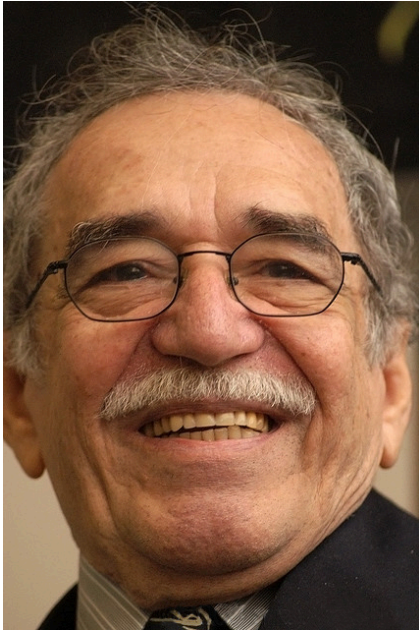


Remembering Gabriel García Márquez



Gabo, Gabriel García Márquez died today. I remember on my visit to Caracas, Venezuela in 1986, being in a tree-lined square full of book merchants selling from carts. And several of them were calling out “lo último de García Márquez!” Theirs were excited voices with something hot to sell, books! But not just any books.

Gabo belonged to all of Latin America and really all of the world. So it was no surprise that booksellers not in his home country of Colombia, or in his adopted country Mexico, were hawking his books to an avid public.

García Márquez’s work taught me that a story is very nearly anything. And the truth is not what we think it is. And that greater truths can come from the fantastic, the exaggerated, the impossible. And that words can create and make you believe in magic.

He gets credit for taking me away from the wrong-headed idea that some objective concrete truth should be the basis for anything that we write. Or better, he taught me that there’s a different kind of truth that you can discover with fiction.

His was probably the strongest narrator’s voice that lodged in my head, and I read his books long ago. Surely Gabo would give some credit for that to his gifted translator Edith Grossman whom he greatly admired. But most of all it was his thoughts, his original prose, and the way his mind worked the gave the strength of his writing which spoke right through from the Spanish into the English and into my forming literary ear.

I am a slow reader I don’t re-read books often, but those of Gabrielle Garcia Marquez I will read again and perhaps again and again.

Thanks Gabo.

Image: Wikipedia