

Yuga Cohler

29-year-old Yuga Cohler is an orchestral conductor and cultural innovator. He is a creator of *Yeethoven*, an orchestral comparison of the works of Kanye West and Beethoven presented by Lincoln Center in 2018. The project was hailed as a work of “[musical genius](#)” and received widespread 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 Chamber Orchestra in Los Angeles, one of the foremost pre-professional orchestras in the country. Other orchestras he has conducted include the Filharmonica Toscanini, the Juilliard Orchestra, and the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, which he 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 Career Assistance Award from the Solti Foundation U.S., the Ansbacher Fellowship from the American Austrian Foundation, and a fellowship from the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen.

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, and in 2018, he was a featured speaker at the Aspen Ideas Festival.

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