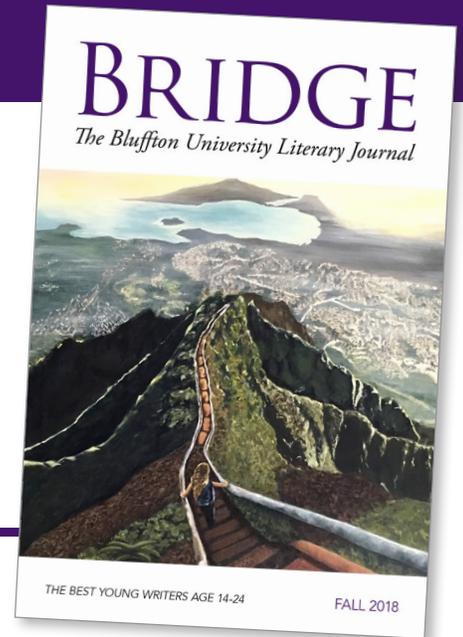


BRIDGE

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."