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FREDERICK SPEAKER SERIES 2021-22 LINE-UP ANNOUNCED



FREDERICK, MD, July 29, 2021- Entering its ninth year, [The Frederick Speaker Series](#) has developed a reputation for bringing world-class speakers to the Frederick community. The 2021-22 line-up includes two speakers who were rescheduled from the 2020 Season due to the pandemic: best-selling author and sustainable food advocate, **Michael Pollan** and leading political satirist and best-selling author, **P.J. O'Rourke**. Joining them this season will be author, journalist and social observer, **Fran Lebowitz**, Emmy award winning filmmaker, cultural critic and journalist **Henry Louis Gates Jr.**, seasoned journalist, presidential debate moderator and host of FOX News Sunday, **Chris Wallace**, and award-winning journalist, entrepreneur and host of Matter of Fact, **Soledad O'Brien**. All series events are held at the Weinberg Center for the Arts.

Tickets are already on sale for the two rescheduled 2020 speakers, Michael Pollan and P.J. O'Rourke. Tickets for the four new speakers will go on sale to Weinberg Center members on Thursday, August 12 at 10:00 AM and to the general public on Thursday, August 19 at 10:00 AM. Tickets may be purchased online at weinbergcenter.org, by calling the Weinberg Center Box Office at 301-600-2828, or in person at 20 W. Patrick Street in Frederick, Maryland.

A separately ticketed meet-and-greet reception will take place immediately following each presentation. These exclusive events provide a chance for fans to meet the speakers, take pictures, and obtain autographs. All proceeds from the meet-and-greet receptions will benefit children's programs at Frederick County Public Libraries.

For your convenience, [click here](#) for a link containing images of this season's speakers.

MICHAEL POLLAN | THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2021 | 7:30 PM

For thirty years, Michael Pollan has been writing books and articles about the places where the human and natural worlds intersect: on our plates, in our farms and gardens, and in the environment. Pollan is the author of eight books, six of which have been New York Times bestsellers. A four-hour Netflix miniseries and two PBS documentaries have been based on his books. Pollan has been a contributing writer to the New York Times Magazine since 1987 and has received numerous awards. In 2009 he was named one of the top 10 “New Thought Leaders” by *Newsweek* magazine. His essays have appeared in many anthologies and in addition to being published regularly in the *New York Times Magazine*, his articles have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Harper’s Magazine*, *Mother Jones*, *Gourmet*, *Vogue*, *Travel + Leisure* and more. In 2010 he was chosen by *Time Magazine* as one of the 100 most influential people in the world. He has been a professor of journalism at UC Berkeley’s Graduate School of Journalism and a professor of the practice of non-fiction at Harvard and the university’s first Lewis Chan Lecturer in the Arts. In addition to teaching, Pollan lectures widely on food, agriculture, and health.

P.J. O’ROURKE | THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2021 | 7:30 PM

P.J. O’Rourke has established himself as America’s premier political satirist. Both *Time* and *The Wall Street Journal* have labeled him “the funniest writer in America.” He is the best-selling author of 20 books including *Parliament of Whores*, *Republican Party Reptile*, and his latest book, *None of My Business: P.J. Explains Money, Banking, Debt, Equity, Assets, Liabilities, and Why He’s Not Rich and Neither Are You*. He is a contributing editor at the *Weekly Standard*, H. L. Mencken Research Fellow at the Cato Institute, a regular panelist on NPR’s *Wait Wait . . . Don’t Tell Me*, and editor-in-chief of the web magazine *American Consequences*. Born in Toledo, Ohio, O’Rourke received a bachelor’s degree from Miami University and a master’s degree in English from Johns Hopkins, where he was a Woodrow Wilson Fellow. After graduate school he worked at small newspapers in Baltimore and New York. In the early 1970s he joined *The National Lampoon*. He then became a foreign correspondent and has since covered crises and conflicts in more than 40 countries. O’Rourke has written for such diverse publications from *The Wall Street Journal* to *Car and Driver* and *Rolling Stone*. He lives in rural New England, as far away from the things he writes about as he can get.

FRAN LEBOWITZ | SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2022 | 3:00 PM

In a cultural landscape filled with endless pundits and talking heads, Fran Lebowitz stands out as one of our most insightful social commentators. Her essays and interviews offer her acerbic views on current events and the media – as well as pet peeves including tourists, baggage-claim areas, after-shave lotion, adults who roller skate, children who speak French, or anyone who is unduly tan. The New York Times Book Review calls Lebowitz an “important humorist in the classic tradition.” Well-known for her roles on television drama *Law & Order*, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, and various documentaries including the *American Express* series on New York City, Fran Lebowitz is a frequent face on television. A regular on various talk shows, movies, and series, she has mentioned that she is not a nervous person and is not afraid of being on TV but is more afraid when she writes. However, that did not stop her from becoming the best-selling author of *Metropolitan Life* and *Social Studies* and the author of the children’s book, *Mr. Chas, and Lisa Sue Meeting the Pandas*. In 2010 Martin Scorsese directed a documentary about Lebowitz for HBO titled *Public Speaking*. A limited documentary series, *Pretend It’s a City*, also directed by Martin Scorsese, premiered on Netflix in 2021, and was nominated for the 2021 Emmys in the Outstanding Documentary Or Nonfiction Series category.

HENRY LOUIS GATES JR. | THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2022 | 7:30 PM

An Emmy Award-winning filmmaker, literary scholar, journalist, cultural critic and institution builder, Henry Louis Gates Jr. has authored seventeen books and created fourteen documentary films. Host of the popular show *Finding Your Roots*, Professor Gates is one of the United States’ most influential cultural critics and is both an eloquent commentator and formidable intellectual force on multicultural and African American issues. He is Editor-in-Chief of the Oxford African American Studies Center, the first comprehensive scholarly online resource in the field of African American Studies and Africana Studies. His six-part PBS documentary series, *The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross* (2013), which he wrote, executive produced and hosted, earned the Emmy Award for Outstanding Historical Program — Long Form, as well as the Peabody Award and NAACP Image Award. Gates is the Alphonse Fletcher University Professor and Director of the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research at Harvard University. He has received 54 honorary degrees, from institutions including the University of Pennsylvania, Dartmouth College, Harvard University, New York University and Howard University. In 2006, he was inducted into the Sons of the American Revolution, after he traced his lineage back to John Redman, a Free Negro who fought in the Revolutionary War.

CHRIS WALLACE | TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2022 | 7:30 PM

As one of the country's most respected journalists, Chris Wallace delivers today's top news issues with the individual and the industry in mind. His thorough presentation of the facts leaves audiences with knowledge that will prepare them for the ever-changing political landscape. Over his decades-long journalism career, he has reported from the ABC News desk as the senior correspondent for *Primetime* and *20/20* and was an anchor on the longest running show on television, NBC News' *Meet the Press*. In addition, Chris is the author of the best-seller *Character: Profiles in Presidential Courage* and recently published *Countdown 1945*. Further, he has won every major broadcast news award, including three Emmys, the Peabody Award, and the Dupont-Columbia Silver Baton Award. Chris has also been highly praised for his outstanding performances as he moderated the final presidential debates between Hilary Clinton and Donald Trump in 2016 and between Joe Biden and Donald Trump in 2020. With dedication, determination, and dignity, Chris holds the audience's interest on current events and political affairs, including the impact the role of the media and the influence of technology has on the presidency and what constituents can expect during the Biden administration.

SOLEDAD O'BRIEN | THURSDAY, JUNE 23, 2022 | 7:30 PM

Soledad O'Brien is an award-winning documentarian, journalist, speaker, author, and philanthropist, who founded Soledad O'Brien Productions, a multi-platform media production company dedicated to telling empowering and authentic stories on a range of social issues. She anchors and produces the Hearst TV political magazine program *Matter of Fact with Soledad O'Brien* and is a correspondent for *HBO Real Sports*. She is also host of the Quake Media podcast *Very Opinionated with Soledad O'Brien*. She is a thought leader, with over 1.3 million Twitter followers, who has a national impact through her speeches, numerous documentaries and her presence on the op-ed pages of platforms like the *New York Times* and *Huffington Post*. She has anchored shows on CNN, MSNBC, and NBC, and reported for Fox, A&E, *Oxygen*, *Nat Geo*, the *PBS NewsHour*, *WebMD*, and *Al Jazeera America*, among others. O'Brien's work has been recognized with three Emmy awards, twice with the George Foster Peabody Award, three times with the Gracie Award, which honors women in media, twice with Cine Awards for her work in documentary films and with an Alfred I. DuPont Award which honors excellence in broadcast and digital journalism in the public service and is considered one of the most prestigious awards in journalism.

ABOUT THE FREDERICK SPEAKER SERIES

Since its inception in 2013, the Frederick Speaker Series has featured notable personalities such as Cal Ripken Jr., General Colin Powell, Tom Brokaw, George Takei, Bill Nye, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Ted Koppel, Dr. Temple Grandin and Bob Woodward.

ABOUT THE WEINBERG CENTER FOR THE ARTS

The Weinberg Center for the Arts is one of the region's premier performing arts presenters, offering film, music, dance, theater, and family-focused programming. Located in the historic Tivoli Movie Theater in downtown Frederick, MD, the Weinberg Center strives to ensure that the arts remain accessible and affordable to local and regional audiences alike. Weinberg Center events are made possible this season with major support from the City of Frederick, the Maryland State Arts Council, Plamondon Hospitality Partners, the Maryland Heritage Area Authority and other corporate and individual donors.

Frederick Speaker Series Sponsors for the 2021-22 Season

