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Fog fair, film noir and other social events of the new year

Catherine Bigelow | Jan. 7, 2019



Dr. Carolyn Chang (from left) with her fellow CPMC gala hosts Allison Speer and CPMC board chairman Sloan Barnett at a Tiffany-hosted Octavia lunch, December 2018.

Photo: Catherine Bigelow / Special to The Chronicle 2018

The empty calendar squares of the beginning of the year were once akin to the slow dog days of August. But nature, and event planners, abhor a vacuum. The new year's big kahuna is the public March 2 opening of the sparkly brand-new California Pacific Medical Center complex on Van Ness Avenue, between Geary and Post streets. This \$2.3 billion, 740,000-square-foot, one city block-wide medical behemoth (privately financed by Sutter Health and CPMC) is a LEED-certified state-of-the-art wonder.

The CPMC Foundation celebrates this achievement Feb. 7 at its See the Future gala (sponsored by corporate stalwarts Salesforce, Saint Haven, Wells Fargo) at the new hospital, located smack-dab in the center of EssEff.

This isn't your typical seated soiree — it's billed as a "high-tech, high-touch" happening, whisking guests along interactive "patients' journeys" so supporters can experience CPMC's new health advances — from holographic emergency simulations of a heart attack to trying your hand at robotic surgery.

"This is the most beautiful state-of-the-art hospital in San Francisco," enthused Dr. Carolyn Chang, a gala committee member and CPMC trustee. "That's why the opening party needs to be in the new hospital and not at a hotel. Although it's so beautiful, it's like a hotel."

A strolling dinner will unfurl throughout the 11-story hospital with themed cocktail bars, live music and entertainment, a mixology lab and dinner buffets to savor at plush lounge seating. Single tickets start at \$500, then, like a fever, rise to \$50K (for 10 tickets) that include access to the top Tiffany-sponsored VIP floor.

During a lunch last month at Octavia hosted by Tiffany (a sterling silver \$100K gala sponsor), CPMC board chairman Sloan Barnett didn't mince words on her passion for the new hospital.

"The new CPMC is the most important medical building to open in the history of San Francisco and it will forever change the face of health care," she declared.

Barnett, who led the charge to raise \$300 million in philanthropic donations, also dreamed up the hospital's new tagline, Your City, Your Hospital. She also noted that every one of the 274 patient beds at the new Van Ness campus is private. As in one person per room.

"Because really," noted the savvy Barnett, "who wants to share when you're in pain?"

Before CPMC, there are a few other high-profile arts and cultural events to add to the calendar.



CPMC opening-gala sponsor Tiffany set the tables at Octavia for a gala committee lunch. December 2018.
Photo: Catherine Bigelow / Special to The Chronicle 2018

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