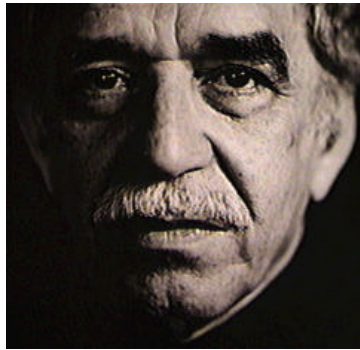


## GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ

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Colombian author Gabriel Garcia Marquez began his career as a journalist for a series of liberal South American newspapers in the late 1940's. Although he toyed with fiction as a young man, his first true efforts were incited by the negative reviews of contemporary Latin-American writers. The result was the short story *The Third Resignation*. The reviews of the story were positive and the impact strong; the press heralded *The Boom*, a second generation of Latin-American writers. Garcia Marquez followed with a compilation of short stories (*Big Mama's Funeral*) and three novellas (*Leaf Storm*, *No One Writes to the Colonel*, and *In Evil Hour*). These dark, eerie, and sad works were influenced heavily by Franz Kafka yet they reveal the voice of an intelligent young writer preparing himself for larger things.

Larger things came to Garcia Marquez in 1967. While suffering from writer's block several years earlier, the author suddenly had a vision of his next novel -- as he has said, the first chapter was as clear as if it had already been written. The idea was to tell the story of several generations of a Colombian family as his grandmother might have told it: supernatural occurrences and unbelievable events described with unblinking sincerity. After eighteen months of seclusion, Garcia Marquez produced his masterpiece *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which has been called one of the greatest novels in history.

*Solitude* set the standard for a genre called Magical Realism, which Garcia Marquez wonderfully continued in his following works and which other writers have expanded. Latin-American life is particularly rich with the experiences that create Magical Realism: the reality of political oppression and proud familial obligations easily complement the magic of strong beliefs in the divine and supernatural.

Many of Garcia Marquez's stories take place in the fictional town of Macondo, located in the banana-zone of Colombia. [Macondo](#) seems inspired by William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County, and is certainly based on Garcia Marquez's own village of Anacataca. With respect to the latter, the stories of Garcia Marquez raise questions about reality: what it is, what it can become, and whether it is the same for all people. In addition, each work is touched with deep melancholy.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1982. Currently he resides in Mexico City.