

LATVIAN MUSIC AND MUSICIANS IN TARTU, SUMMER 1916¹

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The developing public concert life in the 19th century Europe was largely based on various musical and choral societies. Tartu together with the southern part of Estonia and northern part of Latvia formed the Livonian governorate in imperial Russia with the capital in Riga. Tartu University, which was reopened in 1802, became an important centre of musical activities. Although Tartu University was officially a Russian imperial institution (*Keiserliche Universität*), it was a German university until official policy of Russification was launched in the 1880s aiming to unite foreign-speaking border-areas more closely to Russian culture. Though directed more against the strong German domination in the Baltics, it also affected local people.

Social life in Tartu was closely related to Riga and St. Petersburg – the administrative and cultural centres of the area. Since the beginning of the 19th century, musical life in Tartu had profited from its geographical position between those two larger cities, as artists travelling from the West to St. Petersburg often stopped in Tartu. The students of Tartu University as well as academic staff came not only from the local families, but also from a wider area; communication in both German and Russian was common practice at the turn of the century. Furthermore, national movements in Riga and Tartu had created several Estonian and Latvian organisations with the aim to cultivate national language, literature and arts, to develop national cultural and educational institutions. One might find it interesting that there were Estonian Students' Societies not only in Tartu (1870–1940, continued in emigration), but also in St. Petersburg (1880–1918) and Riga (1909–1915).

As mentioned before, St. Petersburg Conservatory, founded in 1862, was certainly the most important institution for students of music. It became the closest and most accessible university level music school for Estonians and Latvians who mostly did not come from wealthy families and could not afford to travel to western musical centres for studying purposes. St. Petersburg was a multinational capital and there were about 50 000 Estonians living there in the beginning of the 20th century. Hence many young musicians found their first accommodation at some relative's home or a job to earn a living through their connections in the local Estonian community. Like several Estonians from his generation, Jāzeps Vītols came from a teacher's family. Whilst browsing the biographies of the first group of Estonian composers, one can find

several descendants of teachers' and *kösters'* families, i. e. comparatively well-educated but not wealthy young people. By the time the future remarkable Estonian composers like Rudolf Tobias or Artur Kapp were beginning their studies at the conservatory, Vītols had already become an instructor. By the time one of the central figures of the present article Juhan Aavik (1884–1982) was studying trumpet and composition (with Aleksander Glazunov) in St. Petersburg (1901–1911), Vītols had become a professor, worked as a regular music reviewer for the *St. Petersburger Zeitung* and was one of the leaders of the famous Belyayev's circle. Juhan Aavik became the leader of musical life in Tartu after graduation and continued contacts with his teachers and colleagues.

Whilst studying at the St. Petersburg Conservatory in 1880–1886, Vītols together with his Estonian friend, also a music student Johannes Kappel (1855–1907) often used to visit the pastor of the Estonian Jaani Church at St. Petersburg Jakob Hurt and participate in domestic music making. Hurt was one of the leaders of the Estonian national movement, organiser of collecting folklore, his home was open not only to Estonian intellectuals living at St. Petersburg, but also to others. Hurt's assistant Aleksander Mohrfeldt in the 1880s (later his son-in-law and pastor at the Novgorod Lutheran Church) described social life at their home:

„Making music and singing had unified and attracted people to this family earlier and continued so after moving to the new place. It was already known that *Frau* Hurt was active as a musician and singer, elder children needed piano lessons. Teachers from the church school were the first to join the family. Young celebrities in music, Johannes Kappel together with his friend, later Latvian professor Joosep Wihtol were always welcomed as guests and piano teachers. In years they were accompanied by names that were becoming well-known musicians and ladies, like Rudolf Tobias.“
(Mohrfeldt 2007: 196)



Figure 1. Rudolf Griwing (*Griwinš*, b. 1853 in Ļaudona, d. 1922 in Tartu), organist and conductor at Tartu Jaani (St. Johannes) Church since 1896

At the end of the 19th century, musical life in Tartu centred around the German *Musikalische Gesellschaft Dorpat* led by *Musikdirector* Rudolf Griwing (also *Griwinš*, *Griving*; 1853–1922), the organist and conductor at the Jaani Church (Rohtla 2005: 27–35). This was the most important (German) congregation in Tartu and its musicians always had a prominent position in local musical life. Griwing was a Latvian from Laudon (*Ļaudona*) county and had studied at the university and conservatory in Leipzig. In 1897, he also founded a music school in Tartu to train up church musicians.

St. Johannis-Kirche.
Dinstag, den 6. April a. c.
 2. Aufführung
 des Oratoriums
„Elias“
 für Chor, Soli und Orchester
 von
Mendelssohn-Bartholdy
 unter Leitung des
Herrn Musikdirect. Rudolf Griwing.

Solisten:
 Sopran: **Frau J. von Zur-Mühlen** und
Frau von Samson-Kosse
 Alt: **Frau von Samson-Bockenhol.**
 Tenor: **Herr A. von Fossard.**
 Baas-Baryton (Elias): **Herr A. von Smollan.**

Beginn um 8 Uhr Abends.

Billette inclusive Kronsteuer: im Altarraum à 1 Rbl. 60 Kop., in den Emporen à 1 Rbl 10 Kop., im Mittelschiff (numerirte Plätze) à 80 Kop. und im übrigen Raum der Kirche à 50 Kop. in E. J. Karow's Universitäts-Buchhandlung und an dem Concerttage eine Stunde vor Beginn an der Kirchenthür.

Texte à 10 Kopeken.

Figure 2. Nordliivländische Zeitung on April 5, 1899



Figure 3. Louis Höflinger, Eduard Ivanson, *Die St. Johanniskirche.* Album von Dorpat, 1860. Library of the Tartu University

It was supported both by the church and local German societies, so the tuition fee was lower than at private studios and many future Estonian musicians started their education there (Lippus 1997: 19). *Musikalische Gesellschaft* organised concerts in Tartu, professional musicians were joined by amateurs for a symphonic orchestra, often there were also amateurs among soloists. It was quite usual at Baltic German societies that among the members there were middle and upper class people with German education and cultural habits, but of a different national origin. It was characteristic for that period of time that many Estonians and Latvians moving up in social position had to choose whether to join German or Estonian/Latvian societies and professional musicians participated in various musical events. For example, the composer Rudolf Tobias (1873–1918) who was working in Tartu in 1904–1908 was also well-known as a pianist in the musical life of the German society.²

² There is an anonymous review (*Nordliivländische Zeitung*, 09. (22.) 09.1905) of a recital at which the expected pianist did not appear and Tobias jumped up from the audience and accompanied the soloist. The event was not mentioned in the local Estonian daily; obviously the recital was addressed to the German society.



Figure 4. The main concert hall in Tartu up to World War II, *Bürgermusse* in 1907

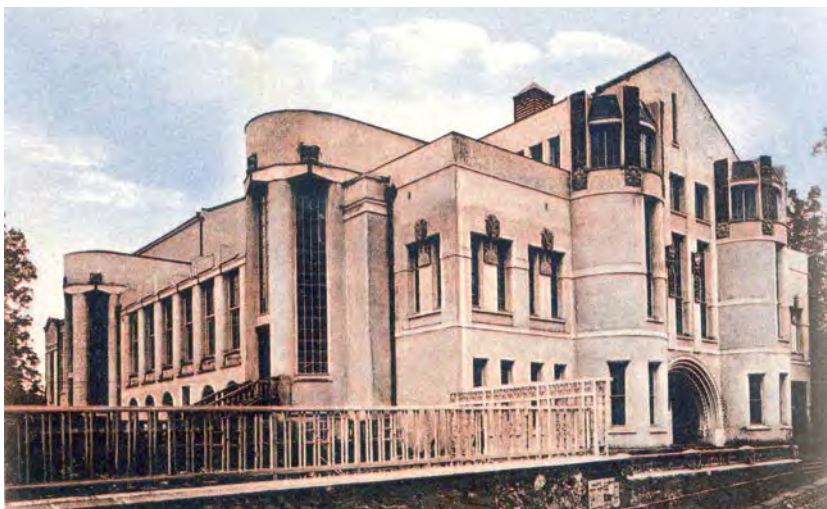


Figure 5. Tartu Vanemuine, 1906 (In 1944, the building burned down during World War II)



Figure 6. Summer concerts took place in the gardens of different societies. This is the garden of the *Handwerker-Verein* in Tartu.

Concerts in Tartu, spring 1899 (Geiu Rohtla 2005, based on
advertismets in Nordlilvländische Zeitung)

17. Januar, Neues Theater: Gesangchor von Frl. **Milna Hermann**, musikalisch-literarischer Abend unter Mitwirkung von J. Zmigrodzki
31. Januar, Johannis-Kirche: Musikdirektor **Rudolf Griwing**, Kirchen-Concert unter Mitwirkung Frau von zur Mühlen und bewährter musikalischer Kräfte
14. Februar, Bürgermusse: **Alfred Fossard**, Lieder-Abend unter Mitwirkung der Damen Frau Elly Ammon, Helene von Samson-Kosse und Frl. C. von Fossard
19. Februar, Bürgermusse: III Familien-Abend des **Vereins für Kammermusik**
24. Februar, Bürgermusse: Familien-Abend (Faschings-Aufführung) des **Vereins für Kammermusik**
28. Februar, Bürgermusse: III Symphonie-Concert unter Leitung des Musikdirektors **Rudolf Griwing** und Mitwirkung des Oratoriensängers A. von Fossard
10. März, Johannis-Kirche: **Rudolf Griwing**, Kirchenconcert am Buss- und Bettage unter Mitwirkung von Frl. Recke (Riga) und geschätzter musikalischen Kräfte
21. März, St. Petri-Kirche: Frl. **Milna Hermann**, Concert unter Mitwirkung geschätzter musikalischer Kräfte
24. März, Bürgermusse: Familienabend des **Vereins für Kammermusik** unter Mitwirkung von Frau J. von zur Mühlen und einer anderen geschätzten musikalischen Kraft
4. u 6. April, Johannis-Kirche: Oratorium "Elias" von Mendelssohn-Bartholdy unter Leitung von **Rudolf Griwing**

Table 1. Concerts in Tartu, spring 1899. Based on adverts in *Nordlilvländische Zeitung* (Geiu, Rohtla 2005)

Thus, musical life of the town was certainly not limited to singing and brass bands. Nevertheless, local Estonian musical society had no capacity to organise regular orchestral concerts in order to perform large-scale works. In 1906, *Vanemuine* Society in Tartu opened a new theatre building and founded a professional troupe. At that time, each theatre would have a small orchestra or an ensemble – instrumental music was necessary for all kinds of performances, not only for performing musical plays such as an operetta or singspiel. A larger ensemble was hired for summer music or for special symphonic concerts performed on the open-air stage. In 1908, *Vanemuine* opened a garden with a new bandstand and planned a season from the end of April to the 1st of September with three concerts a week. Even in July many concerts took place. Juhan Aavik participated in organisation being still a student at the St. Petersburg Conservatory and brought a number of his colleagues – students to play more responsible parts in the orchestra (Jürisson 1987: 14). After graduating in 1911 he became a conductor. In summer, when wealthy people moved to their manors and resorts, musical life in St. Petersburg slowed down and musicians were eager to find temporary engagements in resorts and smaller towns. That was a common way to finance their further studies among Estonian music students and they had friends with similar interests. Sometimes performances of really large-scale music were organised by *Vanemuine*, engaging also the choir of the Society. When the war broke out in 1914, German social life diminished and *Vanemuine* Society became the main organiser of musical life in Tartu.

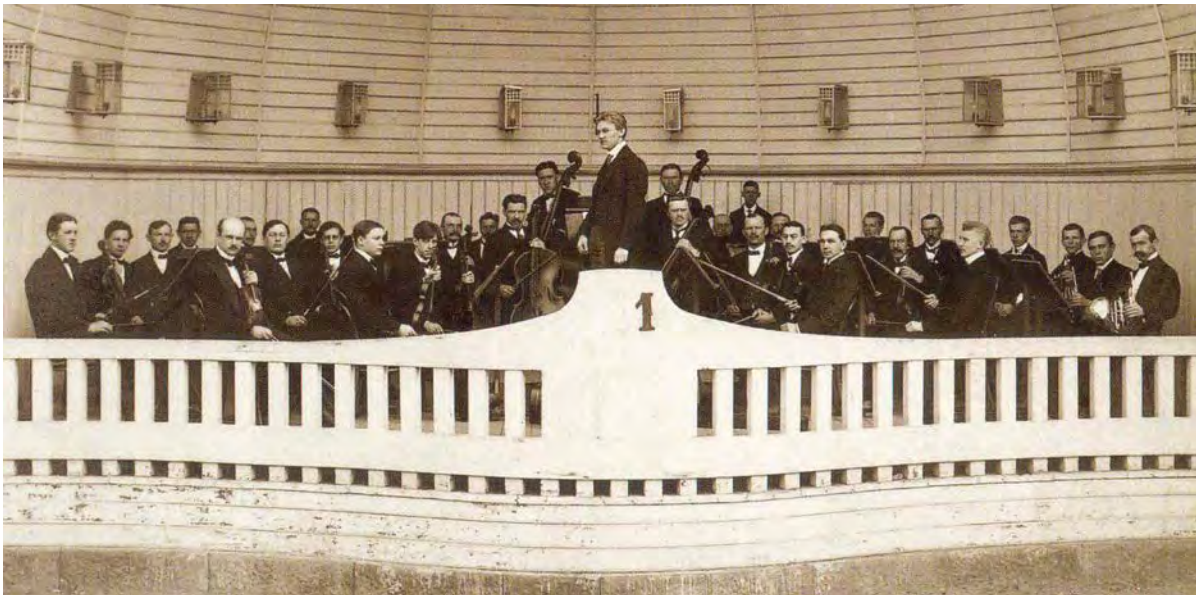


Figure 7. Vanemuine Symphonic Orchestra's summer concerts in 1913, Juhan Aavik as the conductor

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Riga, the capital of the Livonian province, was the largest and wealthiest city in the Baltics, and in the end of the 19th century the local Russian community founded a branch of the Imperial Russian Musical Society in Riga. This society had music schools in several Russian provincial centres and a new school was also opened in Riga. One of the first Estonian professional pianists Theodor Lemba (1876–1962) worked at this school from 1905 up until the time the war reached Latvia in 1915 (Lippus 1997: 55). As the frontline was approaching Riga, offices and schools were evacuated to different towns and the Riga music school advertised its admission exams and the beginning of classes at Tartu on the 1st of September in the local newspaper (*Postimees*, 24.08.1915).

Tartu tagasi tulnud annan jälle

wiulimängu õpetust

1. septembrist alates. Walmistan konserwat. kõrgema kursusele astumiseks ja ka konserwat. seaduse § 75 põhjal tunnistuse saamiseks ette.

Wastuwõtmine 1. septembrist igapäew kella 12—6 Riia uul. nr. 32-a, kort. 3. Säälсамas on ka Riia Muusikakooli kantselei.

A. Grünupp Petrogradi konserwat. wabakunstnik ja Riia Muusikakooli omanik.

Figure 8. *Postimees*, August 30, 1916: A. Grünupp has returned to Tartu. As a violin teacher tutor he prepares students for entering the higher course of the conservatory. He also introduces himself as a freelance musician from Petrograd Conservatory and the owner of Riga Music School. His office is located at Riga Music School, Riia Street 32-3.



Reisertliku Wene Muusika Selti Riia osakonna

muusikakool.

Orkestri harjutuste algus 10. septembril.

Soovijad orkestrist osa võtta andku nma tsadaandmised kuni 8. sept. kooli kantseleisse dra. Anderit'ad õpilased ja need, kellel oma muusikariistad on, arvatakse määrata wabakohtadele kooli juures kui ka sinfonia-orkestrisse. Direktor: G. D. v. Samjon-Himmelstjerna.

Figure 9. Postimees, September 1, 1915: Talented students and those who have their own musical instruments are offered by Riga Music School to join the orchestra. The orchestra members will be exempt from tuition fees. The rehearsals are to start from 10th of September onwards.

„Wanemuise“ saalis

Teisipäeval, 25. augustil 1915.

Jurjewis asuwa Läti sõjapõgenejate abiandmise komitee toidumuretsemise punkti ülespidamise hüüks

Sinfonia

kontsert

hra Baltgaili (wiul), hra R. Tunze (ooperilaulja) preili B. Rogge (saatemäng) ja Wanemuise seltsi sinfonia-orkestri kaastegewusel hrade J. Awiku ja B. Künkise juhatusel.

E E S K A W A :

- | | | |
|--|----------|-----------------|
| 1. Sinfonia № 5 | I. osa. | P. Tschakowski. |
| Kannab ette sinfonia-orkester. | | |
| 2. Läti rahwa'aulud | II. osa. | J. Wihtol. |
| Kannab ette hra Baltgail. | | |
| 3. a) Kawaradosal aaria ooperist „Tosca“ | | G. Puccini. |
| b) Aaria ooperist „Luisa Miller“ | | G. Verdi. |
| Kannab ette hra Tunze. | | |
| 4. Sinfoniline lugulaul „Lihgo“ | | J. Wihtol. |
| Kannab ette sinfonia-orkester. | | |

Hakatus kell 9 õhtu.

Piletite hinnad (ühes häätegewa maksuga): 1. ja 2. rida 1.50 kop., 1. koht 1.10 kop., 2. koht 80 kop., 3. koht 60 kop., 4. koht 40 kop., 5. koht 20 kop., gallerie 60, 30 ja 25 kop. Piletite müük Wanemuise kassas kella 11—2 päewa ja ki. 6—10 õhtu. Komitee juhatus.

Figure 10. Postimees, August 24, 1915: a symphonic concert will take place to support Latvian refugees in Tartu.

Sinfoniaorkestrit häätegewaks otstarbeks.

Eila pandi „Wanemuise“ kohaliku Läti sõjapõgenejate abimeeste komitee toidumuretsemise punkti üles toetamiseks sinfonia-orkestrit toime wõtta diige elawalt osa wõtet. Publikumirühadid täitis seebord pääsajalikult aina Läti seltskond.

Etteannete pattujate seas eijneidjid siin — pääle meile juba tuntud tegelaste: „Wanemuise“ orkestri ja wiuliloolis J. Baltgaili — ka paar uut Läti jõudu, nimelt ooperitenor H. Tunze ja klawerimängija pri. B. Rogge, kes eeltäh. jolistide saatemängu eest hoolitses.

H. Tunze on meeldim laulja, iđeranis oma kõrgemal tenorirohketel, kus ta ettelanne fortealulus puhtalt ja heltsalt kõlab, kuna ta piano poole nii häid talduwust — wõhemalt seebord — ei ilmutanud. Oma hoolaanu ettelandega ahwaates ta kuulajaid rohetele kiidawaldustele, mille tasuks laulja weel mitmed lisanumbrid kuuldawale läi.

J. Baltgaili wiuliloolo-etteandes siin siin muu seas J. Wihtoli rhapsodiat kui Läti rahwawiiside alusel loobud taunist kunstitöödet hindama, mille maitsmises nõudekohane etteanne hääd wõimalust pakkus. Saatemängija temperamentlik ojatäitmine pääsijid siin kõige mõjusamalt küll wiimimotiwide puhul „Ma kaswajin jälpool jõe“ maksuwajele.

Sinfoniaorkester kandis J. Awiku juhatusel Tschakowski 5. sinfonia tuntud nõudekohajusega kuuldawale; ainult 1. jao algus ilmutas praiguit taktiwõtetes argust. Öhtu lõpnumbrina B. Künkise juhatusel ettelantud J. Wihtoli sinfoniiline poem „Lühja“ oleks aga oma waheldusriika tempo jaoks kuldamat juhatawat läti tarotitunud, et oma wõürtuji täiele mõjule aidata.

Kontsert lõppes kolmetordijelt mängitud riigihümnaufega.

Lõpnks wäike märkus „Wanemuise“ juhatusetele: Wiimastel aegadel lipub publikumi keskel suusetamine faalikeses jalutusruumis maad wõtima. Sellele nähtusele tuleks tõketa.

W.

Figure 11. Postimees, August 26, 1915: the review of the charity concert (W.)

Keiserl. Wene  muusika-seltsi
 Riia osakonna
muusikakool

Wastuwõtmise eksamid ja järeleksamid on 27. ja 28. augustil kell 3 päewa. Õpetuse algus 1. septembril.
 Direktor H. O. von Samson-Himmelstjerna.

Figure 12. *Postimees*, August 24, 1915. The music school of the Riga branch of the Imperial Russian Musical Society has admission exams and is to open on the 1st of September.

Wanemuine Resdel. 4. sept. s. s. **Wanemuine**
AINO TAMM'E KONTSERT
 Liidulaste ja Poola, Läti ja Eesti laulud.
 Kaastegelased: Wabakunstnik pr. Bonifazia Rogge (klawer)
 ja hra *.* (cello)

Osa sissetulekust läheb Läti sõjapõgenajate hääks

<p>I. Italia: Aria oop. Anna Bolena Donizetti. Prantsuse: a) Elegie Massenet b) Berceuse (Hällilaul) oop. „locelyn“ Codard. (Cello ja klaweri saatel). Wene: Cello soolod: a) Тучка (Pillweke) Gul. b) Коночей (Õõplik) c) Съ куклоу (Nuku minulaul) Alabiew. Mussorgski. d) Душечка дѣвица Даргомыжскаго.</p>	<p>II. Juglise: When the swallows (Kul pääsukesed) White. Poola: Aime-moi Chopin. Läti: Schupia deesamin (Maggage lapsukesed) Rahwalaul. a) Prelude Kalnin. b) Caprice Kalnin. Mängib pr. Rogge. Eesti rahwalaulud: a) Kul mina hakkas laulemale b) Meie elu. c) Olen mina ilma waenlaps d) Pulmalaul.</p>
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NAKATUS KELL 9 ÖHTUL

Klawer Beckeri wabrikust, hra Sprenk'i ladust.
 Piletite hinnad: 160 kop., 1 rbl., 75 kop., 50 kop., 40 kop.
 balkon: 75, 50 ja 20 kop. — Piletite eelmüük „Postimehe“ ja
 Zirkel rmtkpl., ja kontserdi õhtul kl. 7 pääle Wanemuise kassas.

Figure 13. *Postimees*, September 1, 1915: recital of songs by Aino Tamm (soprano) accompanied by Bonifazia Rogge. Part of the concert revenue is to be donated to the Latvian refugees. Aino Tamm has introduced herself as a teacher of Riga Music School.

Admissions and the beginning of classes in September were advertised in August of the next year (*Postimees*, 28. 08.1916). Together with the music school and other refugees, the number of musicians residing in Tartu increased, there were many more musicians available for the seasons 1915/1916 and 1916/1917, among them many Latvians. Orchestral works

by Jāzeps Vītols had been in the programme of *Vanemuine* symphonic orchestra already in 1912, but in the seasons mentioned above, the number of Latvian compositions performed in Tartu increased significantly. In the summer of 1916, two special events took place – the concert of orchestral works by Alfrēds Kalniņš on the 11th of July and those by Jāzeps Vītols on the 1st of August, both were conducted by the composers themselves. It is likely that Vītols was also in Tartu in July, attending the concert of Kalniņš for they are both photographed together with Estonian musicians. During the war, Vītols spent several holidays in Tartu, as he was a family friend of the rector of Tartu University Piotr Pustoroslev.



Figure 14. Alfrēds Kalniņš, Juhan Aavik, Aleksander Läte, Leenart Neumann and Mart Saar together with Jāzeps Vītols and Artur Kapp. Tartu, July 2, 1916



Figure 15. Juhan Aavik, Aleksander Läte, Leenart Neumann and Mart Saar together with Artur Kapp. Tartu, July 2, 1916

Juhan Aavik started to plan the summer orchestra season several months ahead and tried to find good musicians as soloists, who could also perform instrumental concertos and virtuoso solo repertoire.

the Society, were repeated because of the lack of new scores. Composers and conductors Kalniņš and Vītols, most probably, travelled with their own scores to perform a full programme of their music; it was common practice also among Estonian composers. For instance, in the summer of 1916 there was a special concert of the works of Estonian composer Artur Kapp on 25th of July that included several symphonic pieces, some of them new, and a fantasy for tenor, organ, mixed choir and symphonic orchestra *For the Sun* (composed for the opening festivities of Estonia theatre and concert hall in Tallinn, 1913). The concert started in the garden and because of the rain it was continued inside the theatre in the second half. Due to the overcrowding of the hall as a result of the large audience, the Society decided to repeat the concert three days later. On the 28 July, *Postimees* published not only the advertisement, but also a short memo: this is the last possibility to listen to the works of Artur Kapp in this season for he leaves from Tartu tomorrow and takes his manuscripts with him (*Postimees*, 28.07.1916). The first special concert of one Latvian composer was organised on 11th of July 1916, conducted by the composer Alfrēds Kalniņš (*Postimees*, 11.07.1916). The programme also contained some solo works (songs for tenor and piano; *Elegy* for solo violin and orchestra). The reviewer (*Postimees*, 12.07.1917) found that the material of his music came from Latvian nature and Latvian people and the composer's soul was excellently merged with this spirit. The singer, the Latvian tenor Pauls Sakss is particularly praised for understanding the songs. Again, many Latvians in the audience are noted. In August, the special concert of the works by Jāzeps Vītols took place (*Postimees*, 01.08.1916) and, several solo compositions were included: three orchestral works (the overture *Princess Gundega and King Brusubarda*, *Līgo*, fantasy of Latvian folk melodies for solo violin and orchestra) and variations on Latvian theme for solo piano (Variations for piano on the theme of folk song *Ej, saulīte, drīz pie Dieva*, performed by Bonifacia Rogge).

Wanemuise sinfonia orkester.
Esmaspäeval, 1. augustil
VI. erakorraline kontsert
J. Wihtol'i
helitöödest
 pri. B. Rogge (klaver) ja D. Ass'i (viul) kaastegemisel.
 Piletid 175—50 kop. saada Wanemuise kassast.
Kontsert on tasuta. — — Makatus kell 9 õhtul.

Figure 18. *Postimees*, August 1, 1916. Vanemuine Symphonic Orchestra, the 6th special concert of the compositions by Jāzeps Vītols

