

# Tord Gustavsen - Extended CV

## MUSICAL PROJECTS [turn to the last page for formal education, discography, grants and awards etc..]

- **TORD GUSTAVSEN ENSEMBLE, QUARTET AND TRIO** - with Jarle Vespestad (drums); Mats Eilertsen / Harald Johnsen (double bass) and Tore Brunborg (saxophones). On selected concerts, as well as the album "Restored, Returned", the ensemble also includes vocalist Kristin Asbjørnsen. This recording was awarded the Norwegian equivalent of the Grammy award - Spellemannsprisen 2009. The music builds on Tord's original compositions, with memorable melodies in the foreground, and traces of inspiration from sources as diverse as Scandinavian folk music; Caribbean music; Impressionism; spirituals and hymns. Gentle, but robust - contemplative, but subtly funky, Tord Gustavsen occupies a distinctive space on today's music scene. The trio's debut album "Changing Places" was released 2003 on the ECM label with world-wide distribution, and was followed by "The Ground" and "Being There" in 2005 and 2007 respectively. The trio was Tord's major project from 2003 through 2007, with extensive touring in Norway, Germany, France, Italy, UK, USA, Canada, and Australia. From 2008, the setting was transformed into an ensemble that now performs in duo, trio, quartet or quintet settings, while still remaining essentially one musical project. New colours are added to the palette, but Tord's music still makes up a distinguished musical universe cherished by listeners and critics in many parts of the world.
- **COMMISSIONED WORKS** for the Vossajazz Festival 2008, Arendal Jazz Festival 2009, Oslo International Church Music Festival 2011, and Cheltenham Jazz Festival (UK) 2011, featuring various varieties of the Tord Gustavsen Ensemble. The commissions include a **REQUIEM** for full choir, ensemble and poetry reciting - with poetry by Norwegian author Lars Amund Vaage set in dialogue with the ancient Requiem lyrics in Latin. Actress **CECILIE JØRSTAD** contributes in the Requiem as well as in other projects combining spoken word and music. Her style complements Tord's music in a fascinating way - quiet and serene, yet full of intensity and subtle power. Tord also
- **NATT I BETLEHEM** - with Solveig Slettahjell (vocals) and Sjur Miljeteig (trumpet). This collaboration sheds new light on selected Scandinavian and English Christmas hymns - well known as well as lesser known ones, arranged and performed with a spellbinding contemplative serenity. An album was recorded in the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem in 2008, and was continued into concert version of the repertoire. The album sold to gold status in Norway during its first two months.
- The duo **AIRE & ANGELS** with singer **SIRI GJÆRE** features Tord's compositions with lyrics from 17<sup>th</sup> Century poet John Donne and 20<sup>th</sup> Century poet Rupert Brooke. The music embraces lyrical beauty, strong songwriting and creative improvisation in a fresh way. The duo gained much praise for its debut recording "aire & angels" in 1999, and followed up by a second album "aire & angels II" in 2002.
- **SILJE NERGAARD BAND** with Silje Nergaard (vocals), Jarle Vespestad (drums) and Harald Johnsen (double bass). CDs "Port of Call" (2000), "At First Light" (2001) and "Nightwatch" (2003) on

Universal/Emarcy have reached out to a broader audience, selling gold and platinum in Norway, and also getting a lot of attention around the world. The band has toured Europe extensively, playing at major jazz scenes and festivals in Germany, Spain, England, Hong Kong, Canada, Switzerland, Portugal, Italy, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Norway. With this project, Tord has also worked with distinguished soloists like **PAT METHENY**, **TILL BRÖNNER**, **ARVE HENRIKSEN**, **PUTTE WICKMAN**, **MAGNUS LINDGREN**, **PETER ASPLUND**, and **GEORG WADENIUS**. Silje and Tord ended their collaboration in 2006 after seven years of fruitful touring and recording.

- **NYMARK COLLECTIVE** with Kåre Nymark jr. (trumpet), Mats Eilertsen (double bass) and Kenneth Ekornes (drums). This projects focuses on creative but respectful re-workings of Caribbean and New Orleans grooves; in original compositions as well as fresh approaches to older material. The quartet takes early jazz much more seriously than young jazz musicians have usually done in later years, while still never letting go of the essential flexibility and freedom. They have released two albums; "First Meeting" (2000) and "Contemporary Tradition" (2002). The quartet has toured Norway extensively and performed at most major Norwegian jazz festivals, including also a commissioned work for the Oslo Jazz Festival in 2001.
- Several years of cooperation with distinguished singer **KRISTIN ASBJØRNSEN**. An original approach to modal improvisation and African American Spirituals brought this duo around Norway in the 1990's. In 2008/2009, they reinvented the collaboration, when Kristin took part in Tord's commissioned work for the Vossajazz Festival, as well as his album "Restored, Returned" - and Tord played on Kristin's solo album "The Night Shines Like the Day", which was also awarded the Norwegian equivalent of the Grammy award, Spellemannprisen.
- Work with clarinetist **SIMON FLEM DEVOLD**. A musical encountering bridging the generation gap in a free fusion of hymns, folk tunes and classic jazz. The duo has performed all over Norway, communicating with a broader audience while also developing a highly original approach to performing.
- The play "Edge" with vocalist and actor **LIVE MARIA ROGGEN**. Theater with an integrated concert inspired by Radka Toneff's legendary album "Fairytale".
- Work as an improvising pianist with classic **SILENT MOVIES** at the National Institute of Film (Cinematket) in Oslo. Here, Tord has created and performed the music for a number of films from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, ranging from German expressionism through social realism and Scandinavian national romanticism, all the way into American comedy.
- In 2005, Austrian bass clarinet player **ULRICH DRECHSLER** invited Tord to join his trio on a recording session and two concerts in Vienna. The result was the moving and lyrical release "Humans and Places" (2006), also featuring Jörg Mikula (drums) and Oliver Steger (bass) - with Drechsler's original tunes plus a couple of Tord's own pieces.

- Projects with the choir **SKRUK** on Norwegian label Kirkelig Kulturverksted. Tord has arranged music for three CDs with this unique choir, and also performs on the recordings. The first, "Krybberom" (2003), is a special Christmas recording featuring Palestinian singer Rim Banna. The second, "Sommerlandet" (2004 - English version to follow) is a moving story of support and hope in the face of tragic loss written by Eivind Skeie, and read by actor Cecilie Jørstad. Composer Galib Mamedov came up with some very touching melodies to complete and comment the story, and Tord's arrangements are performed by singer Torunn Sævik and the choir. The third, "Dype, stille, sterke, milde" is a project based on Norwegian hymns, performed by the choir with the musicians from Nymark Collective. In 2010, Tord also released a recording with the choir combined with the brilliant Iranian singer Mahsa Vahdat, performing renderings on ancient Hafez and Rumi poems in Farsi alongside Norwegian translations.
- **BASUNSTEDET** - a suite for extended chamber jazz ensemble and poetry reading; featuring distinguished poet and performance artist Øyvind Berg together with some of the most interesting young professionals in Norwegian jazz (Eirik Hegdal, Håkon Kornstad, Mats Eilertsen and others). Tord's highly original music interacts with improvisations and poetry by German writer Paul Celan in Berg's translation.
- Collaborations with clarinetist **CARL PETTER OPSAHL** in quartet and duo, resulting in the critically acclaimed albums "Indigodalen" and "Love, the Blues", the latter also featuring legendary drummer Jon Christensen.
- **SORGEN OG GLEDEN** - with Solveig Slettahjell, Maria Solheim, Sondre Bratland, Susanne Sundfør, Lars Lillo Stenberg and others. A project where 10 of the most intriguing Norwegian singers from jazz/folk/pop areas presented their versions of Norwegian hymns; collected and curated by Her Majesty the Crown Princess Mette-Marit. Tord was musical director of this project, wrote arrangements and put together a band with Mats Eilertsen (bass) and Rune Arnesen (drums). The album sold to Platina status in Norway and created a small wave of awareness and interest in the hymnal traditions.
- Duo concerts with saxophonist **TORE BRUNBORG**, one of European jazz' most unique voices ever since the recording of the legendary band Masqualero in the 80's. Performances in Norway, Germany, and Austria.

**DISCOGRAPHY:**

- Tord Gustavsen Trio: "Changing Places" (ECM) 2003
- Tord Gustavsen Trio: "Being There" (ECM) 2007
- Tord Gustavsen Trio: "The Ground" (ECM) 2005
- Tord Gustavsen Ensemble: "Restored, Returned" (ECM) 2009/2010
- Tord Gustavsen Quartet: "The Well" (ECM) 2012
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- aire & angels: "aire & angels" (C+C Records/EMI) 1999
- aire & angels: "aire & angels II" (Bergland) 2002
- Silje Nergaard: "Port of Call" (Universal/Emarcy) 2000
- Silje Nergaard: "At First Light" (Universal) 2001
- Silje Nergaard: "Nightwatch" (Universal) 2003
- Silje Nergaard: "The Essential" + "Live in Köln" – concert dvd (Universal) 2005
- Nymark Collective: "First Meeting" (SONOR) 2000
- Nymark Collective: "Contemporary Tradition" (SONOR) 2002
- Nymark Collective with Kristin Asbjørnsen: "Bessie Smith Revisted" (SONOR) 2008
- Carl Petter Opsahl: "Indigo-dalen" (GRAPPA) 2001
- Carl Petter Opsahl: "Love, the Blues" (Park Grammofon) 2008
- Funky Butt: "Whoopin'" (SONOR Records) 2001
- SKRUK / Rim Banna: "Krybberom" (Kirkelig Kulturverksted) 2003
- SKRUK / Torunn Sævik / Cecilie Jørstad: "Sommerlandet" (Kirkelig Kulturverksted) 2004
- SKRUK / Nymark Collective: "Dype, stille, sterke, milde" (Kirkelig Kulturverksted) 2006
- SKRUK / Mahsa Vahdat: "I vinens speil" (Kirkelig Kulturverksted 2010)
- Ulrich Drechsler Quartet: "Humans and Places" (Cracked an Egg Records) 2006
- Solveig Slettahjell: "Natt i Betlehem" (Kirkelig Kulturverksted) 2008
- Solveig Slettahjell, Maria Solheim, Sondre Bratland, Susanne Sundfør and others: "Sorgen og gleden" (Kirkelig Kulturverksted) 2008
- Kristin Asbjørnsen: "The Night Shines Like the Day" (Universal) 2009

## EDUCATION/FORMALIA/GRANTS AND AWARDS

- Born in Oslo, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1970.
- Educated in jazz piano (bachelor in performing arts) from the legendary Jazz Department at the Conservatory of Music in Trondheim, Norway.
- Cand.philol. (a degree between Master and Ph.D.) in Musicology from the University of Oslo, focusing on the psychology of improvisation, general music theory and esthetics.
- Scientific essay "The Dialectical Eroticism of Improvisation" published in *Improvisation: Between Technique and Spontaneity* by Marina Santi (ed.)
- Guest teacher at the Institute of Musicology, University of Oslo.

## GRANTS/AWARDS

- "Verdt å vente på-prisen" from Nattjazz festival in Norway in 2005.
- Held "Statens arbeidsstipend for yngre kunstnere" for two years - the most prestigious grant given to young artists in Norway.
- Tord Gustavsen Trio's album "The Ground" was awarded "Best international jazz album of the year" in Australia in 2006 (the Bell Awards).
- Tord Gustavsen Trio's album "The Ground" sold Gold in Norway and more than 10,000 copies in Germany, both of which very rare accomplishment for an instrumental jazz recording.
- Other awards for albums include: *Stereophile* (Recording of the month); *Jazzreview* (Editor's Choice); *Le Monde de la musique* (Choc du mois); *Jazzman* (Choc du mois); *Fono Forum* (Empfehlung des Monats); *Piano News* (CD des Doppelmonats); *Gramophone Korea* (Editor's Choice)
- Tord Gustavsen Ensemble's album "Restored, Returned" won the Norwegian Grammy for 2009, and continues to receive excellent reviews as it is released world-wide in 2010.
- Tord Gustavsen won "NOPAs Musikkpris" 2010 - an award for best Norwegian pop/jazz-composition for the piece "Intuition"
- Tord Gustavsen Quartet's album "The Well" was voted best Norwegian jazz album of the year 2012 in the major Norwegian newspaper *Dagbladet*.

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