

Electric Shamans at the Festival of the Sun

Mónica Ojeda

Sarah Booker, Translator

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Two friends have a transformative experience in Mónica Ojeda's psychedelic horror novel *Electric Shamans at the Festival of the Sun*.

Nicole and Noa run away to Chimborazo to attend Solar Noise, an “experimental music festival” in the Andean páramo—a perfect place to escape the violence of their regular lives. While there, they join up with a drummer, Pamela, a musician, Pedro, and a dancer, Mario. Eight days of psychedelic drugs, music, mosh pits, and thunderstorms follow, making way for personal transformation. Indeed, each person uses their connection to the music to imagine a world different from the one in which they live.

The language is lyrical, as when the songstresses speak in flowing, poetic lines to tell stories of nature and legends. Even the descriptions of the inescapable violence of men and nature are measured, relaying action with clarity and emotionality.

Experiencing a gradual untethering from physical reality, the characters take philosophical views of love, friendship, music, and dance as a way to transmute emotion. Each is distinctive, telling their stories about celebrating the solstice at Solar Noise in terms of their relationships to themselves and to each other.

Noa is the only character who does not speak for herself. She is known through the others' observations of her and the changes she undergoes: “Noa found in music a language that helped her strengthen her love of life, a language I'd only found in our friendship.” Her metamorphosis is so complete that it reaches back to the past and toward the future. And around her, people's voices build upon one another in a chorus until a choice must be made.

Electric Shamans at the Festival of the Sun is a polyphonic, meditative novel about love, violence, fear, and courage.

DONTANÁ MCPHERSON-JOSEPH (May / June 2026)

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