

## **Booksigning Event**

### **MIDNIGHT: THREE WOMEN AT THE HOUR OF RECKONING Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, Joan of Arc.**

**Three stories we thought we knew, but we didn't, not like we know them after we see them at midnight. This book takes each of these women as she faces her greatest challenge—a homeless Jane Austen. Joan of Arc at the stake. Mary Shelley in Italy, watching the water, wondering how she will face all the forces ranged against her if her husband, the poet Percy Shelley, doesn't come back. Vastly different stories, but the moment is the same, the darkest one.**

#### **Midnight and Jane Austen:**

**By the time she and her sister pulled up to Manydown that winter day in 1802, she was nearly twenty-seven, the age at which Anne Elliot finally married for love in PERSUASION, and poor Charlotte Lucas resigned herself to Mr. Collins in PRIDE AND PREJUDICE. But outside of the great Jane Austen novels, twenty-seven was beyond the pale. Women didn't marry at twenty-seven, they died at twenty-seven, of serial childbirth for the most part. Since they married at seventeen.**

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#### **Mary Shelley on the Beach**

**If only she'd slipped out of her father's door alone—but she didn't, she slipped out with Jane Clairmont, who soon changed her name to the more romantic "Claire." As if a change of name could change a fate, or a fateful slash through her own life. Though that morning she had no sense of what it boded, to have her fifteen-year-old, black-haired, black-eyed anti-double running by her side down the still-dark street to the corner, where Shelley was waiting with his carriage.**

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#### **Joan of Arc in Chains**

**Joan of Arc scanned the sky, and the crowded churchyard. No miracle in sight, no great victory. As opposed to the hooded man, who was right there before her. It wasn't supposed to end like this today. She suddenly knew it.**

**"I submit." It was simple, once she'd said it. Louder now: "I submit!" She smiled for the first time in the year since she'd been captured. Suddenly everything fell into place. She wasn't going to burn. "I submit."**

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