

# **Introduction to the Psaltic Art**

**Term: Yearlong 2020-2021, September 8- May 28**

## **Eligible Students**

**Target Grade Levels: 9+, Adult** [Students under the 8th grade or lower who wish to take this should contact the instructor.]

**Class Times:** 2x / week, 50 min.; M/W 12:15 -1:00 p.m. ET

**Instructor:** Irene Bullock **Contact:** [irene.psalticart@gmail.com](mailto:irene.psalticart@gmail.com) **Office Hours:** TBD

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## **CLASS SESSIONS DATES**

**Classes will take place on Mondays & Wednesday: 12:15–1:00 pm (ET) for 32 weeks and 60 classes on the following dates\***

September (Orientation + 7 meetings): 2, 9, 14, 16, 21, 23, 28, 30

October (8 meetings): 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, 28

November (7 meetings): 2, 4, 9, 11, 16, 18, [Thanksgiving Break], 30

December (5 meetings): 2, 7, 9, 14, 16, [End of 1st Semester- Christmas Break]

January (4 meetings): [Christmas/New Year's Break], 18, 20, 25, 27

February (6 meetings): 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, [Winter Break]

March (10 meetings): 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29, 31

April (6 meetings): 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, [Holy Week Break/Bright Monday- No Classes]

May (7 meetings): 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 27, [End of 2nd Semester]

*\*Please note: The above dates and times are the anticipated class sessions for this course. However, all dates are subject to change as the instructor's circumstances might dictate (e.g., illness, family emergency). Any classes canceled by the instructor will be made up at an alternate time designated by the instructor.*

## **REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS**

Psilacos, Basilios. *Byzantine Ecclesiastical Music*. Sydney, Australia 2010.

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/basilios-psilacos/byzantine-ecclesiastical-music/hardcover/product-14846377.html>

The Psalter (*for prayer and the purpose of learning its liturgical use*)

One option is: *The Pocket Psalter*. Translated by Holy Transfiguration Monastery.

Brookline, MA. <https://store.ancientfaith.com/the-pocket-psalter/>

*If the student already has a Psalter, please be sure that it follows the Septuagint Numbering. Please contact the instructor if there are any questions.*

A USB microphone and headset, as required for all Saint Raphael School/ Scholé Academy courses. (See Parent Handbook for recommended models and purchasing information).

### **OTHER COURSE MATERIALS**

The instructor will provide other necessary materials for the course through Schoology (i.e. recordings of notation exercises, hymns, readings, etc.)

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course aims to provide a basic introduction to the Psaltic Art (the art of chanting), which encompasses music theory, history, hymnography, hagiography, and the development and tradition of the worship of the Orthodox Church.

In large part, this course will focus on learning the New Method of Analytical Notation, the musical notation system used to read the hymns of the Orthodox Church. This notation system, which is the “language” in which our hymns are traditionally written, will be taught through practicing various exercises and hymns. Ample time will also be dedicated to learning the history of Church music and the historical figures that influenced the development of hymnography, melodic composition, and liturgics. Finally, students will receive a basic introduction to the liturgical cycles/seasons and the liturgical books used in Orthodox worship services.

### **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

*Since a large portion of this course will be focusing on learning and mastering the New Method of Analytical notation, the instructor highly encourages and asks that the students: 1) **Pray** before and after their assignments for “the Lord is my helper and my defender...The Lord is the strength of His people...” (Psalm 27) 2) **Practice** daily! Mastery of any art requires practice even if for just 5-10 min a day. 3) **Patience** with oneself. There is much to be learned and there may be moments of frustration while practicing, but don’t be discouraged; in everything we do, “do all to the glory of God.” (I Corinthians 10:31)*

In addition to the above:

- ❖ Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class.
- ❖ Students are encouraged to take notes, ask questions, and participate in discussion.
- ❖ Students will be required to learn and perform short notation-reading exercises and hymns. They will demonstrate their mastery of these exercises by completing each week’s assigned homework, which will include recording themselves singing these exercises.

- ❖ \*Students will also be expected to complete all readings as provided by the instructor, as these readings will be indispensable for establishing the proper theological, historical, and liturgical context for the music being learned. Many of the readings will be from the Psalter for the purpose of learning its liturgical use and for prayer— as the Psalter is the “*prayer book of the Church par excellence*”.
- ❖ For the sake of checking progress, students will take an exam at the end of each semester. Both exams will have 1) a written section (true/false, fill-in-the-blank, or short-answer) and 2) an oral section—that is, a student will submit a recording as part of the exam.

*\*The assignments associated with the readings are still to be determined.*

### **STUDENT EVALUATION & GRADING**

While pursuing the *Introduction to the Psaltic Art* course through the Saint Raphael School/ Scholé Academy will be “restful,” we also recognize the need to provide grades for students who will be using this course as part of their prepared college transcript. It is a delicate balance to achieve both restful learning and excellent academic performance. Earning a specific grade should not overshadow achievement goals for mastery of this discipline. The following grades will be assigned to your student’s level of achievement: *magna cum laude* (with great praise); *cum laude* (with praise); *satis* (sufficient, satisfactory) and *non satis* (not sufficient).

Ideally, every average student working diligently should do praiseworthy work (*cum laude*). Those who excel beyond this expectation will be the *magna cum laude* students. Students who do adequate but not praiseworthy work be designated *satis*. *Non satis* means lacking sufficiency or adequacy.

Traditional percentage grades will also be provided and will be readily accessible on the *Introduction to the Psaltic Art’s* Schoology page. Additionally, a transcript of that grade or an evaluation narrative can be provided to the requesting parent at the end of the year. Student’s grades will be comprised of:

10% Class Participation	20 % Two end-of-semester Exams
50% Recorded Assignments	20% Written Assignments

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

*By the end of this course, students should:*

- ❖ demonstrate an appreciation and general understanding of the Orthodox Church’s liturgical life, particularly as it pertains to liturgical music;

- ❖ be fully versed in basic musical concepts and terminology;
- ❖ be fully versed in the theoretical and practical aspects of the notational system;
- ❖ be able to sight-read and perform simple melodies in both solmization (paralage) and melody (melos);
- ❖ be well-equipped to commence a systematic study of the Eight Modes;
- ❖ be familiar with the lives, works, and contributions of the most important hymnographers of the Orthodox Church
- ❖ be familiar with the liturgical cycles/seasons and liturgical books of the Orthodox Church
- ❖ have a deep appreciation of the Psalter's significance in common and private prayer;

*Time permitting, students will have also learned model melodies (automela) for hymns commonly found in Orthros and Vespers services. This will provide ear training, strengthen musical memory, and allow students to actively participate in various parts of the Orthros and Vespers services.*

### **RUBRIC FOR BYZANTINE MUSIC PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

	Poor 1 pt	Fair 2 pts	Good 3 pts	Excellent 4 pts
Accuracy in Parallage	Could not identify most notes.	Identified few notes.	Identified most notes with few errors.	Confidently identified all notes.
Pitch Accuracy	Performed most pitches incorrectly.	Performed many pitches incorrectly.	Performed most pitches correctly.	Confidently performed all pitches correctly.
Rhythmic Accuracy	Performed most rhythms incorrectly.	Performed some basic rhythms correctly; however, has challenges with some rhythms.	Performed most rhythms correctly with few errors.	Confidently performed all rhythms correctly.
Accidentals (flats/sharps)	Could not identify the function of most accidentals.	Identified most accidentals, but could not execute their function.	Identified and correctly executed the function of most accidentals correctly.	Confidently executed all accidentals correctly.
Fluidity	There were numerous stops and starts throughout the performance.	There were several stops and starts throughout the performance.	There were few stops and starts throughout the performance at a fairly consistent tempo.	The piece was performed at a consistent tempo with no breaks.

TOTAL SCORE:

x 5 =

### **STUDENT EVALUATION: ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Students are on their honor to abide by [Scholé Academy's Learning Philosophy](#) which assumes the personal cultivation of *Student-Virtues* described in the *Student-Parent Handbook*.

Additionally, please be mindful regarding plagiarism. Any copying of someone's work, online sources, or traditional sources without citing where said information came from is plagiarism. Students should consult their chosen manual of style to cite sources. If found, students who have plagiarized will be asked to resubmit their work and consequently will be given a lower point value for that particular assignment.

### **THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM**

We will be using the free online "virtual classroom" software provided by Zoom, one of the leading companies that provides such software. The virtual classroom will provide students with interactive audio, text chat and an interactive whiteboard in which texts, diagrams, video and other media can be displayed and analyzed. We will provide students with a link (via email) that will enable students to join the virtual classroom.

Specific information regarding the technology used by Scholé Academy (including required technology) can be found by visiting the [Technology in the Classroom](#) section of the Student Parent Handbook. Please note, students should have their cameras on during class.

Students will submit documents by scanning and uploading them to their personal computer, then attaching those files as .pdfs to an email. They will submit their work to the *Introduction to the Psaltic Art Schoology* assignment page (access granted after enrollment is secured).

### **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Please review the [Student-Parent Handbook](#) concerning the policy on attendance.

### **SYLLABUS NOTE:**

*This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. The instructor will inform the students on any updates or changes made.*

## **MEET THE INSTRUCTOR**

Irene Bullock was born and raised in Tarpon Springs, Florida. She attended Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts, where she received a bachelor's degree in religious studies (2014), a Byzantine chant certificate (2015), and a master's degree in theological studies (2016). During that time, Irene was an active member in two of the school's choirs—the St. Romanos the Melodist Byzantine Choir and the St. Kassia Byzantine Women's Choir. After graduating, Irene worked as an adjunct instructor of Byzantine liturgical music at Hellenic College/Holy Cross. In 2017, Irene was officially tonsured a canter by His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios. Irene's husband, Trevor, graduated from Holy Cross in 2018 and accepted a pastoral assistant position at the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation in Baltimore, Maryland. Irene currently gives private chant lessons and presents on topics of liturgical music. She recently started a Byzantine choir composed of women from the Baltimore/DC area. Outside of chanting, Irene enjoys listening and dancing to Greek folk music, cooking, drinking coffee, and spending quality time with her husband. **E-mail: [irene.psalticart@gmail.com](mailto:irene.psalticart@gmail.com)**