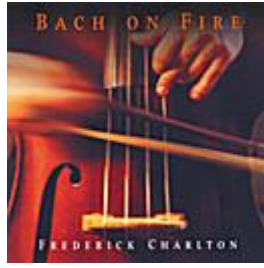


## Mp3 Frederick Charlton - Bach On Fire



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Double Bassist Frederick Charlton has received world- wide acclaim for his CD of selections from the Violin Partitas of J.S. Bach, including the first-ever recording of the famous "Chaconne" in it's entirety. Gary Karr calls it "Dynamite" 10 MP3 Songs CLASSICAL: Traditional, EASY LISTENING: Mood Music Details: FREDERICK CHARLTON Solo Contrabass (Double Bass) Reviews and Critiques After hearing a recording of Bach's famous Chaconne performed by Frederick Charlton, the late great bassist David Walter said of his playing: "A real tour de force! Excellent insight into Johann Sebastian Bach. Fine sound, fine chops, an intelligent, romantic approach to this Gibraltar of a piece." The great solo contrabassist Gary Karr solobass@shaw.ca recently received a copy of Mr. Charltons CD Bach on Fire and replied via email to Frederick: What you've accomplished probably goes over the heads of most bassists, but, for sure, I greatly admire your work and can't thank you enough for the music and the CD, which is dynamite. If I said years ago that I didn't know how you did it, it still goes for now. You're amazing. Reviewer for the Italian Publication "Musicherie" Vito Domenico Luizzi vitus69@libero.it said of Mr. Charlton's CD Bach on Fire (Translated from Italian), "Frederick Charlton's CD Bach on Fire is extremely well made. Consisting entirely of Bach Unaccompanied Violin Partitas (including the Chaconne), it is very commendable Great technique and clean sound. A perfect, impeccably intelligent approach to these works... A sweet and yet grand sound. I have finally found a truly fine contrabass CD that is quite different from the rest!" A review by Sandor Ostlund sobass@worldnet.attfor Bass World Magazine: Bach on Fire is a truly phenomenal achievement that is the result of thirty years of work by Charlton. On this recording, he has compiled ten movements from J.S. Bachs Partitas for Unaccompanied Violin. In addition to the considerable challenges posed by the double bass performer of Bachs cello suites, one must also contend with an enormous amount of double, triple and quadruple

stops as well as a denser, more polyphonic texture in the Partitas Charlton endeavors to play everything that Bach wrote without removing notes from the chords. The transpositions that he chose work in making the music lay as well as possible on the bass At the peak of this CD is the Ciaccona from the Partita no. 2. This movement, which is one of the most beautiful in Bachs unaccompanied string oeuvre, lasts for over seventeen minutes, and it is quite simply an inspiring experience to hear it performed on this recording. For those interested in attempting this piece for themselves after hearing Charltons performance, he has published his own edition of the Partitas, including the Ciaccona, available through Lemur Music [lemurmusic.com](http://lemurmusic.com). While violinists and those who know this music well may have a difficult time adjusting to the different tessitura and texture of the double bass sound, the astonishing fact remains that Charlton is playing this music at all, let alone with good intonation, a lovely sound, and musical conviction. Martin Perlich [perlix@pacbellof](mailto:perlix@pacbellof) KCSN radio, said of Fredericks new CD: It rocks! Lemur Music in San Juan Capistrano, CA featured Mr. Charlton as soloist in 2004 for their open house. The following is the review that was posted on their website [lemurmusic.com](http://lemurmusic.com): Frederick Charlton graced the stage for a set comprised of his 30 years dedicated to transcribing Bach Partita's for the unaccompanied violin to the double bass. Many pieces from his recent CD, Bach on Fire were performed with an element of grace and precision that reinforced Frederick's arco ability. There was a silence that took over the crowd as he weaved his way through a repertoire of compositions he has dedicated his life to perfecting. Frederick went into great detail in explaining certain hurdles he had to overcome in transposing and perfecting these great works. It was a phenomenal experience to see this master in action. Martin Simpson, founder of the South African Bass Collective, has had information about the CD Bach on Fire on the Breaking News portion of their website for over a year now. This is how Mr. Simpson begins an interview with Frederick, that can also be found on the website [bassplayers.co.za](http://bassplayers.co.za) Joe McNally, Artistic Director at the Hutchins Consort, recently sent me Double Bassist, Frederick Charlton's (CD) Bach On Fire which features ten of the nineteen Unaccompanied Violin Partitas performed on Double Bass. This work is, in a word, astounding. At a recent International Society of Bassists convention where Frederick was a featured soloist, Tom Knific, [thomas.knific@wmich.edu](mailto:thomas.knific@wmich.edu) President of the convention and Professor of Double Bass and Director of Jazz Studies at Western Michigan University said: "Frederick Charlton is a man on a mission, bridging repertoire and instrumental demands in a remarkable manner. His fond regard for the past and vision for the future of the double bass is inspiring." Pam Kragen,

pkragen@nctimesreviewer/writer for the Southern California publication North County Times in the April 20th, 2005 edition, wrote: Frederick Charlton, a contrabass player and composer from Santa Ana, has been traveling the world for nearly 30 years performing his contrabass arrangement of the Chaconne from Bach's Partita No. 2 for Violin. And now he has recorded the epic 17-minute piece --- or more accurately, he has finally mastered it. One of 10 tracks on his new CD *Bach on Fire*, the Chaconne has been such an inspiring and challenging work for the musician that Charlton has recorded it on each of his three CDs. The third time seems to be the charm in this case, as Charlton's rendering of the ever-shifting piece is subtle, hypnotic and graceful. And his experience with the 10-movement CD invests it with such precise musical detail that it seems to pour directly through the instrument from his soul. The rest of the cuts on the CD are contrabass cuts of movements from Bach's Violin Partitas No. 1 through 3. The Partitas become mournful and serene in the deep, reflective tones of the contrabass. Most rewarding are the lilting Gavotte en Rondeau from Partita No. 3, and the emotional Sarabande and Double from Partita No. 1. From the South African Bass Collective CD Reviews: Dr. Kai Horsthemke, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa/ March 2006 horsthemkek@educ.wits.ac.za *Bach on Fire* is a 10-movement suite compiled, arranged and performed by American concert bassist Frederick Charlton, consisting of his favourite selections from Johann Sebastian Bach's three Partitas for Unaccompanied Violin. The partitas and sonatas for solo violin have in the past been arranged for a wide variety of contexts, from solo instrument (lute, guitar) to full symphony orchestra. According to the liner notes, Charlton began working on the partitas when he was a teenager and over the next thirty-plus years performed all of the various movements to critical acclaim. The present versions, arranged for contrabass, are an octave and a fifth to an octave and a sixth lower than the original. Sacrilege? Hardly: Bach himself is known for constantly revisiting his canon and for arranging various movements for other solo instruments, in lower keys in some instances a full two octaves lower than the original violin version. Belying the album title, *Bach on Fire* begins in a slow, low, smouldering way with the Sarabande from Partita # 1. With the same partitas Double, the tempo picks up, and the harmonic and thematic movement becomes to the uninitiated listener more recognizably Bach. By the third cut, Giga from Partita # 3, the instrument is certainly on fire. Charlton negotiates the tricky progressions with ease and dexterity but he allows himself and the listener to breathe in between the arco flurries of notes, which magnifies the enjoyment. Partita # 2's Sarabanda has the opening piece's gravitas, a darkly gorgeous tune. Gavotte en Rondeau from Partita # 3 will be

recognizable to many, a playful excursion. Allemanda takes things a notch down in terms of tempo, but up in terms of register. Charlton skillfully explores the upper ranges of the instrument, without the result ever sounding strained or forced. What is remarkable is that Charlton does not attempt to make the bass sound like a (necessarily clumsy) violin or even like a violoncello. He has adapted the pieces for bass which is to say he manages to bring the bass's many charms to bear on the tunes, in a fascinating kind of cross-fertilisation. Double, from the same partita as Allemanda (Partita # 1), is up in terms of both tempo and register and still the instrument sounds like a bass. Menuet I II (Partita # 3) begins with daring, startling double stops Bach has never sounded so modern! The 17-and-a-half minute Ciaccona (Partita # 2) is, in some ways, the centerpiece of this collection, an immensely demanding piece that is rich in moods and textures and which Charlton negotiates with astonishing aplomb and importantly feel: a captivating performance. Partita # 3's Loure gently eases the listener into a state of wistful longing an appropriate ending to a beautifully performed and compiled suite that is equally suitable as a backdrop for a Sunday morning breakfast-in-bed with your lover or for meditative/ reflective immersion. A stunning achievement! Also from the South African Bass Collective CD Reviews: Nippy Cripwell, well known S.A Double Bassist Frederick Charlton has compiled a vast ten movement Suite of his favourite selections from the famous 3 Partitas for Unaccompanied Violin by Johann Sebastian Bach. This is the culmination of some 30 years work of transcription and performance; a monumental undertaking. From a Bass playing perspective it is enlightening to hear these Bach compositions performed so ably on the instrument. The technical challenges posed in playing Bach are extreme; difficult interval leaps, complex harmonic progressions, double stopped passages. Intonation is so crucial to clearly distinguish the harmonic movement in Bach. The sound on the Bass must be kept light and nimble to prevent the music from sounding ponderous. It is difficult enough on an instrument tuned in fifths; it is compounded on a Bass (tuned in fourths). Added to this is the physical endurance and concentration required. Some of the movements are long (Ciaccona from Partita No. 2 is 17.30.)! All these challenges emphasize the heights Mr. Charlton's performance has achieved. Frederic Charlton is critically acclaimed, and rightly so. Bach's music is sublime though not always easy listening. Make an effort to listen to Bach on Fire, the music will open your mind and the Bass playing will open your perception of performance possibilities. From a review in Double Bassist Magazine (UK): If you're looking to fuel the debate on whether violin works should be transcribed for the bass, Bach on Fire is excellent discussion material. His accurate

transcriptions are performed with excellent intonation(Frederick) Charlton has proved that it is technically possible to perform these superb works on the double bass. Famed contrabass soloist and educator Bertram Turetsky bturetzky@pacbellsaid: With Mr. Charltons CD Bach on Fire and subsequent publishing of the Unaccompanied Violin Partitas of J.S. Bach, Frederick has single-handedly raised the bar in solo bass performance for the new millennium. Reviews and Critiques updated 10/10/06

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