***This pre-publication review*** *of* The Last Shade Tree*’s manuscript is written by Alex McIe, a voracious and knowledgeable reader of a wide variety of science fiction and fantasy. She is a PhD candidate in ethnomusicology at New York University*. (Her last name is written capital M, small c, Capital I, small e.)

-----

*The Last Shade Tree*, Panofsky’s tremendous first novel, takes readers on an enlightening journey across time and around the world alongside protagonist Sequoyah Morgan Hummingbird, a withdrawn yet emotionally and expressively gifted Cherokee man shaped by the heart-wrenching trauma of his early life. Sequoyah fights to come into his own despite both his hardships and the ever-present burden that he faces as a chosen specimen in the enigmatic Moon People’s dictatorial master plan. Sequoyah’s journey is influenced and guided by friends, family, enemies, lovers, and by his unique insight into the ominous future that awaits a dangerously heedless humanity.

Reading *The Last Shade Tree* is a compelling, enjoyable, and deeply thought-provoking experience. This book provides everything I could want as a reader and enthusiast of science fiction; time travel, complex mythology, witty satire, apocalyptic scenarios, and an engaging cast of characters. With vivid descriptive prose and engaging dialogue, Panofsky treats her readers to a novel infused with romance and adventure, at times humorous, and often deeply serious. From cover to cover, the plot is fast-paced and exciting, which Panofsky achieves without ever neglecting the attention to detail that animates both her characters and their vividly atmospheric surroundings. The range and complexity of characters serves to explore the many facets of the human condition, where each character displays a believable array of strengths and imperfections, and each grows and transforms as they face the consequences of good, bad, and sometimes unthinkable experiences.

In today’s volatile world, *The Last Shade Tree* emerges as a crucial reminder that many of our predecessors’ transgressions still go overlooked or are underplayed within contemporary society. A history forgotten is doomed to be repeated, and I encourage readers to explore the very real history behind many of the events in *The Last Shade Tree* that have been so meticulously considered and researched for the purpose of this edifying novel. The book’s website lastshadetree.com provides a welcome introduction to readers seeking to discern fact from fiction. My initial reading of this book was undertaken in conjunction with this auxiliary material, and as a result, my greater awareness of and deeper sense of empathy for several of the book’s historical events has for me been one of the foremost successes of this book. Panofsky’s respectful and informed presentation of multicultural characters further serves this apparent objective, and should not go underappreciated.

As an avid lover of science fiction works both old and new, I appreciated this book's resemblance in content and tone to the mid-20th century era of the genre. I would particularly recommend *The Last Shade Tree* to all with an interest in the science fiction genre and to anyone attracted by history, culture, and reflections on the human condition. However, the profound narrative, expressive writing, and wholly original concept are sure to intrigue and please a vast audience.

*Review by Alex McIe: June 10, 2016*

M. Panofsky

July 2017