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# ***THE LAST PARADISE***

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICOLAS RIGHETTI

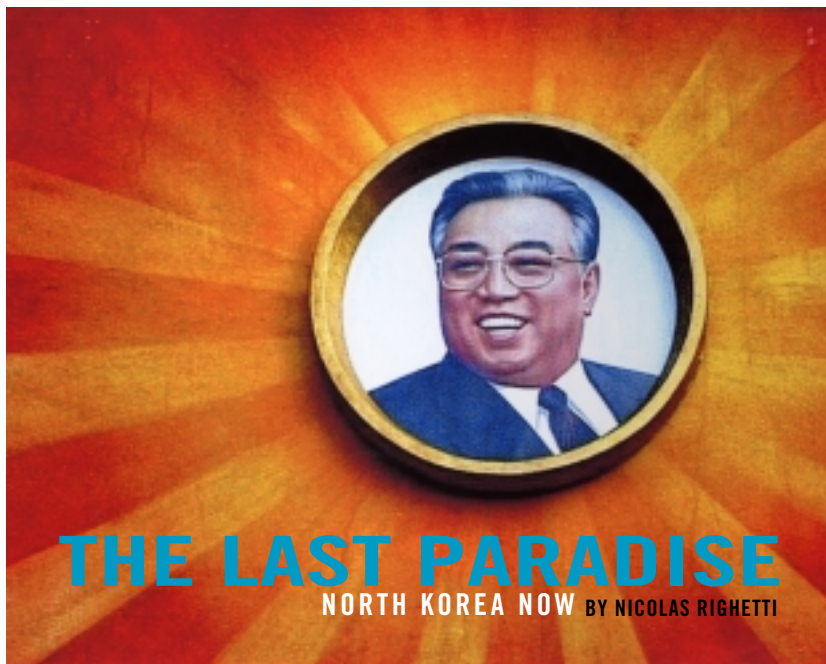
RIVETING GUIDED TOUR THROUGH NORTH KOREA'S  
SECRETIVE CULTURAL AND PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE

**UMBRAGE EDITIONS ANNOUNCES FALL 2003 PUBLICATION**

**BOOK SPECS:**  
Hardcover with jacket  
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9 x 7 inches (horizontal)  
128 pages  
70 four-color images

**\$35 USD**  
**October 2003**



**New York, New York** – Umbrage Editions is pleased to announce the Fall 2003 publication of ***The Last Paradise***. Through seventy enlightening images Nicolas Righetti offers a tantalizing glimpse into the surreal terrain and psyche of the world's only communist dynasty, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. An essay by the legendary journalist and academic, Orville Schell, Dean of UC Berkeley Journalism School, and author of fourteen books, provides insight and context. Secretive, paranoid, and unrepentantly militant, North Korea has incubated its own peculiar mix of communist utopianism and personality cult. ***The Last Paradise*** offers a riveting guided tour through this seductive yet chilling landscape; the paradoxes of an earthly paradise and the tragic outcome of an unattainable utopia with its dual message: "Welcome. Stay Away."

Righetti is one the few Western artists invited to photograph Pyongyang's "New Order of Happiness," after spending nine years securing permission to document North Korean society. Once allowed in, forbidden from speaking to or photographing individuals, he managed to create an intimate and compelling look into this closed society. Fifty years after the armistice established two separate nations on the Korean peninsula, the country remains a mystery to most of the world and now captures headlines as part of President George W. Bush's "Axis of Evil."

(more)

Nicolas Righetti makes careful note of the slogans in the street or of those regularly volunteered by his ever-present guide. "We are Happy," insists an airport sign greeting visitors; "We are in Heaven," reads another sign at a crossroads. The backdrop for the images is bright urban landscape dotted with paper flowers, curvaceous neo-constructivist architecture, and synchronized folk dancing. Any tell-tale signs to the contrary remain embedded in the absurd juxtaposition of details: huge guns hidden in the traditional landscape wall paintings; looming, inescapable portraits of the late Great Leader and his son; empty shelves at the Paradise Food Shop; Big Brother exhortations proclaiming nirvana achievable through "iron discipline."

AN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS OPENS IN EUROPE IN OCTOBER 2003.

NICOLAS RIGHETTI was born in Geneva, Switzerland, where he studied at the Institut d'Etudes Sociales and the Ecole Supérieure d'Audio Visuel, Geneva. Righetti has traveled, photographed, and filmed extensively throughout Asia, working as a still photographer on the set of various feature films in Hong Kong, Beijing, and Paris. His photographs have appeared in numerous publications worldwide.

ORVILLE SCHELL is one of the world's leading Asia experts. Now Dean of UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism, his groundbreaking work on China including the 1995 *Mandate of Heaven* (one of fourteen published works to date), and frequent writing for *The New Yorker*, *Harpers*, *Newsweek*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *The New York Times Magazine*. His work as a network correspondent (ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN) also underline his stature as a leading journalist on Asia.

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