

Agenda

The sharpest writing every Sunday
for arts, science, books and ideas

Agenda 2-7

- **On my radar** Actress Charlotte Riley chooses her cultural highlights
- **Róisín Lanigan** on the reality of life as a manosphere fake
- **The grid** Artist Abbey Hepner bottles the grief of nuclear fallout
- **Interview** Author Rebecca Solnit on finding hope in difficult times

Critics 20-29

- **Fiona Maddocks** goes inside the Sistine Chapel for a private concert
- **Kitty Empire** on Geese, the hottest band in the world
- **Laura Cumming** on Hurvin Anderson's memories of home
- **Katherine Cowles** sees Self Esteem become a rock 'n' roll star in a David Hare revival

Features 8-19

- **Interview** Vanessa Thorpe takes an exclusive peek inside the London studio of the late artist Paula Rego, with her son, Nick Willing
- **Cover story** Zoë Hitzig took on the tech bros when she quit OpenAI last month. She tells Melissa Denes why
- **Photography** Sean O'Hagan sees a different kind of America in long lost images from Chelsea Hotel
- **Nature** Simon Barnes celebrates the remarkable revival of cranes
- **John Naughton** on the promises and realities of the blogosphere

Books 30-37

- **Tina Brown** reviews *Betrayal*, which catalogues the woes – fiscal and otherwise – of Harry and Meghan
- **Lynn Barber** on *Enough Said*, Alan Bennett's fourth collection of diaries
- **Erica Wagner** enjoys a new biography of travel writer Jan Morris
- **Jade Cuttle** reviews *Gravity Archives*, Andrew Motion's first poetry collection in six years

Puzzles & Television 38-48

- Everyman crossword, sudokus, Azed, chess, guess the picture, cinema connect, Lexipedia quiz, and Goldilocks crossword
- The week's television and radio highlights
- **Barbara Ellen** on *Power: The Downfall of Huw Edwards*



15



8



18



5



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Contributors



● **Melissa Denes** (p12) is an award-winning magazine editor and writer. Her last piece for *The Observer* was on the ageing of Sean Penn's face.



● **Lynn Barber** (p32) has won six British press awards. Her books include the memoir *An Education*, which was made into a film in 2009.



● **Tina Brown** (p30) is a former editor of the *New Yorker*. Her books about the British royals include *The Diana Chronicles* and *The Palace Papers*.



● **Jade Cuttle** (p36) writes a monthly poetry column for *The Observer New Review*. She was named as BBC *New Generation Thinker* in 2024.



● **Sean O'Hagan's** (p15) most recent book was *Faith, Hope and Carnage*, created from lockdown conversations with Nick Cave.

On the cover: Zoë Hitzig photographed in San Francisco by Ian Bates



The big picture

Rania Matar's photograph of a Lebanese woman on the border with Israel is revealing due to what it keeps hidden

The building in the foreground is in Kfarkila, in southern Lebanon. The land beyond it is northern Israel. The border wall then in construction between the two countries runs below this building. On her tiptoes, with the breeze picking at her robe, it looks as though the young woman, Mariam, could rise up and sail across the wall to that horizon.

This striking shot is by Lebanese-American photographer Rania Matar, who began photographing young Lebanese women in the wake of the Beirut port explosion in 2020, when the country was also reeling from a financial meltdown. "I was in awe of the young women working in the reconstruction," Matar says. She spent the next five

years documenting their lives for her new book *Where Do I Go?*. She had photographed Mariam years earlier for a different project. This time she wanted to explore what life was like in close proximity to this hostile border. "We found a building under construction [from which] we could see into Israel," Matar recalls. "It was very eerie,

because it's a landscape that looks identical to the one we were in." Since the photograph was taken in 2022, much of the border region has been pummelled by Israeli shelling, and in recent weeks Israeli troops have crossed into Lebanese territory. One million residents have been displaced. "I keep checking on them," Matar says of Mariam and her

family. "I don't know where they are." For all the jagged edges in this image, there is beauty too. Matar found something "almost hopeful" in it, she tells me. "Little did I know it would be shattered now." **Killian Fox**
Where Do I Go? will be published by KAPH and the Sidney and Lois Eskenazi Museum of Art on 2 April