

## Congress Bidding Presentation

Ladies and gentlemen, Mister President, dear members of the International Saxophone Committee, on behalf of the Japan Saxophonist Association, I am honored to have the opportunity to address you today and to formally declare Japan's candidacy for hosting the 19<sup>th</sup> World Saxophone Congress in 2021.

In 1988, Japan was fortunate to have the honor and responsibility to be the host of the 9th World Saxophone Congress, in Kawasaki City, near Tokyo, an opportunity long aspired to by many saxophonists in Japan. There had been much interest among Japanese saxophonists, since the very first WSC in Chicago, starting from the 4th WSC in Bordeaux, France, the Japanese saxophonist communities have been well represented at each WSC. This is because there has always been a very strong desire to learn from the many talented saxophonists not only from Europe and the US but also from all around the world.

Our feelings have not changed for the past 30 years, and indeed, our interest and passion for hosting the WSC in Japan once again is as strong as ever. Since the 9th WSC in 1988 (a generation ago), we have continued to dream about the opportunity to invite our global saxophone colleagues, who have had such a tremendous and positive influence on us, to return to Japan to further collaborate with and strengthen the global saxophone community.

We, the Japan Saxophonist Association and the city of Kurashiki hereby declare our candidacy to host the 19th World Saxophone Congress. The city of Kurashiki warmly welcomes you and is strongly committed to supporting a successful WSC in their city. In addition, Kurashiki Sakuyo Music University in Kurashiki, which has a very strong cooperative relationship with the city of Kurashiki, will also provide possible support for the success of the Congress.

The theme of this Congress will be "From the Beginning to the Future of the Saxophone." We would like to first embrace the past by showcasing masterpieces of saxophone music from a variety of countries. Building from that foundation, we would present new compositions from participating performers throughout the world in order to explore the many possibilities for the future of saxophone music.

We propose that the congress takes place from the 18th to the 22nd of August, 2021. The host city of Kurashiki is one of the representative cities of the Prefecture of Okayama. Its residents have a deep appreciation for and understanding of the performing arts. The area has developed into a robust commercial and industrial city. Located 700 kilometers west of Japan's capital city of Tokyo, Kurashiki is a city that prospered in the textile and automotive industries from approximately 150 years ago, including art museums that house world-renowned paintings by masters such as El Greco, Picasso, Matisse, Gauguin and Monet, as well as a specialty products that is the heart of Japan's innovations in blue jeans fashion. Kurashiki also features the remembrance of the former textile spinning mill, a cultural facility, which is now the complex exchange facility Kurashiki Ivy Square. Hotels in the area can accommodate up to 6,000 guests. Popular tourist sites, such as the ancient cities of Kyoto and Nara, the UNESCO World Heritage site of Himeji Castle, and historical city of Hiroshima are only an hour away on the shinkansen (bullet trains). On the

shinkansen, Tokyo can be reached in 3 hours, and Osaka is only 1 hour away. International access is convenient from Kansai International Airport (in Osaka), Tokyo International ("Haneda") Airport (in Tokyo), and Narita Airport (in Tokyo). Major regional airports in Okayama, Hiroshima(domestic,international both) and Itami are also gateways to Kurashiki.

The main performance locations will be the Kurashiki Civic hall and the Kurashiki Geibunkan hall. We also are planning to use the large University hall at Kurashiki Sakuyo Music University, which is located in the adjacent city of Tamashima. Capacity will be 2,000, 900 and 800 persons, respectively. In addition, the Art Museum and Ivy Square are also planned to be used as concert venues within the city.

Once the decision is made to hold the Congress in Japan, Toshikazu Nagase, Professor at Kurashiki Sakuyo Music University will serve as your host of this Congress. We plan to center our activities on performances of new compositions from the participants but also hold masterpiece classical recitals, wind ensemble concertos, and original concertos utilizing the electronic organ, as well as host research presentations. In addition, we would like to include in the program, recitals of large saxophone ensembles as well as saxophone orchestras that have recently gained popularity.

I would like to talk a bit about the current state of classical saxophone in Japan. The Japan Saxophonist Association, which would be honored to host the 19th Congress has approximately 120 professional musician members and approximately 1,000 amateur and music university student members. There are more than 20 domestic Music Universities and 2,000 students who major in the saxophone in Japan. We estimate that there are more than 100,000 saxophone "enthusiasts" who perform in concert bands (wind ensembles) in Japan. One of the key attractions of holding the Congress in Japan is that there are many people here who love the saxophone and its music.

As you may already know, the next Olympics in 2020 will be held in Tokyo. There is heated interest and increasing popularity from people around the world because of the Olympics. The entire country of Japan is preparing to host the 2020 Olympics and its athletes and other participants in the spirit of the Japanese concept of "Omotenashi," which represents the highest possible level of hospitality and care, which is deeply imbedded as part of the Japanese culture. It is this degree of commitment that we would be prepared to offer, should we be chosen as the next location for the World Saxophone Congress. We hope the many participants of the Zagreb, Croatia, Congress will take interest in attending in Japan. It is our hope that saxophonists all over the world will have the opportunity to enjoy the rich culture and natural beauty of Japan as we collaborate with one another and further strengthen our community during the 19th World Saxophone Congress. We are grateful for this opportunity to declare our candidacy for the 2021 World Saxophone Congress, and we hope for your favorable consideration.

Thank you (for listening).