

THE ART OF HÁT XẨM IN NINH BÌNH

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Hát Xẩm, in Ninh Bình province and in Vietnam in general, is a significant form performing art combining *hát nói* (a form of musical storytelling) and accompaniment. Xẩm singers have traditionally composed melodies, verses, and lyrics imbued with folk music culture. The Xẩm artist is typically a person with a long life and rich experience. Hát Xẩm performers continue to cultivate, preserve, and teach their children the values of Xẩm Art. This study focuses on Hát Xẩm as a cultural subject, the performance environment of Hát Xẩm as it changes in the historical process, past and present Xẩm melodies, the content and characteristics of the lyrics, musical instruments, performance forms, and performing costumes of Xẩm artists in Ninh Bình. In this way the essay paints a picture of an intangible cultural heritage of Vietnam in need of recognition and emergency protection.

Keywords: artistic characteristics, Hát Xẩm, Ninh Bình.