

Silicon Valley billionaire says Burning Man is SATANIC AND DEMONIC

By [Aidin Vaziri](#), Staff Writer

Nicole Shanahan, shown campaigning in Oakland last year as Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s running mate during his White House bid, has sparked debate by asking whether Burning Man is "demonic."

Brontë Wittpenn/

[Nicole Shanahan](#), the Silicon Valley attorney, philanthropist and Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s former running mate, has ignited controversy by questioning whether [Burning Man](#) — the countercultural festival long associated with the tech world's elite — is "demonic."

- **Burning Man 2025 census:** [Middle-aged, highly educated, mostly white](#)
- **Body discovered:** [Burning Man death investigated as homicide after attendee found in 'pool of blood'](#)

In a [lengthy social media post](#) timed with this year's gathering in Nevada's Black Rock Desert, Shanahan reflected on nearly a decade as a devoted Burner before turning to Christianity.

"I have come to believe that Burning Man is not just an eccentric festival, but rather a powerful vehicle for deception," she wrote last week. "In fact, it may be one of the most effective tools for Satan to misdirect souls away from our Heavenly Father."

Shanahan, who divorced Google co-founder Sergey Brin in 2023, described the festival's artwork and communal spirit alongside its

darker side: drug overdoses, sexual assault and occult rituals, without citing evidence.

“Yes, there are constant orgies. Yes, drugs are consumed in staggering quantities. And yes, sexual assault and rape occur at Burning Man, along with tragic, often preventable deaths,” wrote Shanahan, the vice presidential candidate in Kennedy’s unsuccessful 2024 bid for the White House before he was appointed health secretary this year.

Tech billionaire Nicole Shanahan, shown in 2022, reflected in a lengthy social media post on her years as a devoted Burning Man attendee before turning to Christianity.
Jordan Strauss/Associated Press

Her critique comes as many of the festival’s most famous billionaire patrons appear to be pulling back. Once a magnet for Silicon Valley titans such as Elon Musk, Sam Altman and Google’s founders, this year’s event has so far seen few of the usual high-profile names.

Some absences may be circumstantial — Altman recently welcomed a child, venture capitalist Josh Kushner’s wife, Karlie Kloss, is pregnant, and Airbnb cofounder Joe Gebbia just accepted a White House role, according to [Business Insider](#).

But the shift marks a contrast from earlier years, when billionaires arrived by private plane and set up luxury camps.

Burning Man itself faces mounting scrutiny after a turbulent run: Storms disrupted travel, dozens were hospitalized, and a homicide investigation was opened when a man was found dead in Black Rock City.

For Shanahan, the break is personal and spiritual.

“I no longer desire to ‘Burn the Man;’ I now burn with zeal in the Spirit,” she wrote.