

Delahaye's *Brassens Redux* is an old dog's new tricks

By **ANDREW HOSHKIW**
The Whitehorse Star

Brassens Redux in Brief, the debut CD of Didier Delahaye, is the weirdest music to come out of the Yukon in quite some time.

Weird in a good way, however. Excitingly creative, fast and inspiring.

Using a collection of gypsy-influenced folk tunes originally written by Georges Brassens half a century ago, Delahaye has taken the songs, laboured over them and reworked them to become something new.

Delahaye was born in France. As a young man in his early 20s, he felt an urge in the summer of 1972 to go travelling.

"I was living in Paris at the time," he said in a recent interview with the *Star*. "I was feeling a need to go west and north."

Trekking through North America, he found his way through the Yukon and eventually Alaska. He went as far as Nome, before going home to France.

Then, in the winter of 1975, Delahaye decided to take the plunge and move to the place he enjoyed the most: the Yukon.

"I fell in love with the space, room to breathe, clean air," he said. "This place is the most diametrically opposed to Paris that you can get."

"I was getting tired of the busy scene and always dealing with riot police."

France at that time, like elsewhere in the world, was facing massive social change and unrest.

"I'd rather worry about bears than police," he said. "And it's nice to see trees instead of antennas."

In his early days, Delahaye worked as a photographer, then with Parks Canada in the Kluane area.

In 1985, he moved to Winnipeg, where he worked at Parks' head office for more than a decade developing programs for visitors centres, before relocating to B.C. There, he met his partner, also a former Yukoner.

After a few years, in 2000 they decided to move back to the Yukon.

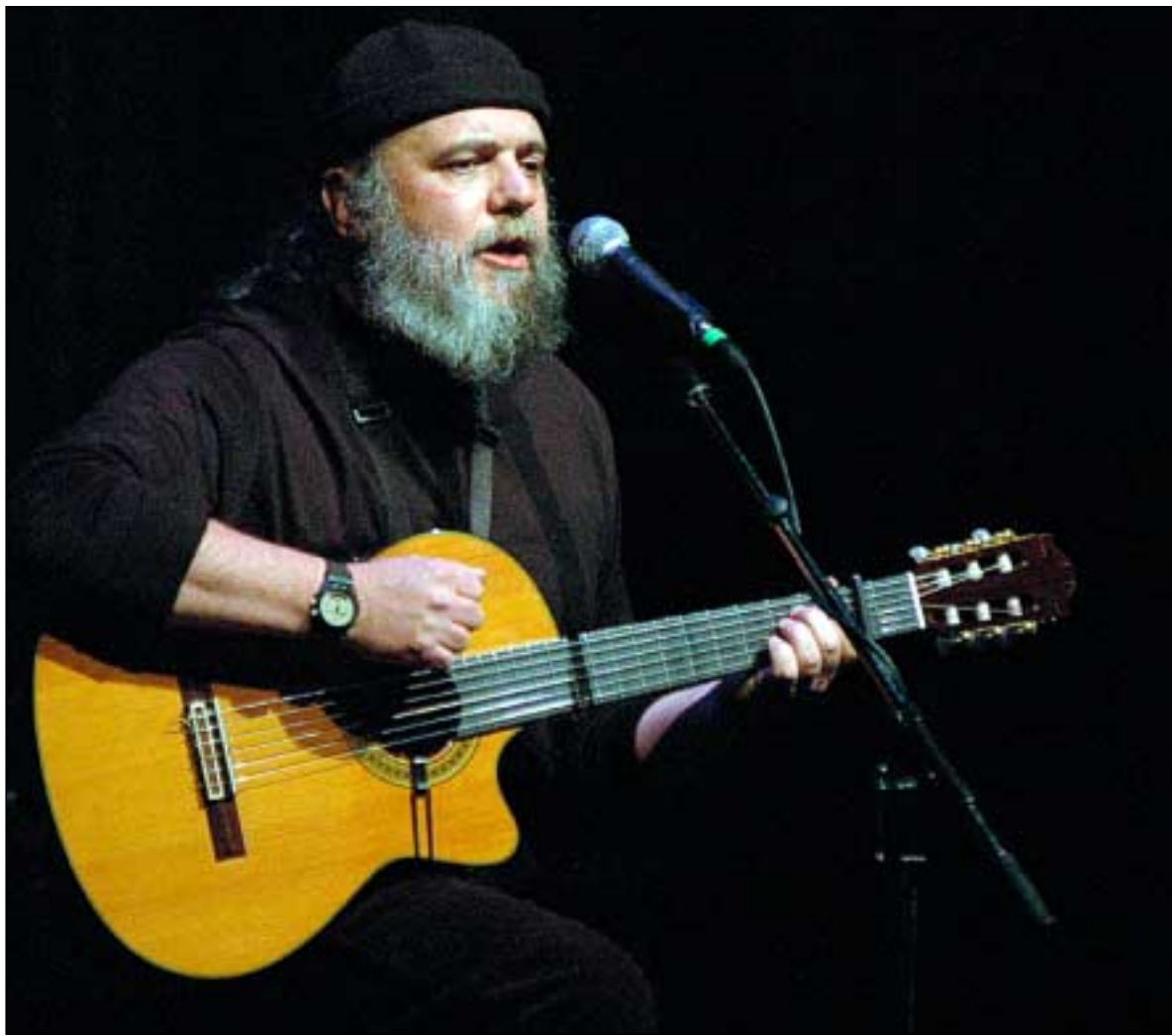


Photo by ANDREW HOSHKIW

IN CONCERT – Seen here performing at the AIDS awareness benefit show held in November, musician Didier Delahaye has released his first CD.

Initially he worked for the local francophone association, then quickly switched to a marketing position with Yukon Arts Centre, where he remains to this day.

An avid musician ever since he was a teenager, Delahaye has only been publicly performing for the last couple of years. It was the Yukon that spurred him on.

"The Yukon is a very friendly environment for music," he said. "In my early days, it started with singing around the campfire or in the winter

around the stove.

"I never tout myself as a guitarist though. I use it as a musical base for singing."

It began, he said, with his work at the francophone association. He used singing in public as a means of leading by example, to encourage others to do the same.

"I'd do the opposite thing though, sing works of Leonard Cohen in French," he said.

With most of the seven songs on this 30-minute recording, Delahaye

approaches the music from the unique perspective of taking these French songs and translating them into English.

"My songs are part of my folk baggage," he said. "It got to the case where I always had to explain what a song was about. It was a lot easier just to translate it."

"I can't really translate it though – it's very rich text – but I can give it the right flavour or intent."

This album is just the tip of the iceberg, however, as Delahaye has trans-

lated more than 70 of Brassens' songs. Over the course of the winter, he hopes to continue recording and expand the album into a double CD.

"The melodies are so old, and yet they're totally listenable," he said.

Over the past year, Delahaye has played at festivals and other events in the Yukon, including the Alsek Music Festival last June and the AIDS awareness benefit show in November. He has also toured a little overseas, including in his native France.

"In France, I'll play almost exclusively in English and people totally love it," said Delahaye.

"I could easily be spending the rest of my life doing this for the rest of my life," he added.

Joining Delahaye on the CD are fellow backing musicians Keitha Clark on violin, Matt King on upright bass, Ed White on drums, Pat Braden on stick and Marie-Hélène Comeau on vocals.

The CD will be officially released next month as part of the Canada Winter Games cultural events, though it's currently available at several locations throughout Whitehorse, including Steve's Music and Triple J's Music Café.

For more information on Delahaye, his music and Brassens, visit his website at www.brassensredux.com.

Lawyer hopes bet will trim Black's excess

TORONTO (CP) — Could a small-stakes wager with his lawyer help keep Conrad Black out of jail?

Black has a fondness for the kind of million-dollar words that leave some listeners scratching their heads.

Black's lawyer, Edward Greenspan, is worried that few judges and jury members relish the prospect of having to tote a thesaurus or dictionary to court.

So Greenspan, a veteran criminal defence lawyer, has made a bet with Black: for every five-syllable word Black says while on the stand during his upcoming fraud trial in Chicago, he'll owe Greenspan \$5.

Four-syllable words will cost \$4 and Greenspan will charge \$3 for three-syllable words.

"He can use as many one- or two-syllable words as he likes," a source familiar with Black's legal team told the Toronto Star.

Charged with defrauding Chicago publisher Hollinger International Inc., Black has maintained his innocence. The charges against him have not been proven and his trial is poised to begin in March.

Legal experts have mixed opinions about Greenspan's plan.

"It's unusual but it strikes me as a very sound strategy," said Columbia University law professor John Coffee. "The danger of a witness — particularly the key witness — going over the head of the jury is always a concern. Nonetheless, I suspect that Mr. Greenspan will collect a few dollars on his bet."

Greg Wallace, a former U.S. federal prosecutor now working as a defence attorney in white-collar criminal cases, agreed. He said the plan "sounds like creative witness preparation."

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Toll free in Yukon: 1-800-661-0408 ext. 5927
Email: ann.birnie@gov.yk.ca

Public Notice

The Department of Community Services is seeking comments on or before February 26, 2007 on proposed amendments to the **Zoning Appeal Board Regulation**, which falls under the **Area Development Act**.

Under this proposal, the Zoning Appeal Board will be the decision-maker rather than the Commissioner. The Board will hear appeals of decisions made by Yukon government development officers under the Area Development Regulations (often referred to as zoning regulations). Appeals will be heard within specified timelines and with precise procedures with regard to the board's decisions.

Decisions made within an incorporated municipality under the *Municipal Act* or under municipal bylaws by either elected officials or staff, such as the CAO or municipal development officers, are not affected.

For more information email us at zoningboardamendments@gov.yk.ca or call 667-8945 toll free at 1 800 661-0408 ext. 8945.