Welcome to Spotlight. I’m Liz Waid. And I’m Adam Navis. Spotlight uses a special English method of broadcasting. It is easier for people to understand, no matter where in the world they live. This city is busy. Hundreds of motorbikes crowd the streets. People are walking along and across the streets. Old women sell fruits and vegetables from rolling carts. Men sit on the sidewalk and smoke cigarettes. It is loud and hot. The smells of smoke, gas, and food fill the air. This is the city of Hanoi, in the north of Vietnam. Every year, people living in different countries come to visit or work in Hanoi. Some of them even fall in love with this beautiful city. This was the case for Ian Paynton, a young man from the UK. Ian Paynton is a writer. In 2008, he visited Hanoi for the first time. But after his visit, he could not stop thinking about the city. He talked to travelfish.org writer Sarah Turner. He told her that he “thought about Hanoi every day for two years”. Finally he was able to return to Hanoi in 2010. Ian Paynton is also very interested in music. While in Vietnam he tried to find the kind of music he wanted to listen to. At the same time, two other foreigners living in Hanoi also wanted to find music they liked. Their names are J.C. Smith and Hanoi Funkmaster. J.C. Smith and Hanoi Funkmaster are part of a group called Hanoi Sessions. They were mixing the sounds of hip-hop and traditional Vietnamese music. But they needed someone to rap - or sing words over the music. Paynton enjoyed rapping. He began to work with these men to create a song. None of these men make music as their job - they just love it! J.C. Smith told Vietnamese reporter Nguy Ha why they began working together to create music. “I suppose it began because none of us really liked the music we were hearing when we got here. Modern Vietnamese popular music is not really popular in other countries. I think that is because it sounds too much like the pop music from other countries. I had been searching for some underground hip-hop that was particularly Vietnamese. But I had not found it.” So what did they choose as the subject of their song? They chose a popular saying in Hanoi – “Oi gioi oi”. Paynton says that people all over Hanoi know this little saying - old women, moto-taxi drivers, children, and others. He began to say it too. It is something to say for almost anything that happens. Paynton explained to Ha, “‘Oi Gioi Oi’ is probably the first thing every foreigner learns when they get to Hanoi. It can be used in so many ways - as a way to show you do not like something, that you are disappointed or sad, or that you are excited. It is fun and it seems to fit almost anything.” Paynton wrote the words to the song. He says that writing the song was easy because the saying “Oi Gioi Oi” was so interesting to him. He wrote the song using English and Vietnamese. He called the song simply: “Oi Gioi Oi”. J.C. Smith and Hanoi Funkmaster produced the music for “Oi Gioi Oi”. They used a normal hip-hop style and beat. Hip-hop music often mixes music from other styles or places into its songs. So they also included traditional Vietnamese music. Paynton says they used traditional Vietnamese music as a way to honor Vietnam’s past. “Oi Gioi Oi” is about all the times a person may say “Oi Gioi Oi”. It is about all the experiences of living in the city of Hanoi - the traffic, the food, the interesting parts of the city, and the people. This is what the song sounds like: Paynton, Smith and Hanoi Funkmaster released the song on the website Youtube. In only a few weeks, the video had been seen over 300,000 times! Many people commented on the video and liked it. But there was some conflict with the video. At one point in the song Paynton sings “north Vietnam, stand up, let’s go”. North and South Vietnam have a complex history. There is still some anger between them. Some people on Youtube understood these words as an insult to South Vietnam. But Paynton explains to World Policy Blog’s writer Helen Clark: “I regret saying ‘north Vietnam, stand up, let’s go’. I was including a normal element of hip-hop by representing an area. But a few people saw it and started fighting. I only said ‘north Vietnam” because the song is about Hanoi and surrounding provinces.” “Oi Gioi Oi” does use some southern Vietnamese music. This music is from a famous southern singer. J.C. Smith tells Clark that using that music was a perfect coincidence - it was not on purpose. But it is a way to show Vietnam’s unity - with southern music and words about Hanoi. “Oi Gioi Oi” is a way for people to see how much Ian Paynton, J.C. Smith and Hanoi Funkmaster love the city of Hanoi, and the country of Vietnam. There are good and bad parts about living in any city. But these three men believe this city is special. Smith told writer Nguy Ha, “When we produced “Oi Gioi Oi”, the main purpose was just for fun. We are here, getting used to this land. And we have found a love for the Vietnamese people. So we wanted to do something to mark this important period of our lives. There are times that we may feel dejected or down, but we never give up doing what we want to do. That is expressing ourselves, playing music, and producing music.” Paynton now lives in London. But he still misses Vietnam. Will he write more songs about Vietnam or Hanoi? He tells Ha that he is still working on other songs. Until then, people around the world will just have to enjoy “Oi Gioi Oi”! You can find a link to the song “Oi Gioi Oi” on the script page for this program. Tell us what you think about this song. The writer and producer of this program was Liz Waid. The voices you heard were from the United States. All quotes were adapted for this program and voiced by Spotlight. You can listen to this program again, and read it, on the internet at www.radioenglish.net. This program is called, ‘Song About Hanoi’. You can also leave your comments on our website. And you can find us on Facebook - just search for Spotlight Radio. We hope you can join us again for the next Spotlight program. Goodbye.