



**MEMO - Bryston Customer Feedback**  
**SUBJECT - Bryston B100 SST Integrated Amplifier**

Email From: Bill Schuchard

Hello James,

Here is a quick update on the B100 SST purchase that I have been mulling over for months. After having it for just one night I bought it. I do not have time to do a full review yet. I will do that after it's broken in and I have completely digested it. I will give you the ADHD version of my initial impressions.



This is not the B60's big brother. It is more like the B60's highly educated Olympian cousin. I can only compare to the B60, not the B60 SST so part of the differences may be due to the SST. Regardless, the B100 is deeper, stronger, and more articulate in the bass, more transparent and detailed in the highs, and much more dynamic overall.

It seems to have the perfect set of features for me; Volume, source select, and balance. I do not miss having bass or treble controls, as I never use them. I found the balance control to have very little negative sonic impact and can be adjusted in small increments, which might prove useful to some folks. It seems to me that this is a VERY GOOD solution to anybody who wants two channel HiFi combined with a video system. It is amazing how good movies sound though good two channel equipment. It also has a pass-through mode for those who want to mix this with a surround system but I did not and will not test that.

It has a built in DAC but I did not get that. I found myself wishing I had as I realized that three of my sources were digital. The DAC has inputs for multiple digital sources at the same time. This is the first I had seen of that. I have a feeling

that the DAC would be good enough such that using a DVD as a transport could rival my Linn CD player. That is just a hunch however.

Sonically this unit disappears. It is very detailed yet neutral sounding. It seems to just let the sound through, as it should be. The bass is strong and articulate. I was somehow surprised by that. The highs are very detailed and transparent. Symbols and triangles sound very much like they should. The midrange is articulate and neither forward or recessed. I could make out some of the words that Tom Waits sings on Heart Attack and Vine that I never have before.

The B100 has an attack on transients that makes listening more exciting. While watching Fantasia 2000 with my boys, we all jumped when "spring" woke up the volcano. I was listening to the Boston Pops while watching the Red Sox play the Yankees. I've been to the Pops several times and this was very close to being there.

The sense of space is excellent. The soundstage is superb and lateral imaging is excellent. Listening to Dire Straits "Private Investigations" revealed sounds that came from far beyond the speakers laterally. The soundstage depth seems good so far too but I have not analyzed it yet.

One thing I noticed is that while listening, my wife and I kept getting caught up in conversation and enjoying the sound instead of getting caught up analyzing it to death. This is a very good sign. I also found that if I compare my Linn CD to my Marantz DVD player, the difference in the amount of detail resolution is greater than I have ever heard before. With different combinations of my Linn preamp, passive Niles preamp, Adcom preamp, Forte Model 5, Bryston B60, I have never noticed such a difference. I did not mention the Goldmund SRI because that is what the B100 is replacing.

**That brings us to the ultimate challenge; The Goldmund SRI. The B100 really competes with products costing more; such as the Mark Levinson integrated, the Macintosh integrated with the autoformers, and the new Goldmund SRI. These units cost much more than the B100 about \$6K, \$6K, and \$8K respectively but the B100 holds its own very well.**

The Mark Levinson and Macintosh sound nice too and to choose between these and the B100 would be difficult. **The Mark Levinson and Macintosh seem to have their own sonic signature, which the B100 seems not to.** Which one of these is better is open to interpretation. I would be happy with any of those.

This brings us to the Goldmund integrated. I have yet to see the brand new one with a full function remote. I can only compare to the older units, which cost about \$4500 and have either remote volume or no remote at all. I have yet to determine what it really is yet. The B100 seems to be sonically in between the old SRI and the newer SRI. It has strong bass like the old SRI but with a little less slam. It has very detailed open transparency like the JOB based SRI but a tiny amount less perhaps. I found myself wishing my old Goldmund had more

transparency and that the new Goldmund with the JOB had stronger bass. I wanted something right in between. The B100 seems fit that 'Bill' and also has remote source select so I am quite pleased. I also refuse to buy from Goldmund because of how horribly they treated me when my SRI had problems. My thanks go out to Natural Sound for taking up the slack there.

I thought about going the tube preamp and Bryston 2B SST route. I haven't heard a tube preamp I didn't like. Perhaps I have just been lucky there. I think that route might sound a hair better with the added tube magic. Those thoughts quickly disappeared when a nerf football hit my stereo cabinet. With the B100, one will not have to maintain tubes and will like the 20-year warranty and great customer service.

From an aesthetic standpoint, the B100 uses first-rate materials and looks much better in person than in the pictures. I had a hard time deciding on black or silver but chose black so that it would disappear more. I didn't like that the silver one had silver on the faceplate only. Even with the nice materials, this is a pretty unit that looks like it sounds good even when it is off. If this were a car, it would certainly be a sleeper.

One should note that it sounds funny when cold. These items are designed to such tolerances that they sound best when at operating temperature so this is probably old news to anybody reading my input here.

My only quibble is with the remote. I think it is great and provides exactly what I need and nothing else. I have a problem with the automatic motion sensor back-light. It seems to light up and stay lit for a few seconds upon the slightest jar if it is on the couch, but if I pick it up, sometimes it does not go on or it shuts off very quickly. Perhaps I will get used to it. **By comparison, after using this remote, all of my other remotes seem cheap and temporary.**

**Overall, I highly recommend this unit. It is the perfect choice for a two-channel audiophile who just wants good music and little fuss.**

Associated equipment;

Linn entry level CD player

Marantz DV4300 DVD player

DIY speakers. Audax 6.5" aerogel woofer with Seas aluminum tweeter and 3rd order crossover. Sealed enclosure for accuracy over bass extension. A Revel F30 was used as a reference during the design and crossover tweaking.

B&W 10" sealed powered subwoofer.

Sincerely,  
William Schuchard