

Druhá Tráva EPK

Bios

Druhá Tráva



Famed on both sides of the Atlantic for its "Czechgrass" fusion of acoustic, bluegrass, folk and rock, Druhá Tráva is the foremost band to emerge from the flourishing Czech bluegrass scene. Its virtuoso musicians can satisfy the most hardcore fans with scorching versions of traditional bluegrass standards. But as the band's name "Second Grass" implies, DT reaches far beyond the classic bluegrass genre for inspiration. The band uses American roots music as a starting point for a synthesis of jazz, pop, folk and even classical motifs, transforming an iconic American idiom into a richly textured, highly personal statement.

DT was formed in 1991 by the influential singer-songwriter Robert Krestan, multi-instrumentalist Lubos Malina and other veterans of the acoustic music scene that had long thrived in Czechoslovakia. Krestan's original songs -- renowned for their enigmatic, at times provocative, lyrics -- make up most of the band's repertoire, and they and Krestan's raw, gritty vocals set the band apart. DT also performs bluegrass standards and covers -- in English and Czech -- of material by songwriters ranging from Mick Jagger to American acoustic veteran Peter Rowan (with whom the group collaborated on a CD, *New Freedom Bell*, in 1999).

Druhá Tráva and its members have produced more than a score of CDs and have won numerous Czech music awards, most recently in 2012. The band enjoys a wide following in the Czech Republic as well as a loyal fan base in North America, where DT tours for at least one month each year.

Robert Krestan



Singer and writer Robert Krestan (1991-present) has been recognized with numerous honors in his home country in both bluegrass and country music. He has been "Male Vocalist of the Year" at the Banjo Jamboree Festival numerous times and has been awarded "Country Artist of the Year" by the Czech Music Academy on several occasions.

He is a contributing writer for two Czech music publications, *Folk & Country* and *Melodie*, and has published a book of poetry. He has also translated a number of American novels into Czech, including Jim Harrison's "Legends of the Fall" (in Czech: *Legendy o vasni*). Robert is co-founder of Druhá Tráva, along with Lubos Malina. Most recently, he was awarded "Best Male Vocalist" by the Bluegrass Association of the Czech Republic for both 2005 and 2006.

Lubos Malina



In 1992, Lubos Malina (1991-present) was named overall "Best Banjo Player" at the 20 plus year old Banjo Jamboree Festival after being voted "Banjo Player of the Year" annually since 1986. Along with Robert Krestan, he recorded six albums with the band Poutnici. Both in 1989 and 1990, Poutnici received the Society for the Preservation of Bluegrass Music award for Best Non-American Recording of the Year.

His first solo recording, *Naper se a Pukni!* (*All You Can Eat*) was released in 1996 and his second project, *A Piece of Cake*, which included guest artists Davy Spillane, Peter Rowan, Bela Fleck, Tony Trischka, and Druhá

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Trava, was released in August 1998. Most recently his third solo project, Afterparty, was released on Good Day Records in 2004. Multi-instrumentalist Lubos has been performing on Irish whistle and clarinet, as well as, his banjos. The Bluegrass Association of the Czech Republic awarded him "Best Banjo Player" in 2005, and in 2006 honored his "Dueling Fingers" album as the "Album of the Year."

Lubos Novotny



With a long history in the folk band Duo Cis as well as with the legendary Czech newgrass group Prudusky, Lubos Novotny (1991-present) plays dobro. He has been named "Dobro Player of the Year" from 1992 until 1997 by the Banjo Jamboree Festival as well by the Slovak Association of Country Music in 1992 and 1993.

His first solo recording, Joy of the Sorrowful, was released in 1995 and his second recording, Venku z travy (Out from the Grass) was released in 2000. When Druha Trava returned to the Banjo Jamboree Festival in 2004 after their long absence, Lubos was once again named Dobro Player of the Year. The Bluegrass Association of Czech Republic has designated Lubos Novotny as "Best Dobro Player" every year from 2000-2006, as well as in 2010-11!

Emil Formanek



Emil Formanek (2004-present) from Bratislava, Slovakia has known members of Druha Trava for over 15 years. He played guitar on Lubos Novotny's first solo album and also on Lubos Malina's first solo album. He is a past member of the bluegrass band Fragment and has been playing acoustic and electric guitar for the biggest country star in Slovakia, Alan Mikusek, since he left Fragment.

He has also recorded guitar for many other country, folk and rock bands in the Czech and Slovak Republics. Emil joined Druha Trava early 2004 and plays guitar and mandolin. He recorded on their all English acoustic album released in 2004 and rereleased in June, 2006 by Compass Records in Nashville.

Tomas Liska



Tomas Liska (April 2010-present) is the newest member of Druha

Trava and performs on bass. He began his career on bass-guitar in 1998, but continued studying over the next several years, studying at the Conservatorium of Jaroslav Jezek in Prague beginning in 2000. He soon became a presence on the local jazz scene, appearing with an array of musicians at the city's most important jazz clubs and festivals.

In 2004, while he completed his studies at the Conseratorium, he was accepted at the Prague Jazz College of Jaroslav Jezek. He has won numerous awards and honors at International Jazz Fesivals in many countries including Spain, Bulgaria, Poland, Italy and Belgium and has appeared at jazz festivals in these countries, as well as in France, Russia, South Africa, Morocco, Germany, and Austria. He has added an exciting new element to Druha Trava.