

NEWS RELEASE

2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90049-6833

TEL: (310) 440-4500
FAX: (310) 440-4595

E-MAIL: communications@skirball.org
WEBSITE: www.skirball.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 23, 2011

Media Contact:

Mia Cariño, (310) 440-4544, communications@skirball.org

Skirball Cultural Center presents acclaimed jazz trio
TORD GUSTAVSEN ENSEMBLE
Friday, March 25, 8:00 p.m.



From l-r: Jarle Vespestad, Tord Gustavsen, Mats Eilertsen by Hans Fredrik Asbjørnsen

\$25 General; \$20 Skirball Members; \$15 Full-Time Students
**Advance tickets: Available online at www.skirball.org, on site at the Skirball, or
by phone at (877) SCC-4TIX or (877) 722-4849**

LOS ANGELES—The widely acclaimed jazz trio the Tord Gustavsen Ensemble led by master pianist **Tord Gustavsen** performs at the Skirball Cultural Center on Friday, March 25, at 8:00 p.m. A major figure on the European jazz scene, Gustavsen has dazzled audiences with his sophisticated melodies and a delicately crafted blend of Scandinavian folk, world rhythms, and cool jazz.

The Tord Gustavsen Ensemble is best known for its four-album “trilogy” with the prestigious ECM label: *Changing Places* (2003), *The Ground* (2005), *Being There* (2007) and *Restored, Returned* (2009/2010). Of the second album, *JazzTimes* (USA) raved, “The rigorously restrained playing is a complete marvel. I’ve already saved space at the top of my 2005 list for *The Ground*.” *The Independent on Sunday* (UK) was equally effusive in its praise, stating: “The most enthralling pianist/composer and trio to emerge for an age...follow up the sensational *Changing Places* with a second set of pellucid ballads, ghostly tangos and gently twinkling ice-funk. Slightly freer than before, but no less stately, *The Ground* is reverie music of the highest order. In short, this album will make your life better.”

Tord Gustavsen takes the stage at the Skirball with **Mats Eilertsen** on bass and **Jarle Vespestad** on drums.

For general Skirball information, the public may call (310) 440-4500 or visit www.skirball.org.

About the Artists

Tord Gustavsen

Born in Oslo on October 5, 1970, jazz pianist Tord Gustavsen grew up in the rural village Hurdal in Akershus, Norway. Inherently musical, Gustavsen started playing the piano at the age of four, and was composing and improvising before he even learned to read music. In college, his interest in jazz blossomed, but he continued to study sociology, psychology, and the history of religions to earn his bachelor's degree.

In 1993, Gustavsen began studies at the Conservatory of Music in Trondheim, Norway and studied jazz piano, jazz history, and improvisational techniques, all the while forming several bands and becoming immersed in the local music scene. He went on to earn an advanced degree in musicology from the University of Oslo while working as a freelance musician.

Gustavsen was an important part of the Norwegian jazz scene for several years prior to his current success leading the Tord Gustavsen Ensemble. His performance was the cornerstone in projects featuring some of Norway's finest singers, including Silje Nergaard, Siri Gjære, and Kristin Asbjørnsen. The Natt i Betlehem project with vocalist Solveig Slettahjell and trumpet player Sjur Miljeteig is currently his major "side project." This group highlights Gustavsen's lyricism and expressive minimalism.

As a musician, Gustavsen draws upon diverse sources for inspiration, including but not limited to Scandinavian folk music, gospel, Caribbean music, and cool jazz. This range of styles contributes to the rich textures and sophistication of his compositions and makes him one of the most intriguing voices in today's jazz scene. Of his musical eclecticism, a *New York Times* jazz critic wrote, "For a European group, Tord Gustavsen's trio has gained a lot of traction with American jazz listeners. The band's overall sound is sleekly new, but Mr. Gustavsen's melodies point to durable elements of older culture: little figures that suggest gospel, pop, flamenco or Baroque music, or maybe a weepy standard that Frank Sinatra was singing in the early 50's."

Hailed as "an artist to watch" by *Stereophile* magazine, Gustavsen as a solo artist and as part of an ensemble continues to draw praise and enthusiasm from around the world. He has received awards from the United Kingdom, France, Australia, Germany, and Korea, and press coverage in publications such as *Downbeat*, *Billboard*, *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Independent*. *Restored, Returned* won the Norwegian equivalent of the Grammy Award, the Spellemannsprisen, for 2009. His composition, "Intuition," was awarded the 2010 NOPA *musikkpris* by the Norwegian popular composer's association. This new work has been presented in concert and will be recorded for his ensemble's next CD.

Currently, Gustavsen tours the world, playing in the United States and Canada, and appearing at festivals and concert halls across continental Europe.

Jarle Vespestad

Drummer **Jarle Vespestad** is one of Scandinavia's most in-demand jazz musicians. He has played with saxophonist Tore Brunborg, tenor saxophonist Petter Wettre, and jazz pianist Bugge Wesseltoft. He also participates in various bands and musical projects like Farmers Market, Supersilent, and the Silje Nergaard Band.

As a child, drumming was a release for Vespesdat's considerable energy. After high school, the drums became his choice for artistic expression. He went on to attend the Conservatory of Music in Trondheim, Norway, and was the driving force behind the formation of many successful bands there. Lauded for his fierce technique and ability to master complex rhythms, Vespesdat's talents are beautifully showcased in the Tord Gustavsen Ensemble, with which he has played for many years.

Mats Eilertsen

Bassist **Mats Eilertsen** has played with several jazz ensembles over the years, including Parish, Food, the Jacob Young Group, the Wolfert Brederode Quartet, and The Source. His intuitive musicality and solid jazz technique can be heard on the Tord Gustavsen Ensemble's 2009/2010 recording, *Restored, Returned*.

Eilertsen also leads his own group, the Mats Eilertson Trio, and has released two albums: *Kram* and *Elegy*.

About the Skirball

The Skirball Cultural Center is dedicated to exploring the connections between 4,000 years of Jewish heritage and the vitality of American democratic ideals. It welcomes and seeks to inspire people of every ethnic and cultural identity. Guided by our respective memories and experiences, together we aspire to build a society in which all of us can feel at home. The Skirball Cultural Center achieves its mission through educational programs that explore literary, visual, and performing arts from around the world; through the display and interpretation of its permanent collections and changing exhibitions; through an interactive family destination inspired by the Noah's Ark story; and through outreach to the community.

Visiting the Skirball

The Skirball Cultural Center is located at 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90049. Free on-site parking is available; street parking is strictly prohibited. The Skirball is also accessible by Metro Rapid Bus 761. Museum hours: Tuesday–Friday 12:00–5:00 p.m.; Saturday–Sunday 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.; closed Mondays and holidays. Museum admission: \$10 General; \$7 Seniors, Full-Time Students, and Children over 12; \$5 Children 2–12. Exhibitions are always free to Skirball Members and Children under 2. Exhibitions are free to all visitors on Thursdays. For general information, the public may call (310) 440-4500 or visit www.skirball.org. The Skirball is also home to Zeidler's Café, which serves innovative California cuisine in an elegant setting, and Audrey's Museum Store, which sells books, contemporary art, music, jewelry, and more.

#