress and act the same. I hope my project will remain a witness of my era’s cultures and traditions,”* says Noroc. Of her journey to North Korea, where she photographed women soldiers, performers and waitresses, she told BuzzFeed News:

“North Korean women are not familiar with global trends, but this doesn’t mean they are not preoccupied with their look. They have a passion for high heels and usually wear classic outfits, always accompanied by a pin on the chest, representing the country’s leaders.”

Unlike their South Korean neighbours, who are currently leading the way in the beauty industry, with it last week revealed that the Estee Lauder Companies had made a significant investment in the market, women in North Korea can find beauty products difficult to come by. Earlier this year it was reported that wealthy North Korean women have been able to purchase skincare products from South Korea through a local trading firm, and that cosmetic surgery is on the rise under leader Kim Jong-un, who wishes to be seen as more progressive than his predecessor. Meanwhile a poster on NKNews.com wrote that girls in the country are forbidden from wearing make-up until graduation from high school. *“Most North Koreans traditionally used skin toner and lotion only,”* wrote Je Son Lee, who now lives in South Korea. *“From 2000 North Korea began to produce its own cosmetics line called ‘You and I’ in its Hamhung factory. This cosmetics line was created to be supplied to high-ranking government officials, as well as to be exported.”*



◀ **Train worker**
North Korea has the most beautiful women in the peninsula, while South Korea [has] the most beautiful men.





▲ *Beauty is everywhere*
During celebrations and other special occasions, they wear traditional colorful outfits.



▲ *Oldfashion dress*
Nearly 30,000 North Korean refugees have made it safely to South Korea. 70% of them are female.
Among the more than twenty thousand female North Koreans who have made it all the way to safe resettlement in South Korea have emerged some of the most effective advocates for the North Korean people.



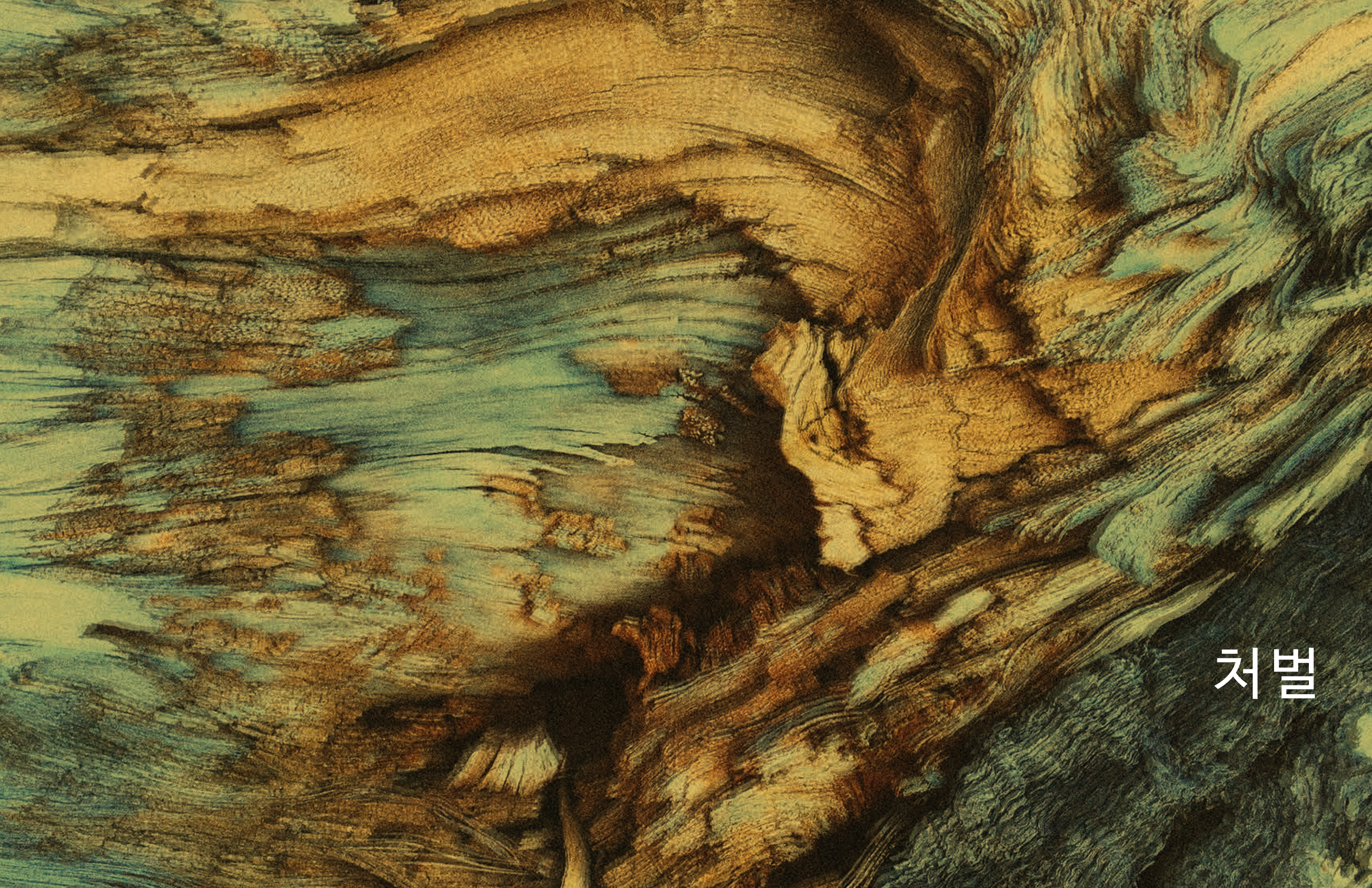
28 STATE-APPROVED HAIRSTYLES
Text by Courtney Subramanian

It looks a lot of this year's male Oscar winners wouldn't survive the Communist state of North Korea without a haircut.

The Telegraph reports that the world's favorite hermit state is implementing state-sanctioned haircuts for men and women. Women are allowed to choose one of 14 styles; married women are instructed to keep their tresses short, while the single ladies are allowed let loose with longer, curlier locks. Men are prohibited from growing their hair longer than 5 cm — less than 2 inches — while older men can get away with up to 7 cm (3 inches). Oddly enough, the list falls short of including its young leader Kim Jong Un's current look — a variation on the high-and-tight that may be too much of a power 'do for North Korea's non-elite.

But hair conformity is nothing new in North Korea. The Daily Mail reports that in 2005 state TV aired a five part series on haircut guidelines for today's modern socialist lifestyle, and it seems the concept is reemerging under North Korea's new leader. There are a couple theories as to why this mandate is in place, including that Kim is not a fan of previous styles. Perhaps he just wants to avoid having to grow a pompadour like his father's.





처벌

AMERICAN HOSTAGES
IN NORTH KOREA



Otto Warmbier ►

North Korea sees foreign prisoners as a valuable tool to exert pressure on its enemies - and none are more valuable than Americans. Most foreigners detained in North Korea since the 1990s have been US citizens, while a handful have been dual American-South Korean nationals. They are usually accused of grandiose crimes such as "plotting to overthrow the state," and handed out harsh sentences to be served in the regime's notorious labour camps. In total, 13 Americans have been detained in North Korea since 1995.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN AMERICANS GET ARRESTED IN NORTH KOREA?

Former American detainee reveals new details of his captivity, showing what others can expect. TEXT by Justin Rohrich

Arrested last January for allegedly attempting to steal a political banner from a Pyongyang hotel, Otto Frederick Warmbier, a 21-year-old college student from Cincinnati, Ohio, has now spent nearly eight months locked up inside North Korea. One of the people trying to get Warmbier freed is David Sugarman, a pro sports agent and social activist who was behind the successful #BringBaeBack campaign, which helped raise the public's awareness of Kenneth Bae, the Lynnwood, Washington missionary arrested in 2012 for allegedly plotting to overthrow the North Korean government in a *“religious coup d’etat.”*

“For whatever reason God has blessed me with the ability to assist in prisoner releases with other people and I believe it’s my calling and destiny to do it,” Sugarman told Cincinnati Public Radio in April. In Jeffrey Fowle’s case, it was a calling from God that landed him in prison to begin with. The 56-year-old road maintenance worker from Miamisburg, Ohio was arrested in 2014 for planting a Bible underneath a trash bin in the bathroom of a seamen’s club in the port city of Chongjin, and spent six months detained in the North Korean capital. Fowle spoke to NK News about his ordeal, revealing new details of his captivity while shedding a bit of light on what Warmbier might be going through. Like Warmbier, Fowle’s troubles began with a bad idea, followed by a sloppy execution. He had written his name, address, and phone number inside the front cover of an Korean-English Bible, purposely leaving off the area code,” which Fowle says he thought would give him a modicum of *“plausible deniability like, like I had just put my information in there for identification purposes in case I ever lost it.”*

Like Warmbier, Fowle’s troubles began with a bad idea, followed by a sloppy execution

Fowle, who attends two church services every Sunday at two different churches, also forgot about the family photos he also accidentally left inside the Bible. When it was discovered a short while later, there was little question who had done the “crime.” At first, Fowle tried to keep the ruse going, saying the Bible must have accidentally fallen out of the pocket of his leather bomber jacket. When it was pointed out that the large Bible fit far too snugly in the small pocket for this to be at all plausible, Fowle owned up to everything. They would be leaving Pyongyang in the morning, and Fowle was instructed by the guides, who seemed to have been able to smooth things over with their North Korean hosts somewhat, to be on

his best behavior. The next day, as the group was boarding a flight back to China, two North Korean security agents approached Fowle and hustled him into the backseat of a black Volkswagen Passat waiting outside the terminal. They sat on either side of him; an interpreter Fowle would come to know as Mr. Jo, sat up front with the driver. No one said a word, and Fowle couldn’t get any of them to make eye contact with him. They pulled into a subterranean garage beneath the Yanggakdo Hotel. Fowle was taken up to suite 205 on the 36th floor, where he would spend the first 3 ½ months of his six-month captivity. The front room contained a table and four chairs, which is where Fowle was interrogated, or as he says, “interviewed,” two to three times a day. It was manned 24/7, and he wasn’t allowed to leave the adjacent bedroom unaccompanied.

Since the United States does not have diplomatic relations with North Korea, Sweden, the protecting power for the United States in the DPRK, took the lead. The U.S. State Department told Fowle’s Russian-born wife Tatyana not to discuss details of his detention with anybody, and to keep her contact with the media to a minimum. *“‘We’re doing what we can behind the scenes,’ and that’s about all they told her, actually,”* says Fowle. Of the ten or so people keeping watch over Fowle, three were responsible for interrogating him: Short Mr. Kim, Tall Mr. Kim, and “Mr. 56,” who refused to tell Fowle his name.

W”Mr. 56 told me that he’d worked on other detained foreigners before,” says Fowle. *“The guy who walked into North Korea from China,”* missionary Aijalon Gomes, arrested in 2010 *“and those two journalists,”* Euna Lee and Lisa Ling, arrested in 2009.

“He was Mr. 56 in my mental Rolodex; he was also 56 years old, same as me. That’s what he told me, anyway.” Through Mr. Jo, the two Kims and Mr. 56 tried to zero in on Fowle’s true motivations. Why Chongjin? they demanded.

Was he part of a secret in-country network of underground Christians? He wasn’t part of any organization, Fowle insisted. And although his initial plan to leave the Bible in a “more public place” than a men’s room stall in an isolated port town, Fowle says he was forced to act in Chongjin because, *“We were getting ready to leave, and it was now or never.”*

That first night, Fowle watched TV to try take his mind off his predicament, and was pleased to find NHK, BBC, and a handful of Chinese channels in addition to North Korea’s state-run stations. The next morning, a maintenance worker came in to install a filter, restricting Fowle to only three local North Korean propaganda channels.



◀ **Fifteen years Prison**

It’s now been 200 days since American student Otto Warmbier was placed in detention in North Korea after drunkenly attempting to take a political propaganda poster from his Pyongyang hotel. Warmbier was tried and sentenced to 15 years hard labor in March, but has been detained since January 2.

Fowle says he was given pen and paper and forced to “write, write, write, all I did was write.” His confession didn’t have enough oomph for his interrogators, no matter how many times he rewrote it. His days became an endless loop of revisions, receiving details and ideas to incorporate into his admission of guilt from the Kims and 56, who would then further shape Fowle’s story to their satisfaction.

Everything but a few articles of clothing, a toothbrush, and a comb had been confiscated from Fowle and meticulously inventoried by his minders. He clipped his nails with a Swiss Army knife a tourist had given Mr. Jo, and shaved with Mr. Jo’s electric razor, which he told Fowle was a gift from a tourist, as well.

“Most of the guys there with me told me they normally gave tours for KITC (the government-run Korean International Tourism Company, which accompanies all foreign groups), but got drawn into this as a temporary thing,” Fowle says. *“They wanted to get back to that, and I was sort of delaying their main line of work.”*

Fowle was provided three Korean-style meals a day at the Yanggakdo “like any regular tourist would eat.” Western-style food was available by request, but Fowle was told he would have to pay extra for that. He’d also have to pay extra for laundry service, so Fowle, who was instructed to wear business attire to his interrogation sessions, washed his clothes in the shower and hung them up to dry.

At the end of June, Fowle was abruptly driven to the nearby Pothonggang Hotel for a meeting with someone the North Koreans would only identify as “a third party.” This turned out to be Swedish Ambassador Karl-Olof Andersson, who came bearing a care package of sorts for Fowle, including a letter from Tatyana, whom Fowle calls “Tanya,” and their three kids.

“I was elated that at least Tanya knew what the situation was, at least rudimentarily, and that my family wasn’t in the dark,” says Fowle, who hadn’t yet been able to call home. *“There was also a*

Milka bar in there, a Swedish candy. I figured my wife told them I was a fan of chocolate. When the ambassador handed it to me, Mr. Jo reached out and grabbed it before I could. He let me have it a couple of days later.”

The package also contained a British printing of an Ernest Hemingway anthology, which had been sent along by the staff at Koryo Tours. When Mr. Jo later remarked on the fact that the book had come from Fowle’s family, Fowle pointed out that the price printed on the back cover was in pounds sterling, not U.S. dollars, and that it probably hadn’t. A 30-minute call home cost Fowle \$140, payable on the spot, in cash

“Mr. Jo said, ‘We need to review this,’ and I never saw it again after that,” Fowle says. “Because the source was a little bit different than what they had been told by the Swedish embassy or whatever, it was ‘not good for me to have.’”

A 30-minute call home cost Fowle \$140, payable on the spot, in cash. He had about \$700 with him but chose not to use the phone again, explaining, *“At that time, I still figured they’d dump me off in Beijing somewhere and I’d have to pay my way back to the States, so I was trying to conserve money.”*

Fourteen weeks after he arrived at the Yanggakdo, Fowle was instructed to pack up his belongings and get ready to go. After his few possessions were checked against the inventory list, Fowle was driven to what has been described in the media as a guesthouse, but says it was *“more like a business facility, with suites in it.”*

He would spend the rest of his detention there, confined to a small bedroom, which locked from the outside, for 23 hours a day. The room’s only window was “fogged over with a plastic film,” isolating Fowle even more.

During his first few days in the compound, Fowle says he heard “raised voices, like someone was being roughed-up verbally.” At first he thought it was “mental training for the staff or something like that.”

But he now believes he was listening to Matthew Miller, the 21-year-old American arrested for ripping up his visa on arrival at Pyongyang International Airport that past April, being punished for getting out of line. Although he says his minders took great pains to keep them apart, Fowle saw at least one trace of who he assumes was Miller.

“Someone had scratched the words ‘No schoolboy’ inside a desk drawer, in English,” Fowle says. “It brought to mind a phrase used by one of my interrogators. When he didn’t like my line of reasoning, he would say, ‘You’re using schoolboy logic.’”

The windows in the interrogation room weren’t frosted over, and Fowle savored any quick glimpse he could get of the outside world. His brother’s wife sent him a week’s worth of crosswords and Sudoku she cut out of the local paper, which Fowle says spooked his minders. From then on, Fowle never got any more puzzles, and his subsequent letters asking for more never got to his sister-in-law.

“I later found out the North Koreans asked the State Department not to let them send any more puzzles,” says Fowle. “I think they thought it was some kind of code.” (Fowle no longer uses the Yahoo email address he had when he went to North Korea, as the North Koreans extracted his login details during an interrogation session and Fowle assumes they are still monitoring his account.) The Kims and 56 told Fowle that he would soon be going to trial.

There was no doubt he’d be found guilty, and Fowle’s next stop would be prison, they said.

Fowle had no reason not to believe them, and began preparing himself for the worst. Toward the end of October, Mr. Jo appeared at Fowle’s door with Short Mr. Kim and told him to pack his things again. “They brought down the suitcase I hadn’t seen in six months, and they kept saying, ‘Come on, hurry up, we’ve got to get going,’” Fowle said. “Short Mr. Kim was smiling slightly. I thought, ‘Oh, here we go, I’m going off to prison now.’ I was kind of ticked off.” After the contents of his luggage were checked against the North Koreans’ inventory list, Fowle was taken to the Pothonggang Hotel, where Fowle met previously with Ambassador Andersson. He had given interviews to CNN and the Associated Press a month earlier at the same hotel, so Fowle assumed the North Koreans milling around with cameras were local media. He noted one Westerner among the crowd, and took him for a European journalist. Suddenly, Fowle says, “This North Korean guy in a suit comes up to me and says, ‘The First Party Chairman and Marshal Kim Jong

Un have recommended that you be released. Immediately after that, the Western-looking guy and a Korean-American guy step up and say, ‘We’re from the Department of Defense, you’re going home.’ It hit me like a ton of bricks, because here I was waiting for the ax to fall.”

Two North Koreans Fowle had never seen before drove the three of them to the Pyongyang airport in a vintage Mercedes sedan, and stopped directly in front of a DoD 737 waiting on the tarmac. It had arrived according to a schedule dictated by the North Koreans.

The plane flew south over the Sea of Japan to Andersen Air Force Base in Guam, avoiding South Korean airspace entirely

Once aboard, the plane flew south over the Sea of Japan to Andersen Air Force Base in Guam, avoiding South Korean airspace entirely. Along the way, the flight encountered turbulence so severe, Fowle says a DoD official was taken off the aircraft on a stretcher after landing. At Andersen, Fowle and the team of roughly 20 DoD personnel accompanying him transferred to an identical 737 for the seven-hour flight to Hickam Field in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. After the plane took on fuel, Fowle was finally headed back to Ohio.

“I was able to talk to Tanya while we were over the Pacific, and I had this idea to surprise my kids at school,” Fowle says. “But that would have been impossible. I was not aware of how huge a media event this was.”

Eight hours later, Fowle’s plane landed at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio. “My wife, my kids, and my wife’s mom were right at the bottom of the stairs when I got off, and a few military officials, too,” says Fowle. “I felt like getting down and kissing the tarmac, but that’s been done before,” Fowle says. He was told that former Ohio Senator Tony Hall, an evangelical Christian who later served as the U.S. Ambassador to the UN Agencies for Food and Agriculture, met several times with members of North Korea’s Mission to the UN in New York City during Fowle’s detention, but says he never got any further details about why he was let go. A State Department spokesperson would say only that the government of Sweden facilitated Fowle’s release, and would not discuss the case due to privacy laws. In January, Governor John Kasich sent a letter to President Obama seeking his assistance in freeing Otto Warmbier.

“The DPRK has made a regular practice of arresting and incarcerating American citizens,” Kasich wrote. “Pyongyang has used

these arrests as a means by which to try to force the reopening of stalled diplomatic relations or simply to antagonize the United States. ” And while politics surely play a role, a source inside the North Korean tourism industry who was involved with both the Fowle and Warmbier cases says it’s actually fairly difficult to get arrested in North Korea.

“There’s no way Jeff Fowle actually thought it was okay to leave a Bible in a bathroom, and there’s no way Otto Warmbier thought it was okay to steal a sign off the wall of a hotel,” says the source, who asked to remain anonymous due to the sensitivity of situation. “These are not weird, obscure laws, these are laws you would expect. If you don’t do anything wrong, a tourist in North Korea isn’t in any danger whatsoever of being arbitrarily detained.”



ESCAPE FROM CAMP 14

TEXT by Stephen Applebaum ⁷

Marc Wiese’s documentary is more sober than *The Act of Killing* about the 1965-66 Indonesian genocide, but its revelations about North Korea’s political prison camps are no less devastating. Using interviews and atmospheric animated sequences, Weise uncovers a world where brutality is the norm and conditioning blurs the line between victim and perpetrator. Shin Dong-hyuk was born in Camp 14 and would have died there if he hadn’t escaped, aged 23. He describes, hesitatingly, how informing on his own mother and brother led to their execution. Watching them die, he felt nothing. His stories are supported by a former commander of the guards at Camp 22 and an ex-secret policeman who casually admit to murder, rape, torture and other abuses performed with impunity. Today, they live normal lives in South Korea. The cumulative effect is sickening, saddening and disturbing.

Genre:	Documentary, Drama, Special Interest
Directed:	Marc Wiese
Story:	Marc Wiese
Runtime:	104 minutees

SHOWROOM

Instagram posts tagged with #dprk



▲ siegfried_chu
A girl was sweeping the snow on Mansu Hill. Mansudae Grand Monument, Pyongyang, Dec.25, 2016.



▲ saigaai
#dprk #northkorea #everydaydprk #everydaynorthkorea #everydayasia #everydayeverywhere #streetphotography #documentaryphotography #panasonic #lx100



▲ aikotruszkowski
snowy village in North Korea on the way to Pyongyang.



▲ mattkulesza
Who needs ads when you've got calming images of waterfalls instead.



▲ ray2toei
School girl, pyongyang. 2012



▲ siegfried_chu
Worker-Peasant Red Guards of the North Korea, Sunan International Airport, Pyongyang, January. 16, 2017.



▲ ludoross
#northkorea #dprk #pyongyang #party-foundationmonument #koryotours



▲ pdp_photography
Eternal stairway



▲ newsjean
Sledding in Pyongyang, North Korea. So cold that day that the streets were frozen over. We don't see such rustic sleds anymore in South Korea but my father took one look at this image and said that's how they „skated” on the Han River when he was a boy. (70 years later, the Han no longer freezes in winter

어둡다



ELAINE LI

Pyongyang's subway built some 316 feet belowground is among the deepest transportation systems on the planet. And yet the 17-stop network has long been like most everything in North Korea: a complete mystery to the outside world. So much so, in fact, that some foreigners believed the subways were an elaborate hoax peddled by a government attempting to legitimize itself. Yet over the past year, North Korea has opened its full metro system to tourists for the first time, which is why Hong Kong-based photographer Elaine Li made the trip. What Li discovered beneath the capital defied expectations. *"Although the stations are very dimly lit, the interiors are extremely ornate,"* she says. *"You see chandeliers on the ceilings, marble pillars, and of course, paintings of [former Supreme Leader] Kim Jong-il."* AD tours Pyongyang's never-before-seen subway system for a peek inside one of the least-known countries in the world. TEXT by Nick Mafi *



▲ Escalator in metro station

While commuters descend deep below the city, they are accompanied by a soundtrack of patriotic anthems playing over aged loudspeakers.



▲ Propaganda is everywhere

The subway stations feature detailed mosaic murals, which often display some sort of propaganda.



▲ Impressive architecture

One of the main metro stops is located below the city's primary business district. It's beautifully decorated with chandeliers on the ceilings.



▲ A signal, allowing the train to proceed.

For years skeptics of North Korea's metro system thought the few pictures the government did release were of actors posing as commuters.



◀ **Nobody ran, pushed or smiled**

During my visit to North Korea, I was part of the first ever group of foreigners given access to all stations across both lines of the Pyongyang Metro. This may sound mundane, but the previously restricted Pyongyang Metro is surely one of the most mysterious, yet beautiful transit systems on earth. Ultrationalistic in theme, each station parades North Korea's revolutionary goals and achievements to impressionable commuters. In many ways, it's a small museum, most of which was previously hidden from outside eyes and subsequently shrouded in conspiracy theories. Sensationalism aside, here's my journey in over sixty photos of the beating heart of Pyongyang, the Pyongyang Metro.

THE GREAT ESCAPE

INTERVIEW: After her epic escape, Park Yeon-mi devoted herself to revealing the brutal truth about North Korea – but the regime is determined to discredit her and other defectors

TEXT by Alex Preston

Yeonmi Park was born in the North Korean city of Hyesan, close to the Chinese border, and brought up in the brutal and paranoid atmosphere of the Kim dictatorships. Aged 13, she and her mother braved the frontier guards and fled to China. In *Order to Live*, her clear-eyed and devastating autobiography tells of her famine-struck childhood in North Korea, her defection and the years in which she was trafficked around northern China by gangsters running forced marriage and prostitution rackets. She and her mother, finally reunited, travelled across the Gobi desert before reaching freedom. Park is now studying criminal justice in South Korea and working as an activist, most recently speaking at the One Young World summit in Dublin and at the UN Human Rights session on North Korea. ventually the mother and daughter took a chance to escape to South Korea through the Gobi desert. In South Korea, Park studied Criminal Justice at Dongguk University. She has since become a prominent defector, speaking at various international summits, including the UN Human Rights session on North Korea.

This spring, Park moved from South Korea to New York City, where she studies economics at Columbia University. We caught up with Park to find out how she is finding life in the US.



▲ A signal, allowing the train to proceed.

Yeonmi Park, a young woman who fled North Korea after seeing friends and family tortured and killed.



◀ **In Order to Live! Book**

In order to live by Yeonmi Park (Penguin, £18.99). To order a copy for £13.29, go to bookshop.theguardian.com or call 0330 333 6846. Free UK p&p over £10, online orders only. Phone orders min. p&p of £1.99.

How has seeing your life on the page made you feel? It's a harrowing story.

Until I started to write this book, I didn't know what trauma was, I didn't know what a counsellor did, because in North Korea we don't have these words, we don't have these jobs. I didn't know what post-traumatic stress disorder was and I didn't think I had it. I thought that I was a totally normal person. Until I started writing the book, I just shut my mind off. I couldn't even remember what had happened – a lot of things I had just blacked out. As I started writing it down, I started remembering: writing was a process of remembering. It was also reliving it. After I wrote the book, when I read it on my own, I could see the order of the story. I said: "Wow, this is what happened and this is how it happened." Because I wrote it not only using my own memory, but using my mother's memory, my sister's memory, using the memories of the people who escaped with us. So lots of people had their input. And it's only now that I feel free. I don't feel like I did before, when something was pushing me down. Now I've written the book all that pressure has gone.

Was there any of your own past that you were tempted to leave there?

Honestly, I was never going to let this story out. I was determined to forget these memories. Now I'm thinking about the fact that – wow! – my grandchildren will read this book. Am I going to have a normal family after this? Someone who will see me and say: "You are not crazy." To know a girl who's been through that, do you really want to be friends with that person? Or be their partner? To me, it was surrendering everything – my privacy, my dignity as a woman who wants to be a normal person.

You write frankly about the way North Korean women in China are treated as "merchandise" by the people traffickers...

There are thousands of people who are going through this and their stories cannot be heard. If you can be more open about this, then it will help others talk about it. In North Korean society, for a woman to admit these kinds of things, it's the end of the world. Our tradition is purity, virginity – for a woman, that is everything. A woman cannot talk about the bad things that happen to her. So writing this did feel like the end of the world for me.

With a few notable exceptions, the men in your story are monsters, exploiting women for gain or pleasure.

For a long time, I lost faith in humanity, especially men. I couldn't imagine that I'd ever see men as normal people and I could never trust them. I couldn't bear any human connection with men. Until recently, I just couldn't do it. It has been six years and there has been no contact with men. It was only when I started writing this book that I refound hope in humanity, and especially in men. It was bad for me to hate men for such a long time, to think they were the worst thing in the world. My father was a man. *Another Holocaust is happening and the west is saying: It isn't happening, it's a joke, it's funny*

One man, in particular, stands out – Hongwei. He's a violent gangster, but he also clearly loved you.

Do you have mixed emotions about him now?

Later, I could understand him in some ways. I thought about this a lot. I was going to kill him. I said I'd never forgive him, that there was nothing he could do to make me feel that he could justify what he did. But people can make mistakes. He'd lost his own parents, he knew what it was to live without your parents, so he knew what I was going through. So I cannot hate him any more, but everything is very complex; I cannot say exactly what I feel.

Will there be a Kim in charge of North Korea in 50 years' time?

Of course we won't let that happen. I'm not going to let that happen. I'll live longer than Kim Jong-un – he's fatter than me. He doesn't like me.

It must be a sign that you're doing something right that the Kim regime feels the need to spread malicious propaganda about you?

That's what I tell myself. Honestly, it's terrifying that one of the most brutal regimes in the world is against me. To them, life means nothing compared with their need for power. Now not only my life is at risk, but all of my relatives' lives are at risk. It's a huge responsibility and it almost made me want to give up the whole project altogether. I'm terrified that they'll do something to my relatives. But I knew what was going on in North Korea and I knew I had to speak about it. It was unacceptable.



ERIC LAFFORGUE

After publishing hundreds of photos from six visits to North Korea, it was an offhand comment that got French photographer Eric Lafforgue banned.

Lafforgue had seen Spanish tourists wearing Kim Jung Il shirts and told a friend that they likely wouldn't wear them in Barcelona. The Spaniards heard it and told the guide. One month after returning from the trip, he recieved a letter with screen captures of his photos, saying they were not good for North Korea and that he could not return.

„They know that when I come, I take pictures. They prefer the tourism money, until it causes a problem for one of the people in charge,” Lafforgue told Business Insider.


Lafforgue has always been well aware of this, but throughout the years, he's played „their game,” as he calls it, to produce some incredible photography.

“The North Korean regime controls everything that goes out of the country,” he said. “Even me, when they let me take a picture of kids smiling, its because it’s good for the country. I take those pictures because there is a real part of the people that are happy and I want to document that ... North Koreans are brainwashed, but they live like everybody in the world.”

TEXT by Harrison Jacobs



▲ **Banned Photos Eric Lafforgue Smuggled Out of North Korea.**
A woman standing in the middle of a crowd of soldiers. This picture is not supposed to be taken as officials do not allow army pictures.




지속

IMPRESSUM


EDITORIAL DESIGN
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milansoremski.com

PRINT
4/4 - farbig Eruoskala/Euroskala
Koller Media
www.kollermedia.com

PAPER
Paper: Munken Lynx 170 g/m²
Cover: Munken Lynx 300 g/m²
Klebebindung mit Holmet

 Munken

TYPEFACES
NanumBarun
Acumin Pro
designed by Robert Slimbach

 Adobe

EDITORIAL OFFICE
Editorial
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Introduction
lonleyplanet
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PREVIEW

ISSUE 2 •
RED LIGHT SECRETS



▲ **Jane Hilton Photography**
Prostitutes pose in haunting portraits that reveal the mundane reality of life inside the Nevada brothels they call home.



▲ **Sex Sells, Even In Broke Greece**
With an unemployment rate over 25 percent, and most of those who do have jobs seemingly taking turns declaring anti-austerity general strikes, it would appear to the casual observer that almost nobody actually works in Greece.

On sale from April 20.

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John Kaplan

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