

Gold Standard



BY KATYA DIAKOW

His songs may be smooth as silk, but Michael Bublé still has an edge

He's a real triple threat: talented, handsome and charming. But while Michael Bublé may be the envy of men and the object of women's desire, he's still a pretty grounded guy.

Bubl  wisely doesn't mess with a good thing. His voice is as smooth as Sinatra's, his clean-cut look and classic suits are reminiscent of the Rat Pack era, and his charisma gets him compared to Harry Connick Jr. Despite these daunting comparisons, Bub  manages to tap into a new generation's sensibility.

"You can try to trick the people and come out wearing a fedora and a tuxedo, but that's not me. I was born in the late '70s, I wear jeans. I don't hang out in casinos. The lifestyle isn't my thing. I don't drink martinis and I don't smoke cigars," he's joked.

He's aware that belting out jazz standards and original ballads isn't the most macho job. His typical audience is mostly women, along with their boyfriends and husbands who are dragged to the concerts. But like any good entertainer, Bub  uses humour to win over both sides of the crowd.

"I wanted to be a hockey player so bad," he lamented during a concert last winter at Madison Square Garden in New York City. And like any true-blooded Canadian, there's hockey running through his veins. Bub  recently teamed up with hockey legends Gordie Howe and Pat Quinn as a new co-owner of the Western Hockey League's Vancouver Giants.

The 33-year-old native of Burnaby, B.C. is also a big-time Canucks fan. After being nominated for a Grammy award in 2007, he told reporters he was happy to skip the ceremony in L.A. to

sit at home and watch hockey instead. "They give away our best traditional pop award at a dinner before the Grammys, so I just think that's bulls**t," he said in a press interview. "I'm just not going to show up."

As one of Canada's top-selling artists, Bub  isn't shy when defending his life's work. With worldwide sales of more than 15 million records, Grammy and Juno awards under his belt, and his latest album, *Call Me Irresponsible*, reaching #1 on the Billboard Top 200, he feels he's just getting warmed up.

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"I would love to lie to you and tell you that I don't want to be an icon," Bub  told the *Vancouver Sun*. "That's not to say that I'll ever get close, or will catch up, to a guy like Bryan Adams, or Anne Murray, or Martina McBride, or BTO. But I want it, and I'm hungry for it."

As a kid, while his friends were blasting Metallica from their stereos,

Bub  was listening to Bobby Darin. "I'm a sentimental person and the lyrics are quite sentimental. The melodies are terrific. The songs are just beautiful and I fell for them and never let them go," he told a New York newspaper.

Bub  was musically groomed by his Italian grandfather, who helped his grandson get gigs as a trade for free plumbing services. Today, Bub  credits his grandfather for introducing him to the singers who later became his idols: Darin, Dean Martin, Sinatra, Ray Charles and Elvis Presley.

"I was like a sprinter with a parachute on his back, running as hard as I could," he said to *People* magazine when describing his early years. "But people didn't show up to see me — they showed up to get drunk."

Proving no gig is too small, Bub  was discovered in 2000 while singing at the wedding of former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's daughter. Mulroney introduced the crooner to one of his guests — award-winning producer David Foster, who remarked to *People* that, "Michael was so good, it was like the first time I saw C line Dion."

The two hit it off and released

DISCOGRAPHY

Call Me Irresponsible
(2007)

Caught In The Act (2005)

Home (2005)

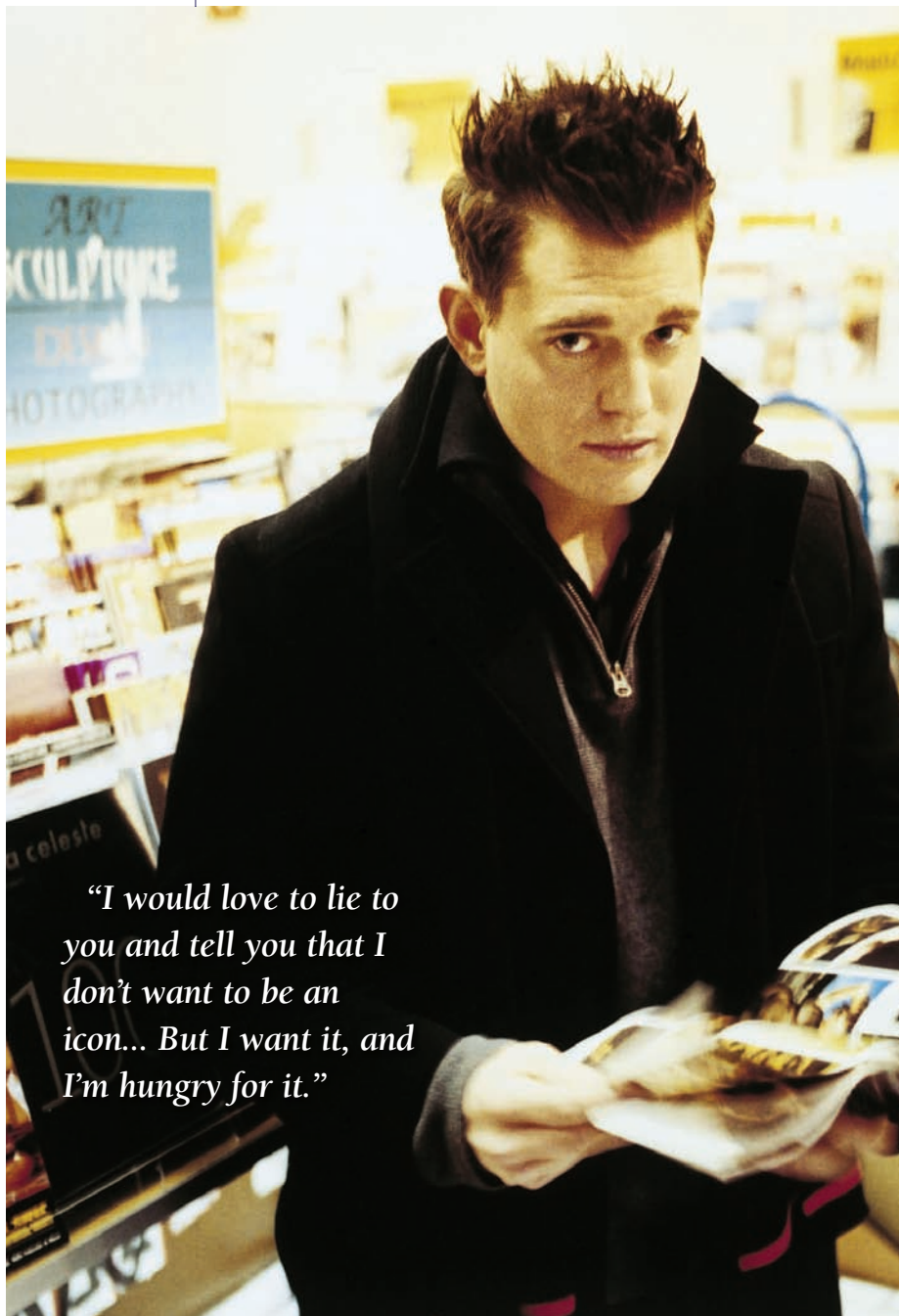
It's Time (2005)

Let It Snow (2004)

Come Fly With Me (2004)

Michael Bub  (2003)





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Bublé's major-label debut in 2003, which revived a slew of classics by artists such as Sinatra, the Bee Gees, Van Morrison and Queen. The album was an international smash; and Bublé wasted no time developing more albums, including *It's Time*, which hit #1 in several countries in 2005.

A self-described workaholic, Bublé arrived at where he is today by doing it

the old-fashioned way: touring, touring, and then touring some more. "The time goes by fast," the singer said during an interview for *The Hour* on CBC. "I miss my family, I miss being at home, I miss my bed, I miss my TV channels that I know."

Though Bublé takes pride in his on-stage prowess, maintaining a stable private life can be complicated. While

away in Italy, Bublé wrote his hit, "Home," for then-girlfriend, Debbie Timuss. Lyrics like, "I've been keeping all the letters that I wrote to you... Well I would send them but I know that it's just not enough/My words were cold and flat/and you deserve more than that," suggest that Bublé is more sincere than suave.

British actress Emily Blunt says it didn't take long for the Canadian crooner to ditch his smooth-guy exterior when they started dating. "He quickly showed his true colours. He's not really that smooth, sophisticated guy," Blunt revealed to *Bang Showbiz* in the UK. "We just laugh a lot together, from the get-go and ever since."

"It's you, you make me sing/You're every line, you're every word, you're everything," Bublé wrote of Blunt in his hit tune, "Everything." The pair had

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a three-year, high-profile relationship. Though they parted ways last summer, both claim to remain friends.

Since then, Bublé is happy to return home after a two-year-long tour. When asked on *The Hour* if anything is missing from his life, Bublé pauses, then says, "A sentimental part of me goes, 'Oh my God, I've got to be careful not to [be away] too long and make this the priority for too long.' But then another part of me is shaking hands with Prince Charles and going, 'This is so cool!'"

It's an observation that sums up the singer's achievements and attitude perfectly: sweet romanticism with a dash of brash. •