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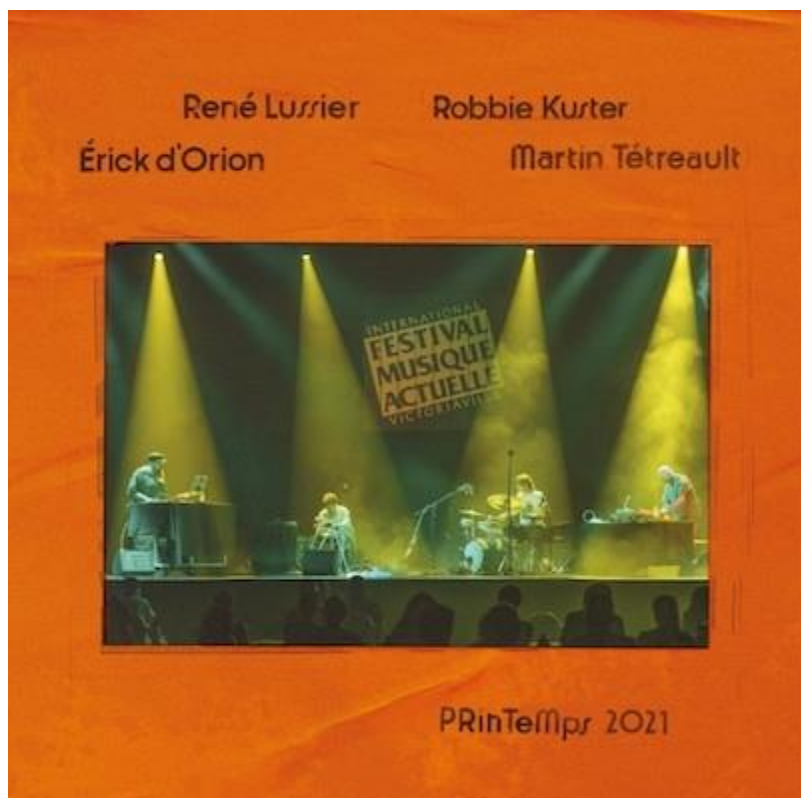
musicworks

René Lussier, Érick d'Orion, Robbie Kuster, and Martin Tétreault. Printemps 2021.

VICTO, CD 134.

BY KEN WAXMAN ISSUE 141

A notable blend of noise and nuance, this Québécois quartet soars through seven live improvisations without ever fraying the sonic thread that holds them together. Veterans in this context, René Lussier (guitar and daxophone) and Robbie Kuster (drums) add just enough squeezed-string elaborations or percussion backbeat to project their identities, while electronic impulses from Érick d'Orion's computer and rumbles from Martin Tétreault's turntable produce a sustainable drone. This waveform continuum is perforated often enough that surprise textures from vinyl-sampled vocal mumbles and gurgles, synthesized outer-space-like crackles and horse whinnies, or acoustic string flanges and relentless backbeats are clearly heard.



The adjoining tracks *Celle qui suit l'autre* and *L'avant dernière* give Lussier space to demonstrate guitar prowess as he moves through folksy runs, bottleneck Blues, cranked up arena-Rock resonations, and microtonal string plinks. At one point, an unexpected interlude of live sampled guitar accompaniment is heard over Kuster's rugged backing and consistent buzzes. The computer's backwards-running flanges reach a crescendo on *L'autre*, joined by singular drum smacks, metallic turntable platter screeches, guitar string slaps, and processed inhuman cries as the exposition is fragmented into a mid-point climax. Reconstituted on subsequent tracks, the performance concludes with *Pis la dernière* as emphatic drones are succeeded by muffled vocal samples, isolated guitar plinks, and a final descending electronic buzz. As engaging throughout as it is logically concluded, this session personifies the imagination and delicacy needed to maintain an hour-long electroacoustic parity.

Ken Waxman is a Toronto-based journalist who has written about improvised and other musics for many years. Many of his articles on music can be accessed at <www.jazzword.com>.

<https://www.musicworks.ca/reviews/lussier-dorion-kuster-tetreault-printemps>
