

THE EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY SOCIETY
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Peter Bergman Named Executive Director of the Edna St. Vincent Millay Society

NEW YORK, NY, February 5—Writer, journalist, and artist Peter Bergman from Pittsfield, Massachusetts has been named Executive Director of the Edna St. Vincent Millay Society, the nonprofit organization committed to protecting and preserving the literary and real property of American poet Edna St. Vincent Millay for the enjoyment of present and future generations. Founded in 1978 under the guidance of Norma Millay, the poet's sister, the Society is steward of Steepletop, Millay's former home in Austerlitz, NY, designated a National Historic Landmark in 1972 and a museum under the New York State Education Department.

Bergman is the first Executive Director of the organization, which will be based at Steepletop, with a branch office in New York. “I feel honored to begin work on this extraordinary project with so much of Millay’s life already so evident in her home,” Bergman said. “I look forward to helping to restore Steepletop and creating a site that will attract scholars, fans, and an international tourist body to the ‘Columbia County side’ of the Berkshire Hills, a region already made outstanding with the performance and visual arts and a perfect place to explore historic authors and artists in their residences.”

Bergman (known to his readers as J. Peter Bergman) has been active in the cultural life of the Berkshire region since 1981. A frequent contributor to *The Berkshire Eagle* as theater, music and culture features writer, he was the first resident Managing Director of The Berkshire Opera

Company and a member of the founding boards of the Berkshire Stonewall Community Coalition, the Berkshire Writers Room, and two successful major public art projects, Sheeptacular Pittsfield! and Art Of The Game. He wrote the centenary exhibit texts for The Berkshire Museum's 100th anniversary and co-curated (with art critic Charles Bonenti) a special exhibit at the Norman Rockwell Museum that combined the artistic impulses of writers and three-dimensional artists based on poetry and fiction published in The Berkshire Review. He recently worked with the Executive Director at the Berkshire Historical Society at Arrowhead, the Herman Melville house museum in Pittsfield. The 2005 recipient of the Massachusetts Cultural Council Volunteer of the Year Award, he served as an advisor on the arts to three Pittsfield mayors.

Born in New York City and educated at Queens College, Juilliard and the New School, Bergman spent a decade working in New York for the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound at the New York Public Library and Museum at Lincoln Center. During that time, he also served on a repertoire advisory committee for the New York City Opera Company. While at the R&H Archives, he produced and presented three ethnic arts festivals, did dramatic and musical presentations, designed the aural aspects of many exhibitions there and for the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and helped promote the revitalized career of composer Scott Joplin, whose work had rested in relative obscurity until the 1970's.

Bergman's own published work includes a recent series of plays dealing with real people in Pittsfield in the 1870s and 1940s; the productions, staged in historic homes in the Berkshires, were all record-breaking hits. These unconventional venues included the Crane Family Model Farm in Dalton, Massachusetts and the Thaddeus Clapp House in Pittsfield. In 2003, Bergman received the Charles Dickens Award for Counterpoints, a collection of short stories published by The Digital Hand Press that also published his poetry collection, A Versifier's Childish Garden Gleanings. He continues to write an arts and fiction website, www.berkshirebrightfocus.com.

For further information about the Edna St. Vincent Millay Society and the restoration of Millay's house and gardens at Steepletop, see www.millaysociety.org.