

Thursday, November 15, 2012, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Strictly Speaking

Fran Lebowitz



Cal Performances' 2012–2013 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

PURVEYOR OF URBAN COOL, witty chronicler of the “me decade,” and the cultural satirist whom many call the heir to Dorothy Parker, Fran Lebowitz remains one of the foremost advocates of the Extreme Statement. She offers insights on timely issues such as gender, race, gay rights, and the media, as well as her own pet peeves—including celebrity culture, tourists, and strollers.

In a recent interview in *The New York Observer*, Ms. Lebowitz held forth on New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg: “We don’t have time for Bloomberg...there are certain things that are in the public sphere and certain things that are in the private sphere. ... What people eat? It’s their own business. Bedbugs he should take care of. That’s a public health issue. Did you ever hear anyone say, ‘Do you like New York?’ ‘No, too salty.’”

Ms. Lebowitz on multiculturalism: “It’s pathetic. Of course the world is diverse. And the differences always express themselves. It’s much more important that you emphasize similarities...there is practically nobody willing to identify themselves as American anymore because everybody is too busy identifying themselves with the area of their lives in which they feel the most victimized.” On aging: “At a certain point, the worst picture taken of you when you are 25 is better than the best picture taken of you when you’re 45,” and “What everyone says when you turn 60 is, ‘It’s better than the alternative.’ If the only thing worse than being 60 is death, that’s pretty bad.”

That is Fran Lebowitz off the cuff. Her writing—pointed, taut, and economical—is equally forthright, irascible, and unapologetically opinionated. Ms. Lebowitz’s first two classic books of essays, *Metropolitan Life* and *Social Studies*, have been collected in *The Fran Lebowitz Reader*. She is also the author of the children’s book *Mr. Chas and Lisa Sue Meet the Pandas*. She recently broke a ten-year writer’s block and is back at work on her novel, *Exterior Signs of Wealth*. A documentary film about Ms. Lebowitz, *Public Speaking*, directed by Martin Scorsese, premiered on HBO in November 2010.