



**MARCH 2018
HIFI EXCLUSIVE - PRE and POWER
AMPLIFIER 17BP3/4B3**

Canadian Power

Bryston amplifiers are living legends. They represent high end sound combined with famous stamina, embellished with a 20 year warranty.

Yes, I admit it I have been enthusiastic about amplifiers forever, but I definitely do pay attention to price and performance. In fact with efficient loudspeakers I appreciate it when, after numerous relevant listening trials, and even public demonstrations on the “World of HiFi”, when reserves are available and the amp does not continually work at its threshold. The latter was and is not a problem with the products of the Canadian Brand Bryston because they represent, likewise both in the professional as well as in the high fidelity area, the highest delivery and can-do qualities, as well as “audiophile punch.” I like to call it “Quality with a Bang.”

The ideal amplifier is a straightforward “wire” which amplifies but otherwise does nothing to subtract or add anything to the signal. Period. And as a synonym for this

Canadian Power

Bryston-Verstärker sind lebende Legenden. Sie stehen für High-End-Klang gepaart mit berühmter Robustheit – garniert mit 20 Jahren Garantie.

Ja, ich gebe zu, dass ich mich seit Jahr und Tag besonders für Verstärker begeistere und dabei durchaus kein Kost- oder Leistungsverächter bin. Selbst an wartungsintensiven Schallwandlern schätze ich nach zehnjährigen antwortenden Hörsitzungen und sogar öffentlichen Vorführungen auf der „World of HiFi“, wenn Reserven zur Verfügung stehen und der Amp nicht ständig im Grenzbereich arbeitet. Letzteres war und ist bei den Transistoren der kanadischen Marke Bryston nicht zu befürchten, denn sie stehen im professionellen wie hifi-fidelen Bereich gleichberechtigt für höchste Leiter- und Hochtemperaturstabilität und „audiophilen Punch“. Halb „Qualität mit Bumm“, wie ich es gern zu nennen pflege.

Ein vielfältiger Aufbau mit zahlreichen Optionen für den individuellen Zuhörer macht das moderne Verstärkerpaar aus ▶

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in this industry one has seen the name Bryston for four decades. However this is not my first Bryston contact, but nonetheless my first test for which I have downright jumped to the front of the line because I always found the classics, the 3B and the 4B (see box) more than interesting, in fact desirable. In due course the possibly record-breaking 14BSST, the holder of the performance record of STEREO magazine, was already a sensation.

An Honorable Family

Now I have it in front of me, the youngest reincarnation of the 4B and the matching second largest preamplifier from Canada, the BP-17, both in the “cubed” version “3.” And much has happened. They appear, perhaps due to the altered living ambience of the well

situated customer base, not only quite different, but also under the hood it appears worthy of exhibiting rather than pragmatic. It is discernable that the engineers specifically did everything to reach “the very best”, components, cabinetry, and workmanship are indeed of the finest. The preamp is totally symmetrical and completely implemented in manufacturing friendly SMD technology, which leads to extremely short signal paths. The apparently available plug-in positions on the main circuit board for phono and DAC options are noticeably vacant, so therefore we have the basic version in front of us, which is available for 4,490 Euro, but which can naturally also be retrofitted making it future-proof and budget friendly. Long life cycles and the 20 year warranty speak for themselves, something will only be altered when it makes sense, and when one is convinced about it.



The Bryston power amplifier, in classic Class AB power amp concept, believe it or not, is dominated and supplied by two huge stacked toroidal transformers. Okay, there is an unwritten law that the quality of an amplifier can be judged by the quality of the power supply, which here in the 4B3 can certainly be categorized as extraordinarily ambitious. The specified 300 Watts into 8 Ohms certainly acknowledges this, but it's actually 311, and 500 Watts into 4 Ohms, and for short periods it can mobilize even 624 Watts, per channel of course. The load resistance slowly

starts to glow here. The amplification factor is switchable between 23 and 29 dB, and additionally the 4B3 amp can be bridged. The innovations of the “Cubed” generation are embodied in an especially sophisticated negative feedback concept and once again improved suppression of HF, common mode, and negative power supply impact.

Modular High-tech Preamplifier

The completely symmetrical Class A preamplifier is the result of over two year meticulous development based on the BP-17, combined with the best analogue technology of Bryston, among which are special superior and patented input buffers (amplifier components) in the entire “Cubed” array, as well as a new symmetrical volume control of extreme precision and channel uniformity, while borrowing from




the B-135 amplifier and the SP-3 processor. The development team around CEO and co-owner Chris Russell honored the deceased co-developer Dr. Ioan Alexandru Salomie by naming the input circuitry “Salomie” after him. Although the applicable DAC module

is not built into our test sample, Bryston attaches importance to strict separation of current and ground separation in analog and digital circuitry.

Earlier Bryston components, naturally especially the 4B, had the reputation of providing fabulous sound, in durable irrepressible straight forward form; the components were uncomplicated and appropriate like a hammer. They had a certain wood cutter's charm, and as an academician who knows how to fell a tree, because he's done it already, without meaning it disrespectful, of impressive simplicity, and reaching this is indeed a complex art. With the actual, modern, and extensively reconfigured generation this is only somewhat the case. Perhaps one notices it during the turn-on ritual of the power amplifier, which is not quite simple and sometimes only succeeds after getting used to it.

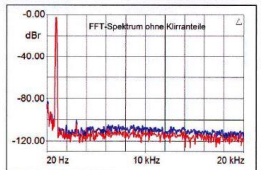
BRYSTON BP-17²



ab 4490 €
 (Fernbedienung 490 €, DAC-Modul 1800 €, Phono MM 1050 €)
 Maße: 43 x 11 x 35 cm (BxHxT)
 Garantie: 20 Jahre
 Kontakt: Avitech
 Tel.: +43 1214 78701, www.avitech.at

Eine herausragend neutrale, unbestechliche und ausbaufähige, vollsymmetrische Vorstufe aus Kanada, wie sie auch der Studiotechnik entstammen könnte, dabei aber mehr als audiophil angehaucht mit starker Rhythmik. Anhören!

MESSERGEBNISSE



Maximale Ausgangsspannung (1% THD)	15,6 V
Verstärkungsfaktor ab Hochpegeleingang	12 dB
Klirrfaktor bei 0,03/0,3/1 V	0,04 %/0,006 %/0,002 %
Intermod. bei 0,03/0,3/1 V	0,07 %/0,0004 %/0,001 %
Rauschabstand bei 0,3/ 0,03 V	89,3 dB(A)/69,6 dB(A)
Eingangsempfindlichkeit für 1 V aus	268 mV
Übersteuerungsfestigkeit	inf. V
Obere Grenzfrequenz	>80 kHz
Lautstärkesteller, Gleichlauffehler bei -60 dB	0,1 dB
Stereo-Kanaltrennung bei 10kHz	92,7 dB
Leistungsaufnahme Standby	<2 W
Leistungsaufnahme Leerlauf	31


LABOR-KOMMENTAR:
 ICI Netzphase am Testgerät
 Übertragende Rausch- und Verzerrungsarmut, alle Übertragungsfunktionen sind superb. Auffallend hoch ist die Gleichtaktunterdrückung von 69 dB, die nicht nur echte Symmetrie verrät, sondern auch Studionormen erfüllt.

AUSSTATTUNG

Je zwei symmetrische Ein-/Ausgänge, fünf Cinch-Hochpegeleingänge, Tapeschleife, Kopfhöreranschluss, Fernbedienung, Phono/DAC optional (Module)

STEREO-TEST
 KLANG-NIVEAU VORSTUFE 88%
 PREIS/LEISTUNG
 ★★★★★☆
 EXZELLENT

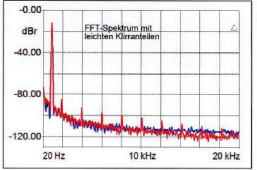
BRYSTON 4B³



um 6550 €
 Maße: 43 x 15 x 42 cm (BxHxT)
 Garantie: 20 Jahre
 Kontakt: Avitech
 Tel.: +43 1214 78701, www.avitech.at

Neueste Version der legendären Doppel-Mono-Endstufe aus Kanada. Ein wahres Kraftpaket enormer Robustheit und Power (rund 300/500 Watt Ausgangsleistung pro Kanal), klingt ungeheuer druckvoll, schnell und lebendig. Topklasse, unbedingt anhören.

MESSERGEBNISSE



Dauerleistung (8 Ohm / 40hm)	311 W/499 W
Impulsleistung 4 Ohm (1kHz)	624 W
Klirr. bei 50mW/5W/1dB Pmax	0,05 %/0,01 %/0,01 %
Intermod. 50mW/5W/1dB Pmax	0,004 %/0,005 %/0,01 %
Rauschabstand bei 50mW/5W	61,2 dB/81,2 dB
Dämpfungsf. an 4 Ohm (63Hz/1kHz/14kHz)	142/100/60
Obere Grenzfrequenz (-3dB/40hm)	>80 kHz
Leistungsaufn. Sby/Leer. (bei)	<2 W/58 W(221 Volt)
Gewicht	28,5 kg

LABOR-KOMMENTAR:
 ICI Netzphase am Testgerät
 Sehr hohe Leistungen und Impulsreserven bei sehr geringen Verzerrungen und guter Kanaltrennung sowie adäquatem Dämpfungsfaktor. Schnelle (breitbandige) Schaltung. Für die Leistung erstaunlich geringer Leerlaufverbrauch.

AUSSTATTUNG

Symmetrische und unsymmetrische Eingänge, schaltbarer Verstärkungsfaktor 23/29 dB, Trigger-Ferneinschaltung, Anschluss für ein Paar Lautsprecher, für Monobetrieb brückbar (500 Watt an acht Ohm), aufwändiges Schutzschaltungskonzept, 19-Zoll-Rack-griffe optional

STEREO-TEST
 KLANG-NIVEAU 95%
 PREIS/LEISTUNG
 ★★★★★☆
 EXZELLENT

Our measuring laboratory as well as our photo studio specifically required editorial support in order to turn on the extremely high-performance power amplifier, although both of these deal daily with amplifiers. This is due to the built-in circuit breaker which, contrary to expectations, is not a normal main switch and should be left continually switched on. It is responsible for a 20 second delay for the next try as well as providing a self-diagnosis sequence, a check for the connected line voltage, and also for the amplifier stages, before activating the amp, while additionally requiring the activating of the front switch. Surprisingly, in turn, the preamp does not feature a "hard" power switch at all. That is not necessarily self-explanatory, but only problematical once, and quickly becomes a matter of course for the owner. In any case the electrical protection of the components is perfect. And different from many other amplifiers, the Bryston amps arrived with marked and even matching net phase which speaks for a thought-out and very constant manufacturing organization.

In our STEREO listening room the Brystons unleash a kind of incredible elemental force whose pronounced rhythm, texture, and aesthetics is

stunning with closer listening. At first the bass attracts attention, then the combination takes the Aurum Vulkan speakers in its grip, and elicits profound depths as well as crisp impulses of exceptional quality. Although the rest of the spectrum may be a bit less spectacular, it is completely praiseworthy, and provides enormous clarity, plasticity, and accuracy. I'll be damned if these aren't simply the best all-around amplifiers about which the demanding listener, at still affordable prices, dreams about!

The new **Bryston** amplifiers, for me the superstar is the power amp, which comes very close to the top references, is with its classic construction uncompromisingly modern,



and not despite, but especially as before, synonymous for reliability and long life expectancy. Soundwise with their tonal naturalness, the riveting dynamic character, the consistent unerring effect-free neutrality, and the tranquility in the sonic image, these Bryston amps belong to the absolute upper chamber of international amplifier manufacturing.

This also means that they project the emotions of an Amanda McBroom into a room if they are indeed in a recording, and in no way creating some and adding them. Consequently they literally omit nothing, the thoroughness of revealing embedded detail is astonishingly good, accompanied by thrilling rhythm, which is rare enough, and then only available from fast AND bass efficient amplifiers.

They are an exemplary sovereign tower of strength, which when required are capable of unleashing unexpected explosive enormous power; likewise admirable as well as endearing. Because for me they combine in a unique manner professional as well as audio qualities, and should absolutely be listened to when one is thinking about the acquisition of ultra-high karat amplifiers. The legend surrounding this brand, Bryston, is indeed absolutely true and justified, since it has been available for decades, a treasured entity and an augmentation to the top offers. Superb.

Tom Frantzen

BRYSTON BP-173

An outstanding, neutral, incorruptible, upgradeable, completely balanced preamplifier from Canada, which could also have come from studio technology, but more audiophile leaning with strong rhythm. Listen to it!

LABORATORY COMMENT:

Outstanding lack of noise and distortion, all transfer functions are superb. Remarkably high is the common mode suppression of 69 dB, which not only reveals true symmetry, but also fulfills studio norms.

CONFIGURATION

Two balanced XLR inputs and outputs per channel, five RCA inputs, tape loop, headphone connection, remote control, and optional phono and DAC module.

STEREO-TEST

Sound-Niveau
Preamplifier 88%

PRICE/PERFORMANCE

EXCELLENT

HISTORY

Bryston Ltd. in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada, is a 1962 founded industrial enterprise which originally dealt with medical technology, but since the middle of the 1970 years devoted itself especially to the manufacturing of amplifiers for professional as well as audiophile purposes. The reliability of the brand is renowned. Every completed component undergoes a 100 hour test and warm-up procedure, and only components which survive this are delivered, which among others is the reason for the unusual 20 year warranty. The key product of the Canadians was, is, and will undoubtedly continue to be the 4B stereo power amplifier which for generations has always been improved, developed further, and lovingly cared for. While we see the newest generation 4B3 in the above test, on the right one can find the photo of the original version of 1976, a difference of over 40 years... Of course time did not stand still, the technical advances led to higher performance, greater bandwidth, more rapid signal processing, and better signal to noise and distortion behavior, thereby achieving higher dynamics and better sound, although as before, the older Brystons remain extremely robust amplifiers. Better successors, as is well known, don't change this. On the contrary, the new component generation will continue to perpetuate the successful Bryston saga on the highest level.

Translated from the German by Peter Ullman

BRYSTON 4B3

The newest version of the legendary double-Mono power amplifier from Canada.

A genuine power package, enormously robust and powerful (about 300/500 Watts power output per channel), sounds enormously forceful, fast and lively. Top-class, you must by all means listen to it.

LABORATORY COMMENT:

Very high performance and impulse with very low distortion and good channel separation as well as adequate damping factor. Rapid (broad band) circuitry. For the performance amazingly low power consumption at idle.

CONFIGURATION

Balanced/unbalanced inputs, switchable amplification factor 23/29 dB, trigger remote-turn-on, connection for a pair of loudspeakers, for mono usage bridgeable (900 Watts into 8 Ohms), elaborate turn-on protection, optional 19 inch rack handles.

STEREO-TEST

Sound-Niveau
Preamplifier 95%

PRICE/PERFORMANCE

EXCELLENT