

**PROGRAMME**  
**“Learning about Vietnam session - 2023”**

*Time:* - April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
*Place:* - Dong Ho Folk Painting Village, Bac Ninh  
- Quan Ho Folk Songs Theater, Bac Ninh

*Organizing:* Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

Time	Content
12h30	Depart from No1 Ton That Dam street, Ha Noi (shuttle buses are provided)
13h45	Arrival at Dong Ho Folk Painting Village, Song Ho, Thuan Thanh, Bac Ninh
14h00 - 14h30	Visit the Dong Ho Folk Paintings Conservation Center
14h30 - 15h00	Experience of making Dong Ho Paintings with two famous artists Nguyen Thi Oanh and Nguyen Dang Che
15h00 - 15h15	Performance of Dong Ngu Water Puppetry
15h15 - 15h45	Depart from Dong Ho Folk Painting Village to Quan Ho Folk Songs Theater
15h45 - 16h00	Tea/Coffee break
16h00 - 16h05	Welcome speech by a leader of the Bac Ninh Province
16h05 - 16h10	Welcome speech by a leader of the MOFA
16h10 - 16h15	Welcome speech by a leader of the Diplomatic Corp
16h15 - 16h20	Welcome speech by Madam VU THI BICH NGOC, the spouse of Minister of Foreign Affairs and presents charity donation to the Nursing Center for people with meritorious services and social protection of Bac Ninh Province
16h20 - 16h50	General introduction of the vietnamese culture and Kinh Bac’s culture; Introduction of “Dong Ho Folk Painting” Dossier submitted to UNESCO
16h50 - 17h00	Film about socio - economic achievements of Bac Ninh Province
17h00 - 17h30	Performance of Quan Ho Folk Singing
17h30 - 19h00	Enjoying Kinh Bac’s cuisine
19h00	Returning to No1 Ton That Dam street, Ha Noi

## **Quan Họ Bắc Ninh folk songs**

*Inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009*

In the provinces of Bắc Ninh and Bắc Giang in northern Viet Nam, many of the villages are twinned, reinforcing their relationship through social customs such as Quan họ Bắc Ninh folk songs.

The songs are performed as alternating verses between two women from one village who sing in harmony, and two men from another village who respond with similar melodies, but with different lyrics.

The women traditionally wear distinctive large round hats and scarves; the men's costumes include turbans, umbrellas and tunics. The more than 400 song lyrics, with 213 different melody variations, express people's emotional states of longing and sadness upon separation, and the happiness of the meeting of lovers, but custom forbids marrying a singing partner.

Quan họ singing is common at rituals, festivals, competitions and informal gatherings, where guests will perform a variety of verses for their hosts before singing farewell. Younger musicians of both sexes may practice the four singing techniques – restrained, resonant, ringing and staccato - at parties organized around singing. Quan họ songs express the spirit, philosophy and local identity of the communities in this region, and help forge social bonds within and between villages that share a cherished cultural practice.

## **Dong Ho Folk Paintings**

Among the lines of folk paintings in Vietnam, Dong Ho are those printed from wood carving boards. Few hundred years ago, Dong Ho villagers in Song Ho commune, Thuan Thanh district, Bac Ninh province created, produced and developed it to a craft village with unique historical, cultural and artistic value.

Dong Ho paintings are vividly integrated into and show the traditional Vietnamese agricultural society, the working life of an honest and simple farmer, customs and living habits of Vietnamese people. To make a painting, woodblocks are used to create the main outline of the picture, in addition to the main black color woodblock, the number of woodblocks used is equal to the number of colors in the picture. In particular, Dong Ho paintings are made on "Do" paper covered by the powder of seashell, and colors used in the paintings are made from natural origin, such as the yellow and red made from flowers, white made from shell powder, black made from bamboo charcoal and so on, creating a simple and unique impression.

Materials and tools used to print painting are consisted of Do paper, assorted colors, printing boards, paperboards and “thét” (brush made of pine needles). The painting is printed completely by hand with color board, each color uses one board, the number of printing board is equal to the number of colors on the painting.

In terms of artistic value, Dong Ho folk paintings are symbolic and decorative but still retain the rustic, easy-to-understand features, close to the lives of people in the Northern Delta, unique with all-natural colors of flower and tree and bright on the Dó paper covered by the powder of seashell. In terms of content, Dong Ho folk paintings deeply reflect the spiritual and material life of people and society from the folk aesthetics point of view of the people here, which reflects the workers' millennial dream about the harmonious, prosperous and happy family life as well as a fair and beautiful society. Dong Ho folk paintings have significantly contributed to preserving the traditional culture of the nation, enriching the spiritual life of Vietnamese people.

In 2013, Dong Ho folk painting craft was recognized as a National Intangible Cultural Heritage (phase 1 in December 2012) in the form of traditional crafts. Especially, Dong Ho folk painting craft has been approved by the Government to prepare dossiers which is now submitted to UNESCO for inscription on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in need of urgent safeguarding.

### **Dong Ngu Water Puppetry**

Dong Ngu water puppetry reflects the humble life of people in northern Vietnam's Red River delta. Spectators are intrigued by folk tales and “Quan Ho” love duets that are unique to this troupe. The themes include offering betel, going to the pagoda, playing on a swing, and playing the flute while herding buffalos.

Founded in the 10th century and revived in 1958, these water puppet performances have primarily entertained the people of Dong Ngu and nearby villages during festivals. A statue made of jackfruit wood is preserved by the Dong Ngu villagers to honor the founder of local water puppetry.

A private character of Dong Ngu water puppetry is that most repertoires are using folk singing. Dong Ngu village can produce diverse, sophisticated and perfect puppets for its repertoires. Dong Ngu puppets are usually made of light wood, fine grain and free from notch such as teak wood, timber wood or fig wood. Dong Ngu ward has created more than 200 types of puppets for its performance.