

ETCHED Immersive Gala Celebrates Women-Led Regenerative Agriculture in Africa

Alabaster's Sept. 12 gala immerses guests in East African culture, elevating women smallholder farmers during the U.N. International Year of the Woman Farmer.

COSTA MESA, CA, UNITED STATES, August 19, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Alabaster International](#) will host [ETCHED: An Immersive Gala Experience](#) Sept. 12 at Serendipity Labs Costa Mesa, the gala's venue sponsor, immersing guests in East African culture and tradition while raising funds to expand the nonprofit's work with indigenous food-security crops such as enset.



Alabaster International will host ETCHED: An Immersive Gala Experience Sept. 12 at Serendipity Labs Costa Mesa, supporting its women-centered food security work and enset program in East Africa.

Known as the “Tree Against Hunger,” enset has sustained more than 20 million people in Ethiopia for generations, providing a resilient source of food through drought, famine, and conflict when conventional crops often fail. Indigenous women farmers have long cultivated enset and passed down the agricultural knowledge that has sustained communities across Ethiopia.

Alabaster International founder and CEO Shannon Fernando-Rubera is a global humanitarian, family nurse practitioner, and TEDx speaker known for going where others won't. Her frontline medical work in remote and conflict-affected communities reshaped her understanding of healthcare, showing her that hunger, access to water, livelihoods, and health are deeply connected.

In 2023, Fernando-Rubera and local partners helped facilitate the first agreement between the governments of Ethiopia and Kenya to share enset for research and development. After years of government approvals, research and collaboration with local experts, the effort reached a historic milestone in 2026 when Kenya produced its first successful enset harvest.

“That harvest wasn’t just a crop. It represented hope, dignity, and the possibility that communities facing drought could one day become food secure,” Fernando-Rubera said.

ETCHED is made possible through the generous support of GAP Community and Novus Global, the gala’s presenting sponsors; Percipio Business Advisors, silver sponsor; and the Glidden Family and Jobs Family, bronze sponsors.

ETCHED will give guests a closer look at that story through the premiere of Alabaster International’s enset mini-documentary and a curated marketplace highlighting the communities, culture, and agricultural knowledge at the heart of the organization’s work.

Produced by Rachel Dares PR, ETCHED will pair passed hors d’oeuvres and charcuterie with sweet and savory selections from Queen Isabella’s Bakery and additional offerings from Mariachi Bakery. Cocktails and beverage selections will be supported by RIKI Spirits, Three Spirit, and Recess, while Delicious by VA will provide Dubai chocolate parting gifts for guests. A live performance by Mendir Fellowship and music by DJ Pepboy Entertainment will round out the evening, with printed event materials sponsored by Idea Tree Advisory.

Guests can also take part in a curated experiential silent auction featuring standout offerings such as a two-night Orlando getaway, dining experiences, wellness packages, and more. Auction experiences are sponsored by Oasis Gold Spike, Rokka Grill & Whiskey Bar, Descanso Restaurant, Forever Beaumore, Visage Laser & Skin Care, and additional anonymous sponsors.

The main event runs from 5 to 7 p.m. Legacy Admission begins at 4 p.m. and includes VIP red carpet interviews with Inspired Journal founder Rosslyn Castro, a traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony hosted by Jebena Joy Cafe, early marketplace access, a photo opportunity with Fernando-Rubera, and curated VIP gift bags.

Proceeds from ETCHED will support Alabaster International’s enset program, helping expand cultivation, equip women farmers with resources and income opportunities, and protect



Alabaster International founder and CEO Shannon Fernando-Rubera, a global humanitarian, family nurse practitioner and TEDx speaker, leads the organization’s community-driven work in health care, food security and women’s economic opportunity.

Indigenous agricultural knowledge. The work reflects Alabaster International's broader model: listen first, invest in local expertise, and build community-led solutions designed to endure rather than create dependency.

Alabaster's Enset Food Security Initiative was named a Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to Action in 2024.

A limited number of tickets remain and must be purchased in advance. No tickets will be sold at the event. General Admission is \$100, Impact Admission is \$150, and Legacy Admission is \$200.

[Secure Your Ticket to ETCHED](#)

About Alabaster International

Alabaster International is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit advancing community-led solutions in healthcare, food security, education, and women's economic opportunity in underserved and conflict-affected regions. The organization works alongside communities, centering local knowledge and women's leadership to develop solutions designed to be sustained from within.

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Women in Ethiopia process enset, the drought-resilient crop known as the "Tree Against Hunger," using traditional agricultural knowledge passed down through generations.



A woman processes enset using traditional methods, reflecting the Indigenous agricultural knowledge that has sustained communities across Ethiopia for generations.

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