

March 12, 2024  
Nagase & Co., Ltd.

**Nagase Theme Song “Safflowers” by Taro Hakase Released:  
Representing the 200 Years of the Group’s History, Starting from Safflowers  
—Building Solidarity Between Employees Worldwide**

Nagase & Co., Ltd. (Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo; Representative Director, President and CEO: Hiroyuki Ueshima) has had a theme song made for the NAGASE Group, titled “Safflowers.” The song was composed by famed Japanese violinist Taro Hakase, expressing the history of the NAGASE Group, which will celebrate its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2032, and the passage of time as the Group continues on into the future even after its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This is the first time the NAGASE Group has had a theme song made.



[Photos courtesy of the Town of Kahoku, Yamagata Prefecture]

Since its founding in 1832, Nagase has dealt in safflowers, a source of natural dyes. Nagase’s founder Denbei Nagase sold safflowers from the Mogami region, in what is now Yamagata Prefecture, to be used to dye textiles in Nishijin, Kyoto. At the time, Kyoto was the top consumer of safflowers, with records indicating that safflowers were imported from China and India as well as being purchased domestically. Once artificial (chemical) dyes were developed in Europe in 1893, Nagase was the first to begin importing them. The connections made with overseas chemical manufacturers at this time created the foundation for Nagase’s business that continues to this day.

Safflowers are plants in the Asteraceae family which bloom with yellow flowers, and they contain both a water-soluble yellow pigment (safflower yellow) and a red pigment (carthamin) soluble in alkaline solutions. By repeatedly washing away the yellow pigment and extracting the red pigment through a series of process, the final color of the dye gradually changes to a deeper red. The unique value of safflowers being brought forth with time and careful work is reminiscent of the ideals of the NAGASE Group, and we hope the release of this song will help build solidarity

among employees.

■**Comment from Taro Hakase:** “Thank you for giving the song a wonderful title that provides an image of a field of safflowers in bloom. I pray for your success on your 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary and on into the future.”

■**Profile of Taro Hakase** (Photo courtesy of HATS MANAGEMENT Co., Ltd.):



1990: Debuted as the violinist for KRYZLER & KOMPANY.

Became known internationally after performing with Céline Dion.

1996: Began performing solo.

2002: Founded the music label HATS, acting as its general music director.

2007: Moved his base of operations to London.

He has released over 400 original songs so far, including not only his most well-known hits “Jounetsu Tairiku” and “Etupirka,” but also many corporate promotional songs and TV theme songs such as “Himawari,” the theme song for an NHK morning drama.

He has also performed many collaborations with artists in a variety of genres, and continues to present his music to the public with nearly one hundred performances each year,

including the outdoor Taro Hakase Music Festival and national concert tours in the spring and fall.

He has won numerous awards, including the Japan Gold Disc Award.

In 2018, he opened the online violin school Hakase Academy, acting as its principal.

On April 1, 2022, he became a guest professor at the Tokyo University of the Arts.

On April 5, 2024, the Taro Hakase Concert Tour 2024 NH&K TRIO Super Chamber Music ~moderato~ will start.

## ■“Safflowers”

[https://youtu.be/\\_TAdIfvzPo](https://youtu.be/_TAdIfvzPo)

## ■Inquiries

Nagase & Co., Ltd. URL: <https://www.nagase.co.jp/>

<Media Inquiries>

Branding Office, Global Communications Department

Tel: 080-8828-8676