

THE ART OF HÁT XẨM – IMPORTANT ASPECTS IN PRESERVATION AND PROMOTION

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Hát Xẩm is a source of livelihood for poor blind artists and their families in the old society. During its existence through many centuries, the profession of Hát Xẩm from Nghệ An to the North has developed into an independent form of vocal music, with its own artistic characteristics. Due to changes in social life especially in the second half of the twentieth century, Hát Xẩm has gradually disappeared as a historical necessity. As a result, some aspects of this art form are diminishing or transforming in some of the environments in which it is preserved.

In recent decades efforts have been made to restore the Hát Xẩm tradition. This is a hopeful sign contributing to the preservation and dissemination of the values of this art form. However, in the new social context - with the aforementioned changes, how should the art of Hát Xẩm be preserved and promoted? It is an issue that needs to be discussed to find the right and best direction for the ongoing restoration work. The article focuses mainly on several aspects in order to preserve the unique features of Hát Xẩm as an *loại hình ca nhạc độc lập* (independent form of music) - with specific characteristics, unlike any other type of music – both new and traditional.

Keywords: conservation, characteristics, Hát Xẩm, promotion, direction.