

“Cohler conducted with surety and security. The orchestra... played with a joyful sense of making a history.”

- The Los Angeles Times



**Yuga Cohler** is a conductor and cultural innovator. He is the creator of multiple orchestral concerts presented by Lincoln Center that advance classical music as a culturally relevant institution. These include *K-Factor: An Orchestral Exploration of K-Pop*, which garnered Lincoln Center’s youngest ever audience, and *Yeethoven*, a comparison of the works of Kanye West and Beethoven that was hailed as a work of “musical genius,” and received acclaim from such media outlets as Time Magazine, the Los Angeles Times, the Atlantic, and Rolling Stone.

Cohler currently serves as the music director of the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra. From 2015 - 2018, he held the music directorship of the Young Musicians Foundation (YMF) Debut Orchestra in Los Angeles, one of the foremost pre-professional orchestras in the country. Other orchestras with whom he has appeared in concert include the Juilliard Orchestra, Symphony New Hampshire, the Filharmonica Toscanini, the Kansai Philharmonic Orchestra (Japan), and the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, which he guest conducts regularly and led on a sold-out international tour that concluded at Carnegie Hall.

In 2018, Cohler was awarded the Paolo Vero Orchestral Prize at the Toscanini International Conducting Competition as the only American participant. Among the other accolades granted to him are the David McCord Prize for Artistic Excellence, the Charles Schiff Conducting Award, a Career Assistance Award from the Solti Foundation U.S., the Ansbacher Fellowship from the American Austrian Foundation, and fellowships from the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen and the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music.

Cohler is a Director of the Asia / America New Music Institute (AANMI), a collective that pursues cultural exchange through modern music. With AANMI, he has performed over 20 world premieres at such venues as the Beijing Modern Music Festival, the Asian Composer’s League in Seoul, and Suntory Hall in Tokyo. Cohler appears as both conductor and executive producer on AANMI’s debut album, *Transcendent*, released by Delos Records in 2018.

Cohler received his master’s degree from the Juilliard School, where he studied conducting with New York Philharmonic Music Director Alan Gilbert. Prior to this, he graduated *summa cum laude* from Harvard University, where he studied computer science. His senior thesis, *Optimal Envy-Free Cake-Cutting*, has been cited by over 50 articles in the academic literature. Cohler has appeared as a guest host of the nationally syndicated classical music radio show *From the Top*, as well as a speaker at the Aspen Ideas Festival.