HE WAS BORN A STORYTELLER. COLOMBIAN NOVELIST CITED FOR HIS UNLIMITED, INGENIOUS VITALITY'

Author: By Stephen Kinzer Globe Staff **Date:** Friday, October 22, 1982

Gabriel Garcia Marquez, the dazzling Colombian writer who was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature yesterday, lists among his cultural heroes Ernest Hemingway, Dick Tracy, Fidel Castro and Little Orphan Annie.

In his novels and short stories, characters emerge from mirrors and ascend to heaven without dying, infants are born with curly tails as a form of divine punishment, and, in one case, all the residents of a jungle village lose their memory and even forget how to keep themselves alive.

His most popular novel, "One Hundred Years of Solitude," has sold more than 10 million copies in 32 languages. It begins with a typically tantalizing image: "Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendia was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice."

In Stockholm, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced it had awarded the $157,000 prize to Garcia Marquez because of the "unlimited, ingenious vitality" of his work. The official citation asserted that the 55- year-old Colombian has "confirmed his position as a rare storyteller, richly endowed with material, from imagination and experience, which seems inexhaustible."

During the last 15 years, a number of extraordinarily talented writers have emerged from Latin America and attracted the attention of critics and readers around the world. Several of them - including Octavio Paz and Carlos Fuentes from Mexico, Julio Cortazar from Argentina and Mario Vargas Llosa from Peru - were considered contenders for the Nobel Prize, as was their elderly mentor, the Argentine master of fantasy Jorge Luis Borges. But in the wake of yesterday's announcement, there was nothing but praise for the choice of Garcia Marquez.

"In this brilliant constellation of writers, he is a star of the very first magnitude," said Prof. Enrique Anderson Imbert of Harvard University, a leading expert in Latin American literature. "He was influenced by Borges, but his great advance is to apply Borges' kind of fantasy to the reality of modern Latin America. He is a master of what we call magic realism.

"He talks about real people, but he puts them in extraordinary situations. He has invented a very original world of his own. The town of Macondo, where many of his works take place, is really a symbol of all underdeveloped Latin countries."

Writing fiction is not Garcia Marquez' sole interest. He is also a passionate journalist who has written scores of articles chronicling the development of the leftist causes he vigorously supports. He is a close friend of Fidel Castro and has expressed admiration for socialist-oriented movements in Chile, Nicaragua, Angola and Vietnam, as well as in his native Colombia. Some of his associates tried to draft him as a presidential candidate last year, but he refused to run on the grounds that the country's leftist factions were too divided to run a credible campaign.

Born in the small town of Aracata near the Caribbean resort of Santa Marta, Garcia Marquez as a child drew comic books modeled after those featuring his favorite cartoon characters.

"I have been told by the family that I started telling about things, stories and so on, almost ever since I was born," he recalled in an interview last year. "I guess that's what got me into journalism and fiction writing, and the two went together all my life." He expressed admiration for writers of the American "lost generation" citing Hemingway and William Faulkner as favorites.

After dropping out of law school, the young Garcia Marquez became a newspaper reporter, dabbling in fiction on the side. In 1960, he went to work for the Cuban news agency Prensa Latina. Later, he was denied a visa to enter the United States because of that affiliation. He lived in Mexico for most of the 1960s, remaining in touch with Castro while writing his masterpiece,"One Hundred Years of Solitude," which took 20 years to complete.

For most of his adult life, Garcia Marquez has lived in self-imposed exile, at times in Mexico and at other times in Barcelona, Paris, Rome and New York. He founded a leftist magazine, Alternativa, in Colombia in 1974, but last year abruptly left his native country again after expressing fear that the police were planning to frame him for alleged involvement with the country's M19 guerrilla movement.

Colombia's new leader, Belisario Betancur, has invited Garcia Marquez to return home and has promised him freedom from harassment. After he was named winner of the Nobel Prize yesterday, President Betancur lavished him with praise, saying he "has always given glory to Colombia" and "has loved his fatherland with affection."

Garcia Marquez is the fourth Latin American writer to win the Nobel Prize. The prestigious award had previously been awarded to two Chilean poets, Gabriela Mistral in 1945 and Pablo Neruda in 1971, and to a Guatemalan novelist, Miguel Angel Asturias, in 1967.

"One Hundred Years of Solitude" has sold more copies around the world than any other work by a contemporary Spanish-speaking author. His other well-known novel is "The Autumn of the Patriarch," a lush and phantasmagorical portrait of a Latin American dictator and his impact on the people he tyrannizes. The fictional dictator, Garcia Marquez once said, was based on a composite of three Latin leaders known for their cruelty and corruption: Rafael Trujillo of the Dominican Republic, Marcos Perez Jimenez of Venezuela and Anastasio Somoza Garcia, patriarch of the clan that ruled Nicaragua for nearly half a century.

Among his other major works are a collection of short stories, "No One Writes to the Colonel," and a new novel, "Chronicle of a Death Foretold."

One of Garcia Marquez' close literary colleagues, novelist Carlos Fuentes, said in a telephone interview that he was "extremely happy" to learn of the academy's choice, "My wife and I heard the news early in the morning," he said, "and since we had no champagne in the house, we toasted the news with orange juice."

Fuentes characterized Garcia Marquez as "the most popular and perhaps the best writer in Spanish since Cervantes. He has great literary quality, but with the knack of being popular among broad audiences as well."

The decision to recognize Garcia Marquez has "a moral and political significance of the greatest importance" in addition to its literary weight, Fuentes said. "Especially when coupled with the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Alfonso Garcia Robles," a former Mexican foreign minister, "it shows that Latin America produces more than just crime and corruption. We are also a continent that values honesty, creativity and culture."TWO EXCERPTS

The following is the beginning of Gabriel Garcia Marquez' "The Autumn of the Patriarch," as translated from the Spanish by Gregory Rabassa. 1976, Harper & Row, Publishers.

Over the weekend the vultures got into the presidential palace by pecking through the screens on the balcony windows and the flapping of their wings stirred up the stagnant time inside, and at dawn on Monday the city awoke out of its lethargy of centuries with t warm, soft breeze of a great man dead and rotting grandeur. Only then did we dare go i

without attacking the crumbling walls of reinforced stone, as the more resolute had wish and without using oxbows to knock the main door off its hinges, as others had proposec because all that was needed was for someone to give a push and the great armored do that had resisted the lombards of William Dampier during the building's heroic days gave way. It was like entering the atmosphere of another age, because the air was thinner in rubble pits of the vast lair of power, and the silence was more ancient, and things were hard to see in the decrepit light. All across the first courtyard, where the paving stones h given way to the underground thrust of weeds, we saw the disorder of the post of the gu who had fled, the weapons abandoned in their racks, the big, long rough-planked tables with plates containing the leftovers of the Sunday lunch that had been interrupted by pa in shadows we saw the annex where government house had been, colored fungi and pa irises among the unresolved briefs whose normal course had been slower than the pace the dryest of lives, in the center of the courtyard we saw the baptismal font where more than five generations had been christened with martial sacraments, in the rear we saw t ancient viceregal stable which had been transformed into a coach house, and among th camellias and butterflies we saw the berlin from stirring days, the wagon from the time c the plague, the coach from the year of the comet, the hearse from progress in order, the sleep-walking limousine of the first century of peace, all in good shape under the dusty cobwebs and all painted with the colors of the flag. . . .

The following is the beginning of Gabriel Garcia Marquez' "One Hundred Years of Solitude," as translated from the Spanish by Gregory Rabassa. 1970, Harper & Row, Publishers.

Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendia was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice. At that time Macondo was a village of twenty adobe houses, built on the bank of a river of clear water that ran along a bed of polished stones, which were white and enormous, like prehistoric eggs. The world was so recent that many things lacked names, and in order to indicate them it was necessary to point. Every year during the month of March a family of ragged gypsies would set up their tents near the village, and with a great uproar of pipes and kettledrums they would display new inventions. First they brought the magnet. A heavy gypsy with an untamed beard and sparrow hands, who introduced himself as Melquiades, put on a bold public demonstration of what he himself called the eighth wonder of the learned alchemists of Macedonia. He went from house to house dragging two metal ingots and everybody was amazed to see pots, pans, tongs, and braziers tumble down from their places and beams creak from the desperation of nails and screws trying to emerge, and even objects that had been lost for a long time appeared from where they had been searched for most and went dragging along in turbulent confusion behind Melquiades' magical irons. "Things have a life of their own," the gypsy proclaimed with a harsh accent. "It's simply a matter of waking up their souls." Jose Arcadio Buendia, whose unbridled imagination always went beyond the genius of nature and even beyond miracles and magic, thought that it would be possible to make use of that useless invention to extract gold from the bowels of the earth. Melquiades, who was an honest man, warned him: "It won't work for that." But Jose Arcadio Buendia at that time did not believe in the honesty of gypsies, so he traded his mule and a pair of goats for the two magnetized ingots. Ursula Iguaran, his wife, who relied on those animals to increase their poor domestic holdings, was unable to dissuade him. "Very soon we'll have gold enough and more to pave the floors of the house," her husband replied. For several months he worked hard to demonstrate the truth of his idea. He explored every inch of the region, even the riverbed, dragging the two iron ingots along and reciting Melquiades' incantation aloud. The only thing he succeeded in doing was to unearth a suit of fifteenth-century armor which had all of its pieces soldered together with rust and inside of which there was the hollowed resonance of an enormous stone-filled gourd. When Jose Arcadio Buendia and the four men of his expedition managed to take the armor apart, they found inside a calcified skeleton with a copper locket containing a woman's hair around its neck.

In March, the gypsies returned. . . .