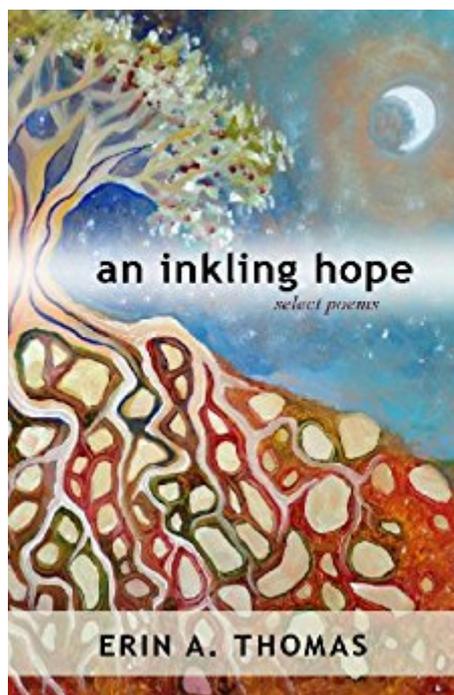


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# An Inking Hope: Select Poems



## Synopsis

Poetry. A labor of love. Drawn from material written over a span of 12 years, 128 form and free verse poems dance together through a variety of topics, themes, and styles. Each has been selected for its strong visual presentation, an element of timelessness and one or more of potent metaphor or allegory, intricate yet tastefully evasive abstraction, and a concrete storyline—real or imagined. Subjects range broadly, from following the birth of a star as metaphor for the birth of a human consciousness to a five page dance with solitude in the pine and scrub oak studded backcountry of the Yolla Bolly wilderness. At one end of the spectrum, find sonnets and free verse reflecting elements of the human condition such as loss, grief, addiction and abuse. At the other end find villanelles and metered poems exploring metaphors for modern culture, spiritual understanding and the cultivation of hope.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

These poems hit the tongue like creme brulee, every bite perfectly smooth, sweet and warm at first tasting. The ultimate care given to every detail of the writing craft is not evident to the ear as I read each poem aloud: so delicate is the craftsmanship that no seam shows. As the sweet sound of each

poem's first reading diffused through me, the meaning of the words ripen and take hold, and there is no telling what turn they may take. Some pieces are bitter, some rich and meaty, some sharp and pungent, and some cool and soothing. The range of experience and feeling in this book is as remarkable as the virtuosity of diverse forms and styles. I picked this book up and couldn't put it down, and I'm not one predisposed to read books of poetry cover to cover. I like to ponder one poem and take it apart word by word, and reconnect the pieces for an evening. By then I'm usually done for the night. This is probably the first book of poetry that gripped me like a good novel. It is both accessible, and incredibly instructive for those interested in understanding the art of poetry more deeply. Each poem yields a unique message for the price of a moment's reflection, but most of the poems, especially the more complex ones, give more and more as you take more time to notice every nuance of structure and word choice, as the aging of a good and complex wine reveals more and more complexity and depth. When my mind wandered, as it is wont to do after being stimulated by one of these poems, and something wasn't connecting, the brief notes for each poem towards the end of the book nudged me back. Each provide just the right amount of context and enrichment to allow the reader to refocus, stop obsessing, and move on to the next course.

An Inkling Hope is an intricately knit collection of poems, ripe with vivid imagery and emotional depth. While these works shine individually and are certainly powerful enough to stand alone, they gain a deep strength from their shared place together in this volume. This strength emerges most prominently in the juxtaposition of the peace and simplicity found in nature with the uncertainty and complexities that exist in human relationships. The intimate personification of nature that is so prevalent throughout these poems creates a sense of intense personal connection that anyone who has ever had an awestruck moment beneath a star-salted sky or a tree thick with blooms can relate to. This personification is at times so extensive, the reader may not at first realize that the author is describing nature instead of a person. One striking example of this is the poem, "Phases," which describes the moon as a woman with a "slightly crooked smile" and a "pale white sundress." On the whole, these poems radiated a sense of tranquility. Interestingly, such intimacy was contrasted by the distance that often emerged whenever the subject of the poem was a person rather than nature. While many of the people-centered poems were still deeply personal, they were often more abstract, or spoken with a voice that was more cautious and sometimes unstable. This dichotomy can be observed very overtly in two poems that are placed side-by-side in the book, both titled "A Christmas Poem." The first depicts a night spent out in the woods, and it is written in gentle, literary language, with images such as "a double-rainbow moon" and the "touch of hidden angels."

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