JEFF MELLIN

a.

REVIEW COPY





Player Piano

( DREAM 19 )



Also by the author

Jeff Mell!n Saves the World, Parts 1ne & 2we ("Double EP" Album, Stereorrific Recordings, 1999)

Good for a Gander, w/ the Midnight Cowboys (Album, Stereorrific Recordings, 2001)

Come Apart & Other Minor Disasters: Best Recordings, 1994-97, w/ The Eddies (Album, Stereorrific Recordings, 2006)

Skin & Bones: Song Lyrics (Book, Kolourmeim Press, 2008)

Love is Made of Sky (EP, dPulse/Stereorrific Recordings, 2010)

Three On A Match, w/ Neil Carlill & King Toad (Album/Lyric Book, Stereorrific Recordings, 2011)

Driveway Chalk Stars of Pajama Astronomers: A Year of Haiku (Book, Pennyring Press, 2020)



## PLAYER PIANO



## JEFF MELLIN



PENNYRING PRESS

## Player Piano (Dream 19)

Copyright © 2021/2022 Jeff Mellin. All rights reserved. Lyrics & song (Sweet Red Onion Publishing, BMI) originally published on Facebook on May 7, 2020

www.jeffmellin.com IG: @jeffmellin.creative

ISBN 978-1-4357-8874-9 FIRST EDITION (PAPERBACK)

Cover & interior decorations:

Master of Claude de France, *Book of Flower Studies*, ca. 1510–1515, Made in Tours, France, Purchase, The Cloisters Collection, Lila Acheson Wallace Gift, and Rogers Fund, 2019. Public Domain, courtesy The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY

Sir Edward Burne-Jones (British, Birmingham 1833– 1898 Fulham), *Chant d'Amour (The Love Song)*, 1868– 77, Oil on canvas, 45 x 61 3/8 in. (114.3 x 155.9 cm), The Alfred N. Punnett Endowment Fund, 1947. Public Domain, courtesy The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY

Kaleidoscopic flower collages ©2021 Jeff Mellin, with images from both *Chant d'Amour* and *Book of Flower Studies* 

Author image adapted from a photo © 2020 Hazel Sun (www.hazelsunphotography.com) taken at Common Space, Ardmore, PA (www.commonspaceardmore.org)

Design by Jeff Mellin. Typset in Crimson Text, Butler, and Regency Script, with initials adapted from the *Book* of Flower Studies

Printed & distributed by Lulu.com for Pennyring Press www.pennyringpress.com IG: @pennyringpress

For my family & friends





Foreword

NYONE WHO WRITES KNOWS some days you're arranging driftwood and desert island beach stones, trying to signal an airplane, trying to jury-rig a radio telescope from the stuff in your pockets. And then, other days, you're soaked catching high tide tsunami water in cups, scrambling to translate an alien transmission.

This was the latter.

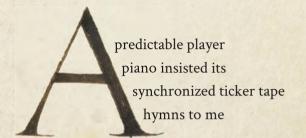
These are strange days, to say the least. Here's to better days ahead.

J.B.M. May, 2020









from beneath its meticulous telegraph teeth spitting slick Rickenback' *Bells of Rhymney* 



as its smoke signal chimney stack syllables swelled spilling paperbacks scrolled for delivery

subliminally mailed on a braille punctured spinnaker billowed with slivers of melody



By the grim chimney flue a windswept witness film crew fell silent and wept in astonishment

and prayed that the daylight that lit the smoke backwards would slip past the choke grip of sunset but the cinematographers' prayers and offers were burned on the earth's curve descending

like a diving whale turned through the submarine air toward a cinnamon diving bell crescent o in slivers of moonlight with apertures open as wide as a silvery ocean

they caught cinnamon cinders of stellar exposure exploding with embers of motion that trailed through the negatives tearing deliberative burning with rapturous delicacy

as a music unrolled from the paperback scroll spilling loose from its prayer book reliquary



Meanwhile I prepared that piano with pages I'd torn from an industry annual

deflecting the hammers with clothespin hosannas that stuck in the eye of a camel Needless to snitch the stitched piano wires intricate unravelled every listen

so I slipped out past the cemetery whistling the melody though my mask hid my expression

