



# Bubl  finally gets his name in lights

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CHRISTMAS CAME early for thousands of Michael Bubl  fans who crowded into Dublin's Grafton Street yesterday evening to greet the Canadian crooner for the turning on of the Christmas lights.

On a stage outside Brown Thomas, the star did what he does best, opening with a few bars of a seasonal song to get people in the mood: "Oh, the weather outside is frightful, but the fire is so delightful, and since we've no place to go . . ."

"Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow," the crowd sang back in unison and utter delight.

Inside Brown Thomas, which hosts the annual Christmas event, Bubl 's album played over the stereo and, as the press pack gathered, the atmosphere inside was more movie premiere than Christmas lights countdown.

The anticipation was palpable, even among seasoned celebrity journalists. "I've heard he's *really* good looking in real life," crooned one. "He's *really* good looking in not-real life," countered another.

Then Bubl  appeared, dressed casually in a navy mac, jumper and jeans, his eyes sparkling. Full of easy charm, cheek and chuckles, Bubl  said Ireland was a special place for him.

"I've been accepted more here than I have been probably anywhere else in the world," he said.



**Michael Bubl : said Ireland was a special place for him**

As a Canadian, he said he felt the two nationalities had much in common. "You share so many of the same values and you share so much of the same very dry sense of humour. People get me here."

Describing his appearances at the Aviva Stadium last year, which attracted 90,000 people over two nights, Bubl  said they were "probably professionally the best nights of my life".

"At that time, that was the biggest show I'd ever played . . . and I mean it wasn't just 54,000 people, it was 54,000 Irish people and there's a big difference between that and other places. They were involved, they sang so loud in places I couldn't hear myself. I felt like the Beatles."

Back on Grafton Street the comparison seemed apt, as girls screamed shrilly, holding thousands of camera phones aloft to capture the scene.