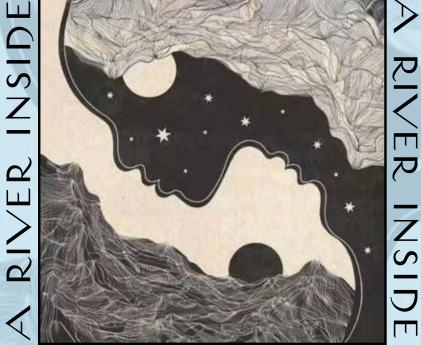


A RIVER INSIDE



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Saturday, November 8th @ 8pm

St. Frances de Chantal 1309 Wantagh Ave, Wantagh, NY

Sunday, November 9th @ 4pm

Christ Episcopal Church 1351 Northern Blvd., Manhasset, NY

David Fryling, conductor
Brianna Blake, piano
Jane Park-Lee, piano
Aisling Hassett, cello
Jarred Mercado, violin
Emily Davidson, crotales
Zhengtong Bian, tom toms



# A River Inside

We ask that the audience hold their applause until the end of each section You Shall Know......Paul David Thomas Emily Davidson, crotales; Zhengtong Bian, tom toms; Jarred Mercado, Violin; Jane Park-Lee, piano  $\infty$ To Sit & Dream.......Rosephanye Powell Mother to Son......Gwyneth Walker Saturday: Jess Felber, soprano | Sunday: Seanna Silver, soprano  $\infty$ If the River Leaves Without Me......Reena Esmail Saturday: Christina Russo, mezzo soprano | Sunday: Kyla Surajbali, soprano Deep River.....Trad., arr. Shawn Okpeholo Leandra Wahlen & Danielle Post, sopranos The Cardinal Alex Canovas  $-\infty$ Aisling Hassett, cello Saturday: Kristin Ventricelli, soprano | Sunday: Rachel Goodman, soprano Where the light begins......Susan LaBarr  $\infty$ 

Treble Ensemble joined by our Invited High School Voices

......Craig Carnelia, arr. Ryan Murphy

#### **PROGRAM NOTES**

Holding hope amidst darkness, Gaining wisdom with each misstep; Finding joy in the wake of heartache, Learning love is greater than loss— We each have our own rivers inside.

—Dave Fryling

#### YOU SHALL KNOW

You are not enclosed within your bodies, nor confined to houses or fields. That which is you dwells above the mountain and roves with the wind. It is not a thing that crawls into the sun for warmth or digs holes into darkness for safety, But a thing free, a spirit that envelops the earth and moves in the ether.

Could you but see the tides of that breath you would cease to see all else, And if you could hear the whispering of the dream you would hear no other sound. But you do not see, nor do you hear, and it is well.

The veil that clouds your eyes shall be lifted by the hands that wove it, And the clay that fills your ears shall be pierced by those fingers that kneaded it. And you shall see. And you shall hear.

Yet you shall not deplore having known blindness, nor regret having been deaf. For in that day you shall know the hidden purposes in all things, And you shall bless darkness as you would bless light.

-excerpts from The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran

A Lebanese refugee whose family emigrated to America when he was 12, Kahlil Gibran (1883 –1931) became the third best-selling poet (after Shakespeare and Lau-tzu) of all time.

Gibran was whisked out of Boston's South End ghetto (where he and his mother and sisters settled) by the independently wealthy photographer and publisher F. Holland Day. Day became Gibran's impromptu tutor, acquainting him with Theosophy, Romantic Poetry, and the Symbolist artists of the early 20th century; Gibran became one of Day's favorite models.

Gibran dabbled in drawing and painting first, but found his voice as an author early on. Writing at first in his native tongue, Arabic, he decided he needed to write in English to reach a broader audience. He leaned heavily on Mary Haskell, a Boston headmistress and his one-time fiancée, for both monetary and editorial support. His best selling book, The Prophet, has sold well over 9 million copies in its American edition alone, and has never been out of print.

—Based on details in Joan Acocella's article "Prophet Motive," The New Yorker, December 30, 2007

#### TO SIT & DREAM

To sit down and dream, to sit and read,
To sit and learn about the world
Outside our world of here and now—
Our problem world—
To dream of vast horizons of the soul
Through dreams made whole,
Unfettered free—help me!
All you who are dreamers, too,
Help me to make our world anew.
I reach out my [hands] (originally, "dreams") to you

-"To You" by Langston Hughes

Langston Hughes was a central figure in the Harlem Renaissance, the flowering of black intellectual, literary, and artistic life that took place in the 1920s in a number of American cities, particularly Harlem. A major poet, Hughes also wrote novels, short stories, essays, and plays. He sought to honestly portray the joys and hardships of working-class black lives, avoiding both sentimental idealization and negative stereotypes....

This approach was not without its critics. Much of Hughes's early work was ignored by white critics and roundly criticized by most black intellectuals for portraying what they thought to be an unattractive view of black life. However, in spite of this, he was the first black American to earn his living solely from his writing and public lectures. Part of the reason he was able to do this was the phenomenal acceptance and love he received from average black people. A reviewer for Black World noted in 1970: "Those whose prerogative it is to determine the rank of writers have never rated him highly, but if the weight of public response is any gauge then Langston Hughes stands at the apex of literary relevance among Black people. The poet occupies such a position in the memory of his people precisely because he recognized that 'we possess within ourselves a great reservoir of physical and spiritual strength,' and because he used his artistry to reflect this back to the people."

—Collated from The Poetry Foundation article on Langston Hughes

# MOTHER TO SON

Well, son, I'll tell you:
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.
It's had tacks in it,
And splinters,
And boards torn up,
And places with no carpet on the floor—
Bare.
But all the time
I'se been a-climbin' on,
And reachin' landin's,
And turnin' corners,
And sometimes goin' in the dark
Where there ain't been no light.
So boy, don't you turn back.
Don't you set down on the steps

'Cause you finds it's kinder hard.
Don't you fall now—
For I'se still goin', honey,
I'se still climbin',
And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

# —Langston Hughes

Hughes' poem "Mother to Son" (alongside his "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" and "Harlem") was described in the Encyclopedia of African-American Writing as an "anthem of black America." The poem, told from the point of view of an allegorical mother who stands in for the myriad Black American mothers urging their children upwards, was referenced by Martin Luther King Jr. several times in his civil rights speeches.

The scholars Regennia N. Williams and Carmaletta M. Williams consider "Mother to Son" to probably most closely represent Hughes's relationship with his grandmother, Mary Leary Langston. Notably, the professor R. Baxter Miller considers "Mother to Son" to illustrate "how dialect can be used with dignity."

—Collated from the Wikipedia article on "Mother to Son"

#### THE DARK

When she was little my mother wanted to hear what the river had to say.

She pressed her ear to the ice and it spoke.

A neighbour saw, guessed where to chop a hole downstream. A miracle, they said, our Lazarus. Her father gave the man a cow. Three weeks in bed and no one asked what the lights were like beneath the ice, what darkness.

A shame, she thought. It was beautiful.

—Keagan Hawthorne

Keagan Hawthorne's intriguing tale in The Dark tells of a young girl's experience close up with danger, discovery and new perspectives. Picking up an almost folkloric interpretation of the words, I set the text as if telling a folktale. I'm especially interested in what the speaker's mother heard and saw, and what the river actually had to say; of course I don't divulge that in this composition, nor has Keagan in the text, but I like to imagine the hummed and sung parts of this setting to be a bit of dialogue between the two characters, before the speaker's mother is rescued from the most beautiful thing she'd ever seen.

# IF THE RIVER LEAVES WITHOUT ME

At the edge of my own life, Stepping out of the river, And the river leaves without me, Without me.

And the river leaves without me, If the river leaves without me, I'll flow on.

There are so many ways to get there, You can swim, You can walk, You can fly or run.

You choose the path you follow, The river is not the only one.

At the edge of my own life, Stepping out of the river, And the river leaves without me, Without me.

Let the river leave without me, If the river leaves without me, I'll flow on.

-Reena Esmail

The text for this piece came from a commencement speech I gave for the Colburn School of Music in June 2020. What do you say to a class of musicians graduating into the darkest days of a global pandemic, when anything you could possibly say about the 'right path' is completely irrelevant?

This piece is about that moment of deciding to embrace an unknown path — which can feel like stepping out of a powerful, flowing river...and watching everyone else float away, carefree, while you're left standing on the shore. But the terror you might feel by letting go of someone else's vision is nothing compared to the beauty you can discover on the path you choose.

Something that looks brave on the outside doesn't always feel brave on the inside. Sometimes what that feels right to us on the inside can separate us from the flow of everyone and everything around us. And yet, we are still compelled to take that first step away from the familiar, well-trodden path and into the unknown.

—Reena Esmail

#### **DEEP RIVER**

Deep river, my home is over Jordan. Deep river, Lord, I want to cross over into campground. Oh, don't you want to go to that gospel feast? That promised land, where all is peace?

Walk into heaven and take a seat, And cast my crown at Jesus' feet.

Deep river...,

-Negro Spiritual

Named the 2024 Chicagoan of the Year in Classical Music by the Chicago Tribune and one of Musical America's Top 30 Professionals of 2023, the Nigerian American artist Shawn E. Okpebholo sees himself as a "storyteller, an educator, and a bridge-builder—composing music that resonates globally while remaining rooted in the individual stories that shape our shared humanity." Named Chicagoan of the Year in Classical Music in 2024, his arrangement of "Deep River" was written for his Wheaton College Conservatory of Music colleague Mary Hopper and was premiered by the Wheaton Women's Chorale in 2021.

—Collated from www.shawnokpebholo.com

# THE CARDINAL

A crimson blur in the heat of the sun Looks beyond the pines and glances at someone. From the pale into fading blue, Far away the cardinal flew.

The last smile in the late summer haze, The electric city dims its light, and waits. From the pale into fading blue, Far away the cardinal flew.

For what is now and is to come Remains unfinished, yet is done. From the pale into fading blue, Far away the cardinal flew.

—Alex Canovas

"The day before my father passed away, I was sitting next to the window in his room at his nursing home. A cardinal landed on a tree branch about 5 feet from the window. It immediately stared at my father and did not break its gaze for the 50 to 60 seconds it was there. Cardinals aren't uncommon by any means in upstate New York, but its presence still stuck with me after it flew away into the deep, blue sky.

A few weeks later, I learned about the history of the bird and its symbolism around death. Cardinals are often thought to be visitors from the afterlife, and have been said to appear to those close to death. At that moment, I began to sketch out many, many versions of "The Cardinal."

The text recounts the brief vignettes from those final days in Dad's room—the bird staring "beyond the pines" (translated from "skahnéhtati", or "place beyond the pines", which was the name used by the indigenous Mohawk people to describe the area around Schenectady,) the last chuckle he was able to muster in spite of the immense pain he was in, the late-summer haze in the nursing home courtyard, the sun setting on his final day on earth as the "electric city" dimmed its lights (also a reference to Schenectady, the home of General Electric.) The last verse begins "For what is now and is to come", which I took from the subject of an email he once sent my brother and I with a link to a book on Buddhism. The line ends with "remains unfinished, yet is done." My father was a fascinating, eccentric person, but his greatest limitation was himself. He was great at starting projects and hobbies, but they often "remained unfinished." He's gone now, leaving much unfinished, yet life goes on."

—Alex Canovas

# FROM RIVERS

To the sky from rivers.

We are beginning will be again. We are beginning round and around.

You are beginning will be again. We come together around you.

My feet in the river, my face to the sky.

—Caroline Shaw

In 2013, when she was only 30 years old, Caroline Shaw became the youngest recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for her composition Partita for 8 Voices. The next year From Rivers was commissioned & premiered for the opening of the Sidney & Lois Eskenazi Hospital and Eskenazi Health campus in Indianapolis, IN.

Dr. Lisa Harris, chief executive officer of Eskenazi Health, explains the commission: "Not only do the arts enhance the health and vitality of our community, but research has also demonstrated the importance of the arts in health care outcomes. That's why art in its various forms is central to our model of health and healing and this composition is an important piece to this approach."

Matthew Gutwein, president and CEO of Health & Hospital Corporation of Marion County (the parent company of Eskenazi Health) adds, "Over a century ago, the St. Margaret's Hospital Guild brought together prominent artists to paint large murals on the walls of what was then called City Hospital. Art has always been an important part of our history and this is only enhanced by having a commissioned piece of music to help us carry on this tradition on our new campus."

—collated from the Eskenazi Health website (www.eskenazihealth.edu)

#### WHERE THE LIGHT BEGINS

Perhaps it does not begin.

Perhaps it is always. Perhaps it takes a lifetime to open our eyes, to learn to see—

the luminous line of the map in the dark

the vigil flame in the house of the heart

the love so searing we cannot keep from singing, from crying out....

Perhaps this day the light begins in us.

—Jan Richardson

In writing this piece for the Henry Middle School Varsity Treble Choir, their director asked me to contemplate the theme of "peace" for their concert program. This text...uses wonderfully universal words that relate to ideas of peace and hope. Jan's blessing makes me think that within each of us is the ability to work toward peace. It doesn't take a monumental action, just many little kindnesses that we can show to others every day which radiate out to bring light to the whole of humanity. When we love, accept, and care for all of our neighbors—despite our differences—we find that the light that the dark world so desperately needs begins in us.

—Susan LaBarr

# **FLIGHT**

Let me run thru a field in the night, let me lift from the ground 'til my soul is in flight. Let me sway like the shade of a tree, let me swirl like a cloud in a storm on the sea.

Wish me on my way thru the dawning day. I wanna flow, wanna rise, wanna spill, wanna grow in a grove on the side of a hill.

I don't care if the train runs late, if the checks don't clear, if the house blows down. I'll be off where the weeds run wild, where the seeds fall far from this earthbound town.

And I'll start to soar.

Watch me rain 'til I pour.
I'll catch a ship that'll sail me astray,
get caught in a wind, I'll just have to obey
'til I'm flyin' away...

Let me leave behind all the clouds in my mind. I wanna wake without wondering why, finding myself in a burst for the sky. High!

I'll just roll. Let me lose all control. I wanna float like a wish in a well, free as the sound of the sea in a shell.

I don't know, but maybe I'm just a fool. I should keep to the ground. I should stay where I'm at. Maybe everyone has hunger like this, and the hunger will pass. But I can't think like that.

All I know is somewhere, thru a clearing, there's a flickering of sunlight on a river long and wide, and I have such a river inside.

Let me run through a field in the night, let me lift from the ground 'til my soul is in flight. Let me sway like the shade of a tree, let me swirl like a cloud in a storm on the sea.

Wish me on my way thru the dawning day. I wanna flow, wanna rise, wanna spill, wanna grow on the side of a hill, wanna shift like a wave rollin' on, wanna drift from the path I've been traveling upon, before I am gone.

—Craig Carnelia

Craig Carnelia (b. 1949) is an American musical theater composer and singer, known for his collaboration on the musicals Working and Sweet Smell of Success. Born in Floral Park, New York, Carnelia began writing songs at the age of fifteen. In 1969, he moved to Manhattan and worked professionally as an actor for a short time (including a run as The Boy in The Fantasticks, Off-Broadway). The cabaret renaissance in the mid '70s offered Carnelia the opportunity to play and sing songs from his own expanding catalog. On the long and eclectic list of singers who have performed and recorded his songs are John Lithgow, Barry Manilow, Betty Buckley, Sutton Foster, and more.

As a theater composer, Carnelia joined Stephen Schwartz in 1977 on the team of songwriters for the musical Working, contributing four songs to the show. Carnelia wrote the musical version of Is There Life After High School? with playright Jeffrey Kindley. Carnelia collaborated with many other notable writers on many more shows throughout his career, and has won many awards for his work.

In 1992, Carnelia began a second career as a teacher, and has come to prize this work as deeply as his writing. He also serves as a mentor to young writers in various workshops and programs throughout the country.

# HIGH SCHOOL INVITATIONAL SINGERS

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our High School Guest Artists on *Flight* 

Elise Albano, Mineola Gabriella Amato, Rockville Centre Hajaratu Barrie, William Floyd Olivia Bragino, Rockville Centre Julianna Bragino, Rockville Centre Olivia Cain, Riverhead Aarini Chakraborty, Herricks Ella Cherry, Port Washington Liana Chetty, South Huntington Stefania Conte, William Floyd Genesis Cana Vega, William Floyd Mia Cruz, Elwood Holly Dunn, Syosset Janelle Espinoza, Hicksville Julia Fasciano, South Huntington Caitlin Ferrari, Rockville Centre Stella Fraser, *Locust Valley* Shirley Galindo Jeronimo, William Floyd Clare Gardner, Garden City Ace Gerace, Seaford Jack Gries, Mineola Sophia Grunfeld, Rockville Centre Corinne Gustavson, Seaford Rachel Huth, *Huntington* Reyna Kamity, Herricks Maya Karagiannakis, Locust Valley Gurkiran Kaur, Herricks Lily Knapp, Manhasset Aliana Kurz, Shoreham-Wading River Gia Lennon, Seaford

Mikaela Lewis, Rockville Centre Olivia LoBue, *Elwood* Arya Lodi, Herricks Melanie Luis, Westbury Lorene Luu, Herricks Charlie Majewski, Bethpage Julia Mannino, East Rockaway Gianna Mercurio, Elwood Jayla Miller, Riverhead Scarlett Modlin, Locust Valley Agape Mojica, Hicksville Katherine Monaco, Manhasset Zoe Moore, East Rockaway Hasmig Mouradian, Manhasset Kaylee Mossey, Elwood Shyri Narayanajaya, Herricks Colleen Overzat, Massapequa Karina Olivares, Rockville Centre Irene Panagopoulos, Riverhead Gianna Price-Longo, Seaford Emily Pulver, Garden City Katherine Rahl, *Hicksville* Alexandra Rivas, Locust Valley Lily Scott, *Mineola* Tessa Shelley, Herricks Samaira Singh, Herricks Sophie Sobel, Port Washington Alicia Tritschler, Valley Stream Janelle Vargas, Herricks Zoe Weiner, Valley Stream

Thank you for adding your voices to ours. We hope to see and hear you again in the near future!

#### ABOUT THE ARTISTS



eVoco\* Voice Collective is an award winning collection of singers of the highest musical, technical, and expressive abilitie. Our shared mission is to invite listeners into the extraordinary experience of singing, together. We are passionate advocates for excellence in the choral & vocal art, presenting evocative concerts and recitals of the highest caliber, summoning the power of the human voice to remind us all of our shared human experiences. Our current projects include the Mixed Ensemble, the Treble Ensemble, Community Summer Sings, and our Young Artist Vocal Competition and Recital. In 2017, the eVoco Mixed Ensemble received the second place award in the national American Prize for Choral Performance-Community Chorus division.

eVoco firmly believes in the transformative and educational power of music, and we welcome everyone to observe our work together. All of our Mixed and Treble Ensemble rehearsals are open to the public. Teachers and students of music, especially, are encouraged to join us throughout the process. Our hope is that our weekly work together will not only prepare us for each concert series, but also-and just as importantly-will serve as a continual learning space for students, educators, and music enthusiasts alike.

\*From the Latin evocare [ex- ("out") vocare ("to call")]: to lure, to summon; to evoke

#### eVoco Treble Ensemble

# Soprano 1 Jessica Felber Doreen Fryling Andrea Galeno Christie Mathew Jacqui McCreedy Danielle Post Seanna Silver Kyla Surajbali Leandra Wahlen Rachel Zielinski

# Soprano 2 Hanna Cozzolino Iillian DiBennardo Rachel Goodman Beth Hsu Louise O'Hanlon Kristin Ventricelli Jade Vila Alex Wind

# Alto 1 Dory Agazarian Terry Bendel Kristin Bertrand Kimberly Corona Christine Fena Anna Izzo Meg Messina Diana Minerva Christina Russo Amy Russo

# Alto 2 Erin Bevan Casey Cormier Jennifer Corrado Maureen Husing Leah Master-Huth Sydney Hankins-Wright Maria Pignataro Nielsen Ioanna Rocco Eva Sheldon Kristina Strang Melissa Tschinkel Jasmin Villatoro Stephanie Visceglie

# Piano Brianna Blake



For more than twenty-five years **Dr. David Fryling** has engaged audiences, singers, and educators as a professional conductor, teacher, adjudicator, and clinician. His many years of work with students and choral educators on Long Island was honored with an induction into the Long Island Music Hall of Fame as the 2014 "Educator of Note," and his artistic leadership on the podium has been recognized with two 1st Place American Prizes in Conducting, one each in the community chorus and college & university categories.

An energetic and engaging conductor, clinician, and adjudicator of professional, community, and high school choirs, David's recent invitations include various all-state

and regional honor choirs, master classes, workshops, and adjudications throughout New York and in Alaska, Arizona, Connecticut, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Michigan, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia.

Since 2001, David has been Director of Choral Activities at Hofstra University, where he conducts the select Hofstra Chorale and Hofstra Chamber Choir, teaches choral conducting, and supervises choral music education student teachers in the field. From 2007 to 2013, Dr. Fryling spent his summers as coordinator of the Vocal Artists program at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in Michigan, where he was conductor and music director of the World Youth Honors Choir and Festival Choir & Orchestra. He has since served as a guest artist on the conducting faculty of the New York State Summer School of the Arts (NYSSSA) School of Choral Studies, as well as the Sitka Fine Arts Camp in Sitka, AK. David is a proud past president of the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) Eastern Region, and currently serves as National Past President of the ACDA.



Pianist **Brianna Blake** is a music educator, conductor, and collaborative pianist. Originally from Nyack, NY, Brianna received both a B.S. in Music Education and an M.A. in Music Education with a concentration in choral conducting from Hofstra University. Ms. Blake is the High School Choral Director and Theater Music Director in the Locust Valley Central School District, as well as Adjunct Professor Professor of Music at Hofstra University, where she conducts the University Chorus. Brianna originally joined eVoco as a singer, but is grateful to now be part of the dance at the piano bench.

# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thanks to Top Shelf Design Studio and Bill Stefanowicz for their graphic design, to our friends who assisted at this concert by helping with tickets and ushering, and to the staff at the Parish of St. Frances de Chantal and Christ Episcopal Church. A special thanks to the Hofstra University Department of Music, Dr. Francesca Cassio, Chair, for your continued support and co-sponsorship of our rehearsal space.



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# MARKING MOMENTS A LESSONS & CAROLS CELEBRATION

Saturday, December 6, 2025 at 7:30pm Sunday, December 7, 2025 at 4:00pm St. Peter's by-the-Sea, Bay Shore A celebration of Lessons & Carols in concert

# For more information, visit www.babylonchorale.org



#### **HOLIDAY SING-A-LONG**

Saturday, December 13, 2025 at 2:00pm Sisters of St. Joseph Convent, Brentwood

# IN LOVE AND LONGING

Sunday, March 22, 2026 at 4:00pm St. Peter's by-the-Sea, Bay Shore Exploring music expressing love, longing, and connection

# SING DEMOCRACY 250

Saturday June 6 & Sunday June 7, 2026 A collaboration with eVoco Voice Collective celebrating the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence as part of a national project to premiere two new works.

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www.evoco.vc





# **UPCOMING EVENTS**



# Mixed Ensemble: Dome of Many-Coloured Glass

Saturday January 24, 2026 @ 7pm St. Peter's by-the-Sea, 500 S Country Road, Bay Shore, NY

Sunday January 25, 2026 @ 5pm The Cathedral of the Incarnation, Garden City, NY



# Treble Ensemble: The Present Now Will Later be Past

Saturday, March 28, 2026 @ 8pm St. Frances de Chantal R.C. Church, Wantagh, NY

Sunday, March 29, 2026 @ 4pm St. Peter's by-the-Sea, 500 S Country Road, Bay Shore, NY



# Mixed Ensemble with the Babylon Chorale: We Hold These Truths to be Self Evident— Sing Democracy 250

Saturday, June 6, 2026 & Sunday, June 7, 2026 Venue & times to be announced

For up-to-date tickets and concert information visit www.evoco.vc

**Young Artist Awards:** 

2026 auditions will be announced soon. Join our mailing list at www.evoco.vc to be the first to hear about this and all upcoming events!

We'd love to hear your thoughts on today's concert. Scan the QR code to share your feedback with us!

