

## Reveles featured at First Thursdays season opener

By Mai Lon Gittelsohn

Nicolas Reveles, Geisel director of outreach for the San Diego Opera, charmed the audience with his "Reflections on a Life in Music" at the Del Mar Foundation's First Thursdays on Sept. 4 at the Powerhouse Community Center. The event opened the 2008/2009 season of First Thursdays. At the piano, Reveles played selections by Haydn and Gershwin and reflected on his career.

In his work for the outreach program of the San Diego Opera and the San Diego Opera Ensemble, Reveles in collaboration with

librettist J. Sherwood Montgomery composed operatic settings for Grimm's tales, "Sleeping Beauty" and "Rumpelstiltskin." Lyric soprano, Rachel Copeland, and tenor, Chad Hilligus, performed a scene from "Rumpelstiltskin".

Reveles says he's always wanted to do a chamber opera in a small space. In this vein, he has developed six vignettes from gay history using the poetry of Walt Whitman. Bass baritone Joseph Grienberger sang a moving song set during the Civil War. This production will be staged in the Diver-sionary Theatre in October.

Reveles began his study of the piano at age 4 and at 8 was already composing music. After serving as a church musician for 40 years, Reveles was ready for new adventures and was the pianist for the White Oak Dance Project, providing musical accompaniment for worldwide performances of Mikhail Baryshnikov and his company. After an exhausting 25-hour flight to Caracas, Venezuela, one year, he was rushed from plane to theater to play for Baryshnikov. He recalls sitting at the keyboard and thinking, "What if I push the tempo just a little bit?"



MARGI SARGIS

Clockwise from above: Mary Jo Potts, left, Virginia Lawrence, Clay and Shirley Johnson, Jim Selsor. Cliff Huffman, Della Johnson, Eileen Huffman. Members of the San Diego Opera Ensemble from left: Rachel Copeland, lyric soprano; Nicolas Reveles, pianist, composer and lecturer; Chad Hilligus, tenor. Pauline Lessman, left, Paula Manheim, Susan Robertis, Judy Crandall-Sloane.

