

TEN years ago Millbrook Lawns rapper Nucentz was watching his idols on Yo MTV Rap and the Lyricist Lounge but now he's collaborating with them – and paving the way for Irish rap artists on the international stage.

Rob Byrne (24), aka Nucentz, was pushed into the spotlight in 2011 when he won Ireland's First Rap Superstar Competition to collaborate with worldwide hip-hop star Lupe Fiasco.

Launched by radio station Spin 103.8, who teamed up with Lupe Fiasco to find Ireland's hottest hip-hop talent, the competition saw hundreds of entrants short-listed down to three by Lupe and David Miller, the Vice President of Atlantic Records.

The final three tracks were put forward for public vote, after which Nucentz's song Had Enough came out tops.

The local lad, who got the name Nucentz from his mother due to his constant annoying, is also working on his first solo album *Trying to Build a Life on Curse Words* – which includes collaborations with international stars such as Brooklyn underground rapper Wordsworth [of MTV Lyricist Lounge Fame] and a selection of

movement in the Irish rap scene for a number of years. However, there seems to be a lot of interest in it now – things are starting to change.

**Did you ever feel like giving up?**

Yeah, there has been times but writing would always draw me back – especially if I was going through a hard time, I'd write about and then I'd be rapping again.

**What inspires your lyrics?**

Life inspires me, simple day-to-day events. I could write about anything from how the way the world is to relationships. That's what a lot of rappers do but I suppose all of our material is different because our lyrics come from our own individual perspectives.

**So, is rapping your full-time job?**

Not at the moment but I am struggling to find the time between working and my music – hopefully in the end, rapping will win! I manage myself and do a lot of my own promotion so things are a bit hectic.

By Mary Dennehy  
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# Mam, he's not a real Nucentz

Irish rappers. Nucentz started writing rap songs when he was only 12-years-old and more than a decade later, he's sharing the microphone with international stars and supporting the likes of Public Enemy, D 12 and Plan B. Nucentz, who had created a solid sound based on relatable lyrics, witty punchlines and catchy rhythms, took some time out to chat with *The Echo*.

**Was it hard to make a name for yourself as an Irish rapper?**

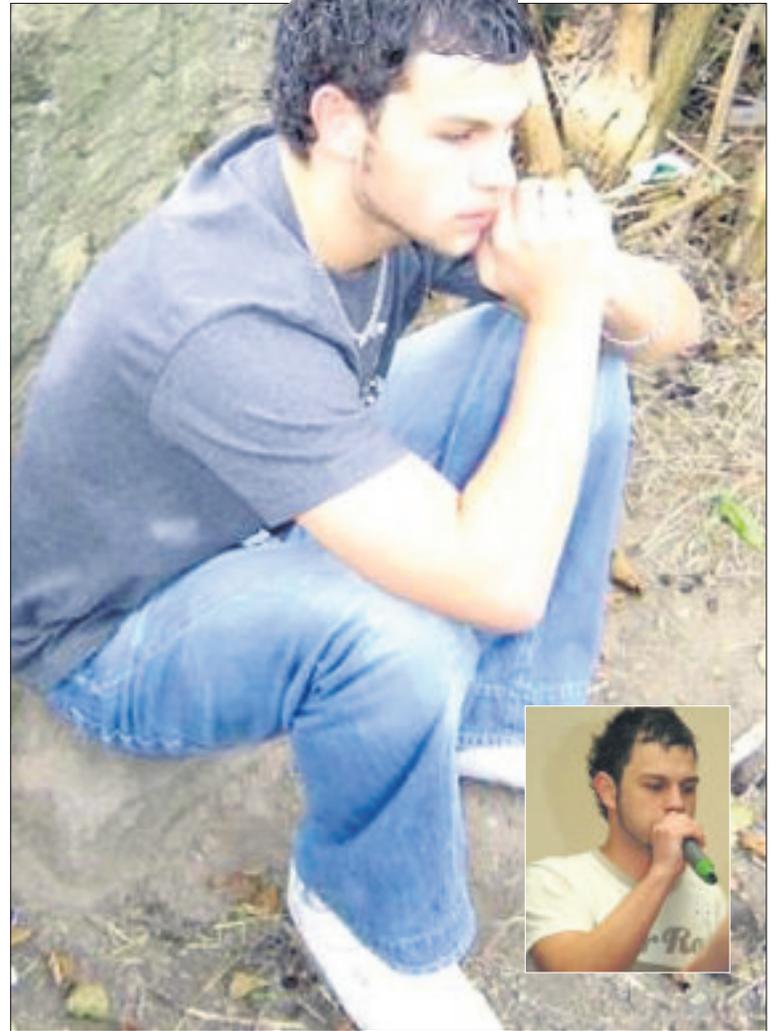
There were times when I was really frustrated and there definitely was a lack of

**You've done a lot of collaboration work with various artists, how did this come about?**

I've got in touch with some people and others I've met on the gigging circuit, who tend to run into people when you're doing shows. I've done three or four songs with Maverick Sabre, worked with Wordsworth, Lupe Fiasco and a number of Irish people as well.

**Are there many artists on the Dublin rap scene?**

I'd say there's about 200 people rapping in



**ALL RAPPED UP:** Rob Byrne, aka Nucentz, is now collaborating with his idols on his first album *Trying to Build a Life on Curse Words*.

Dublin. People haven't heard much about it because our music was not supported by radio stations until now. I hope that from everything that has happened for me, it will open doors for other Irish rappers.

It's something fresh and it's local as well so people should get behind it and listen with an open mind.

*Nucentz will be staging a countrywide tour in tandem with the release of his album this March. For further details and dates, visit Nucentz's Facebook page.*

**Why should people give your music a listen?**

## Poet's corner

I am a Corkman who has been thirty years living in Kingswood, Tallaght. My early years were totally taken up with sport – I played all underage grades with Cork in both hurling and football but it was in athletics that I made most impact having been one of the top sprinters in Ireland in the seventies. Having lived and studied in London and Paris I settled down in Kingswood when I married Veronica. I have always been writing and published my first short story when I was 21 in the Cork Weekly Examiner. Since then, I have continued to write articles, poetry, short stories etc for radio and the print media. I have a particular leaning towards humour and in the next two months my novel RAWMEASHIN will be published. I am a member of Platform One and enjoy the company of the many talented writers in this group.



**OBITUARY** by Jim Archer

*On Monday last in Corkagh Park  
An elderly tree collapsed  
and died  
(natural causes)  
Removal will take place  
In coming week  
By nearby residents,  
To be cremated in suburban  
fireplaces.  
Sadly missed by birds, rats, flies,  
creepy crawlies;  
A host of other friends.  
Word of thanks to  
Sun, rain and earth for  
Sustaining  
A treasured life.*

## The Wheelchair on my Face

Civic Theatre Thurs. 9th  
- Sat. 11th Feb. 8.15pm  
€15/ €10 Concession



Part memoir, part theatre and part stand-up comedy' (Irish Independent), this delightful story of a myopic seven year old is brought to you by actor and comedian, Sonya Kelly (The Savage Eye).  
Developed as part of Show in a Bag, an artist development initiative of Dublin Fringe Festival, Fishamble: The New Play Company and Irish Theatre Institute to resource theatre makers and actors.

Civic Theatre, Tallaght, Dublin 24  
Visit [www.civictheatre.ie](http://www.civictheatre.ie) for more information

Booking: 01 4627477

