

# SITUATION IMAGES IN JĀZEPS VĪTOLS' A CAPPELLA CHOIR MUSIC

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## Summary

**Keywords:** Jāzepts Vītols, *a cappella* choir music, musical image, form, harmony, choir instrumentation

The goal of this research is to continue the quest for answers to questions regarding the singularly unique musical expression and compositional techniques in Jāzepts Vītols' *a cappella* choir songs. In addition to the significant conclusions expressed by previous researchers (Jēkabs Graubiņš, Oļģerts Grāvītis, Ludmila Pismennaja, Jānis Lindenbergs, Arnolds Klotiņš, and others) regarding Vītols' broad choir composition forms, harmonies, and characteristic aspects of choir instrumentation, one more aspect is presented – the composer's view of the poetry used as the song's foundation.

There is no doubt that poetry provides the idea for the initial musical image and for the general form of a piece. The main image – the message, painting, the form of the lyrical image – is usually offered by the exposition strophe (or strophes). The reflection of other words from the poetry (collection of words, phrases) has a secondary role. There is also a defined linking of one musical material with another, the incongruence of the verbal and musical contents in changing texts are not of serious concern to the composer – the key factor is the logic of the musical resolution. Additionally, associative musical language details often come to the forefront in the development phases or areas of activity (the development sections, transitions, preparation of recapitulations), visualising the words in the poetry.

In the dramaturgical arrangement (the overall main image in the exposition – the emphasized middle verses – the overall reprise or coda), the author simultaneously is able to preserve the classic balance of musical form and to entrance the listener with striking, theatrical musical replies. Thus Vītols ably controls his ability to retain the overall mood, the object or tone of an epic message and *paint* into it the musically expressive details that characterise the specific situation.