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**Meet the Conference on Poetry Fellow
Brian Komei Dempster**

Brian Komei Dempster's debut book of poetry, *Topaz*, was published by Four Way Books in 2013 and received the 15 Bytes 2014 Book Award in Poetry. Dempster is editor of *From Our Side of the Fence: Growing Up in*



America's Concentration Camps (Kearny Street Workshop, 2001), which received a 2007 Nisei Voices Award from the National Japanese American Historical Society, and *Making Home from War: Stories of Japanese American Exile and Resettlement* (Heyday, 2011). He is a professor of rhetoric and language and a faculty member in Asian Pacific American Studies at the University of San Francisco, where he also serves as Director of Administration for the Master of Arts in Asia Pacific Studies. In 2010, he was co-recipient of the University's Distinguished Teaching Award.

Brian Komei Dempster on the Poetry Workshop

"I see the poetry workshop as a dynamic site. Here, each poet's aesthetic and approach to the craft is honored, with risk-taking and collaborative feedback encouraged. Within this context, I am excited to discuss the possibilities of revision for any poem. Here are some questions that can inform and shape our dialogue in the workshop: How can reordering, condensing, or expanding the poem enhance its intended effect? How does each stanza carry out the poem's purpose and how can this progression be strengthened? How does the poet effectively balance narrative and lyric elements? What poetic techniques and craft elements are working well and how can the poet utilize this momentum? By applying this integrated model, we can reenvision our work and become reinvigorated. Such perception and energy helps us to draw out the potential of our material, make discoveries, and arrive at breakthroughs. In this critically constructive yet supportive learning environment, we become braver and bolder as poets and grow together as a community."

Temple Bell Lesson

by Brian Komei Dempster

Son, I am weighted.
 You are light.

Our ancestors imprisoned,
 outcast

in sand, swinging
 between scorching air

and the insult
 of blizzards.

Their skin bronzed
 and chilled

like brass,
 listen

to their sorrow
 ringing.

From *Topaz* (c) 2013 by Brian Komei Dempster.

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The Frost Place Poetry Programs Apply Now

Conference on Poetry and Teaching - June 21 - 25, 2015

Conference on Poetry - July 12 - 18, 2015

Poetry Seminar - August 2 - 8, 2015

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