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Canby's Capsules

Edward Tatnall Canby

Super-best

Mozart: Serenade in B Flat, K. 361 "gran partita." Netherlands Wind Ens., De Waart. **Philips 839 734**, stereo, \$6.98.

One of the absolutely great Mozart works in a stunningly beautiful, superbly recorded performance—one of the great recordings of our time. Often known as Ser. for 13 Winds—but one is a string bass. Vast, expansive wind sound. Hey—why do these Philips recordings "decode" so gorgeously into quadraphonic via SQ?? Are they slipping something in?

Tchaikovsky "1812" Festival Overture. Commentary by Deems Taylor. **Capriccio Italien.** Minneapolis Symphony, Dorati. **Mercury SRI 75001**, stereo, \$6.98. (Golden Imports)

Curious! Encouraged by the excellent "Kubelik Legacy" mono Mercury reissue, Philips is bringing out more of the once-famed U.S. Mercury recordings—but now imported from Holland, at a premium price. Well—worth it. This is the celebrated real-bells-and-cannon "1812," with illustrated account by Deems Taylor of the cannon and bells (Riverside Church, NYC) recording sessions. I'd take this part any day over the actual "1812" itself.

Beethoven-Liszt: Symphony No. 9 (complete); Liszt: Festival Cantata. Richard and John Cantiguglia, duopianists. **Connoisseur CSQ 2052**, SQ quadraphonic, \$6.98.

Here is the all-around finest two-piano recording I have ever heard, bar none. First, the Contiguglia brothers, the most profoundly *musical* pair of piano virtuosi of this century, with brains and taste as well as fingers. And this Liszt transcription of the big Symphony, unplayed for a century, is uncanny—the finest job of two-piano recording I know. Not only separation of two unlike pianos, within a perfect over-all ambience, but even separation *within* each piano, as in large concert grands. The two-way play between the performers was a major Liszt feature, perfectly reproduced—and in SQ too. The Liszt Cantata, one piano 4-hands, is lesser fare though with Beethoven quotes (Archduke Trio) incorporated.