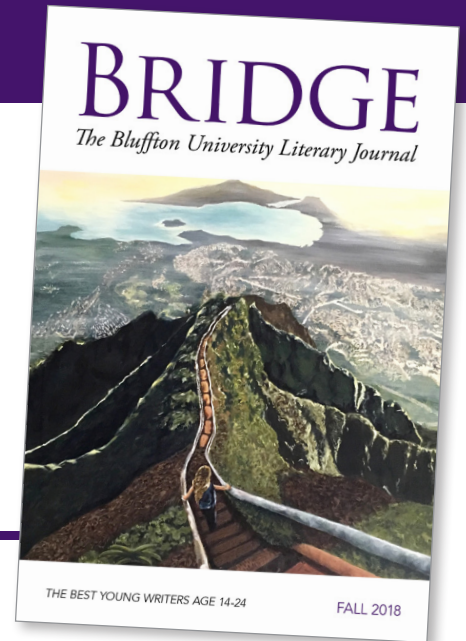


# BRIDGE

*The Bluffton University Literary Journal*



## CHING MING FESTIVAL

Daniel Ng Chun Lung

*Goldfish have only seven seconds of memory.*

— Chinese myth

i haven't been home for a day  
and when i return, the goldfish  
are dead, all seven of them,  
while the survivors hide at the bottom left  
corner  
of the blurred, colloidal tank  
with their sight travelling from me  
to the rusted golden bodies.  
before tomb sweeping in his hometown,  
my father didn't ask me to take  
care of them — they'll be fine —  
and they're now floating  
on the surface, capsized.  
the liquid crime scene stinks  
the flat with a vociferous smell  
(maybe i'll smell the same when i die)  
i, the murderer and mortician,  
start salvaging the white-eyed tails  
into a plastic bag —  
each falling fish hammers the transparent  
hearse,

ripples on the contaminated holy water,  
mimics the tempo of my heartbeat —  
only one struggles, trying  
to position herself upright  
i want to end her pain  
with a butter knife in my hand,  
not knowing where to start for i have  
never killed.  
she flops amongst the stiff bodies,  
sesame eyes fixed upon me, —  
why —  
a crime scene should never be  
the same place as the grave  
so i tie a knot, bear their weight,  
look at her wriggling tail  
and drop them into the graveyard  
of atrovirens where trash is abandoned.  
i close the lid,  
wondering how long she needs to  
suffocate.  
now i have a fresh tomb to sweep.



### DANIEL NG CHUN LUNG

is an English Literature graduate from Hong Kong Baptist University who started writing poetry at Linfield College, Ore. His work has also appeared in "The Birds We Piled Loosely," "EDGE: HKBU Creative Writing Journal," "Joey and the "Black Boots the reBOOT."