

Charlotte

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Get To Know...

Carolina Pro Musica

Maybe it was a day trip up to Old Salem or a quiet stroll past Queen Charlotte's portrait at the Mint. Perhaps you sat in a cool, dark theater and watched King Arthur wield Excalibur on screen or Shakespeare's friar woo his nurse on stage. Whatever the route, you probably did some time travelling over the summer.



Karen Jacob travels to the past through sound, and she can take you with her. A harpsichordist and founder of the professional early-music ensemble Carolina Pro Musica, Jacob knows the music that wafted through Queen Charlotte's palace and Shakespeare's plays. Her quartet of musicians, performing on copies of antique instruments with exotic names like viola da gamba, evokes the worlds of hooded monks and lute-toting minnesingers and recreates Bach's music the way Bach, himself, heard it.

"For a city like Charlotte, that has several orchestras and lots of orchestral musicians, we offer a type of performance that you really can't find in other chamber-music series—a little link to the past," says Jacob, who started Carolina Pro Musica twenty-seven years ago. "There are very few groups around the country that play instruments that date back. It creates a different sound."

Carolina Pro Musica offers five concerts each season, playing music from the twelfth through the eighteenth centuries. This month, the ensemble will perform an "eighteenth-century sampler," says Jacob, with music by Bach and rarely heard composers like Quantz and Rameau.

"Charlotte has some history, but much of it's gone. We'll play music from the time the city was founded. It offers Charlotte a glimpse of our cultural history." —Meg Freeman Whalen