

Nobel-winning US author Toni Morrison dead at 88



New York, August 6 (RHC)--U.S. author Toni Morrison, whose 1987 novel "Beloved" about a runaway slave won a Pulitzer Prize and contributed to a body of work that made her the first Black woman to be presented the Nobel Prize in Literature, has died at the age of 88, her publisher said on Tuesday.

Paul Bogaards, a spokesman for the publishing company Alfred A. Knopf, announced the death but did not provide an immediate cause. The Washington Post said she died on Monday at a New York hospital.

Morrison was a commercial as well as critical success, drawing praise for writing in a vivid, lyrical style while assessing issues of race, gender and love in American society.

In honoring her with its literature prize in 1993, the Nobel organization said Morrison's novels were "characterized by visionary force and poetic import" while giving "life to an essential aspect of American reality."

Morrison was born on February 18, 1931, in Lorain, Ohio, and grew up in a family with a storytelling tradition. She graduated from Howard University in Washington, DC, and earned a master's degree from Cornell University.

In 2012, Morrison was given the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Barack Obama, who

called her a national treasure.

"Her writing was not just beautiful, but meaningful — a challenge to our conscience and a call to greater empathy," Obama wrote on Facebook in a post accompanied by a picture of him with Morrison in the Oval Office. "She was as good a storyteller, as captivating, in person as she was on the page."

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