

I Don't Want This Poem to End Early and Late Poems

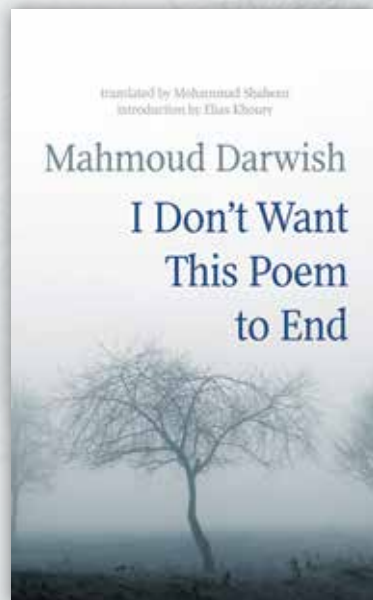
By Mahmoud Darwish

Translated by Mohammad Shaheen

Introduction by Elias Khoury

Interlink Publishers, May 2017

Paperback, 224 pages, US\$ 20



This book presents the first English translation of new poetry by the late Mahmoud Darwish, hailed as the most important among Palestinian contemporary poets. The poems were retrieved by Mahmoud Darwish's friends in 2008 when they visited the poet's home after his death and gathered the poems and other writings they found. *I Don't Want This Poem to End* contains three collections from different phases in Darwish's opus, reminiscences from his friends of events that took place during the poet's final years, and a moving account of how the poems in this collection were discovered. The volume includes the essay "How We Found the Poems" by Elias Khoury, a friend of Darwish and a distinguished novelist himself;

"My Friend Mahmoud," a biographical memoir by Professor Mohammad Shaheen, who is a translator of Darwish's poetry; and three collections of Darwish's poems titled "The End of the Night," "It's a Song," and "I Don't Want This Poem to End," which contain about 80 poems, most of which are translated into English for the first time. Furthermore, the book contains "On Exile," a prose essay by Mahmoud Darwish; a letter from the poet to his brother, written in 1965 from an Israeli prison; and the essay "Last Meeting" by Faisal Darraj, a leading literary critic in the Arab world.

The collection *I Don't Want This Poem to End* tends to depart from the political discourse that permeates much of Darwish's work and focuses more on

abstract and existential concepts of life and death. The poet once said that he, too, loves to write on love and flowers.

The translator, Dr. Mohammad Shaheen, received his PhD in English literature from Cambridge University and is currently professor of English at the University of Jordan. He is the author of many books and the translator of Darwish's *Almond Blossoms and Beyond*, also published by Interlink.

Praise for Mahmoud Darwish has hailed him "a brilliant poet—certainly the most gifted of his generation in the Arab world" (Edward W. Said), and the weekly *The Nation* has praised Shaheen's translations as "so much less cluttered, so much more moving" in a review of *Almond Blossoms and Beyond*.