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By Vanessa Friedman and Jacob Bernstein

Jan. 19, 2022 Updated 1:37 p.m. ET

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André Leon Talley, the larger-than-life fashion editor who shattered his industry’s glass ceiling when he went from the Jim Crow South to the front rows of Paris couture, parlaying his encyclopedic knowledge of fashion history and his quick wit into roles as author, public speaker, television personality and curator, died on Tuesday in White Plains, N.Y. He was 73.

His death, in a hospital after a series of health struggles, was confirmed by his friend Darren Walker, the president of the Ford Foundation.

“André Leon Talley was a singular force in an industry that he had to fight to be recognized in,” Mr. Walker said, calling him a “creative genius” and noting his ability to craft a persona for himself out of “a deep academic understanding of fashion and design.”

Called “The Only One” by *The New Yorker* by virtue of his being the rare Black editor at the top of a field that was notoriously white and notoriously elitist, Mr. Talley, who stood 6 feet 6 inches tall, was an unmistakable figure everywhere he went. Given to drama in his personal style (he favored capes, gloves and regal headpieces), his pronouncements (“My eyes are starving for beauty”) and the work he adored, he cultivated an air of hauteur, though his friends knew him for his subcutaneous sentimentality.

He was, said the actress and talk-show host Whoopi Goldberg in the 2018 documentary “*The Gospel According to André*,” “so many things he was not supposed to be.”

