

House Hours

Monday 8a–6:30p
Tues–Thurs 8a–12a
Friday 8a–1a
Saturday 10a–1a
Sunday 10a–3p

Dining Hours

Monday 8a–3p
Tues–Thurs 8a–9p
Friday 8a–10p
Saturday 10a–10p
Sunday 10a–3p

Reservations

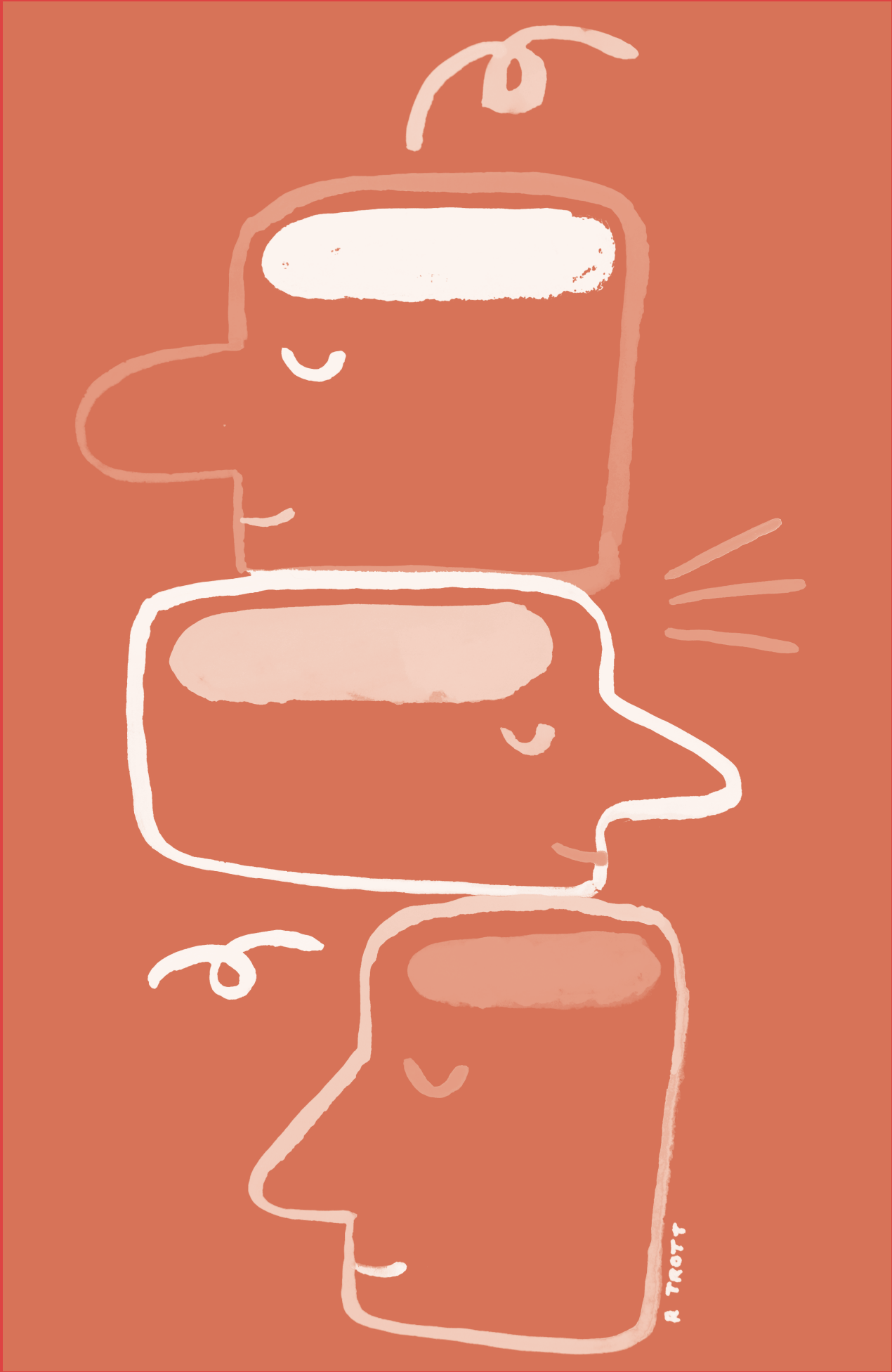
To make a dining or program reservation give concierge a call or email:
concierge@commonhouse.com
(434) 566-0192

The Commoner

DECEMBER 2019 — ISSUE NO. 13

The Commoner





December

TUES, 12/3	Member Spotlight: Juza Africa 6pm	
WED, 12/4	Wellness Wednesdays 4pm	
WED, 12/4	Whisky & Wardrobe w/ Alton Lane 6pm	
WED, 12/4	Music by the Fire: Gina Sobel 6pm	
THURS, 12/5	Holiday Happy Hour 5:30pm	
FRI, 12/6	Late Late: Ugly Sweater Party 10pm	
SAT, 12/7	Need Supply Pop-Up Launch 5pm	
SUN, 12/8	Maker Market 11am	
TUES 12/10	WNL + TheSheLab Cocktails 7pm	
WED, 12/11	Music by the Fire: Koda & Friends 6pm	
WED, 12/11	Print Making w/ Ryan Trott 6:30pm	
SAT, 12/14	Drag Brunch 10:30am & 1:15pm	
SAT, 12/14	Wine Fest 4pm	
SAT, 12/14	Christmas Reggae Supreme 10pm	
MON, 12/16	Film Club 7pm	
TUES, 12/17	S'mores & Kids 4:30pm	
WED, 12/18	Men's Mornings 8am	
WED, 12/18	Music by the Fire: Beasts of Least Concern 6pm	
FRI, 12/20	Spirits Class w/ Joel 6:30pm	
FRI, 12/20	Late Late: Ice Queen 8pm	
SAT, 12/21	Ornament Making 1pm	Tasting Tuesday 5:30-7pm, Tea Room Free revolving tasting presented by wineries, sommeliers, and retailers
TUES, 12/24	Christmas Eve Dinner 5pm	
TUES, 12/31	NYE Dinner 6pm	
TUES, 12/31	Grand Cuckoo 9pm	

All events are at *Common House* unless otherwise noted.

Visit charlottesville.commonhouse.com for updates, current menus, and hours.

HOUSE PERKS

Need Supply Co. Pop-Up

FROM A POCKET-SIZED LEVI'S SHOP TO A NOW INTERNATIONALLY sought-after brand, Need Supply Co. is a Richmond-based clothing and lifestyle store that emphasizes high quality and design of well-known and independent labels.

Since launching their distribution online in 2008, Need Supply has garnered a global influence with two brick-and-mortars in Japan, robust editorial publications, and an eponymous clothing line.

Listed as Inc. Magazine's "Top 100 Retail Companies in America" and GQ's "The Best E-Commerce on the Web," Need Supply is bringing a taste of their unique collections to Common House for a limited time where Members can receive 20% off of all purchased goods at their exclusive pop-up shop.

Their kick off will be available to Members only on Decem-

Hours: December 7th - 22nd

Mon-Fri, 11am - 5pm • Sat, 11am - 7pm • Sun, 11am-4pm

ber 7th where you can take away the first selections of their trend-setting goods. They will then open up their shop to the public until the 22nd where all other orders will be placed online with free two day shipping

Not only will Need's staff be there to connect you with brands you love but they are also bringing a vanguard of Senior Stylists who will provide fashion, beauty, and design style sessions on an appointment-basis. Book with concierge@commonhouse.com. More than just retail, enjoy the intersection of culture and craftsmanship, where people are the core of their brand's global experience.

PROGRAMS

Highlights

Member Spotlight: Juza Africa

Tuesday, December 3rd

6-8pm

JUZA AFRICA IS A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION FOUNDED TO LIFT young people out of poverty through the power of literacy. 1 in 5 people experience illiteracy with a disproportionate rate who live in the Sub-Saharan where access to educational resources is limited due to geographic and economic barriers.

Kenya native, Managing Director, and one of Common House's first members, Zikki Munyao, brings books into classrooms through "Juza Digital Libraries" that provide standardized curricula to boost literacy rates.

In celebration of Giving Tuesday and to highlight the powerful work that's happening in our community, Team Juza and leaders from another local nonprofit with a global focus, Waterboys, will lead a discussion on how collaboration and education can deeply impact the lives of people in our communities worldwide.

NYE Dinner & Grand Cuckoo

Tuesday, December 31st

6:00 & 9:00pm

DINE IN STYLE TO CLOSE OUT 2019. CHEF GREENE IS SERVING UP A special tasting menu—featuring rabbit, oyster, caviar, consommé, and lobster—that is best enjoyed with accompanying wine pairings curated by Somm Scala. If your palette trends more toward pizza and beer, à la carte selections will be available where you can mix and match casual with opulent dining to get the best of both worlds. The last seating will be at 8pm (book a reservation in advance) in Vinegar Hall before making your way upstairs to Grand Cuckoo. Entry is free, so bring all your people to hit the dance floor with tracks spun by a guest DJ. For the third year running, the Scala's are pouring their signature champagne tower, where, at the stroke of midnight, grab a glass for a toast. Friends, family—and our wall of cuckoo birds—will gather to celebrate new beginnings and chime in the new year.

Creating Raves

W/ Susan Salgado

by Annie Sheehan
Common House

“THE COMPETITIVE EDGE TO A COMPANY isn’t what is sold,” Susan Salgado explained in a talk last month in the library, “There are a lot of great products in the marketplace today. Quality isn’t enough. In order to have people coming back to you again and again, you need to create an all-encompassing experience that puts people first.”

Hospitality is an untapped wellspring in business. Ask a stranger “What is hospitality?” and you’ll get a near unilateral response about “niceness” or “kitchens and comfort.” At its core, hospitality extends beyond that; it is a philosophy, a business strategy, one that Susan Salgado revealed can be applied to any industry to build and sustain healthy work cultures.

For two decades, she has provided consulting to small and Fortune 500 companies such as Coca Cola, Goldman Sachs, Merrill Lynch (and more) to help differentiate them in the marketplace. What is sold or provided, she emphasized, is secondary to how you make a person feel. Emotional intelligence is a company’s dark horse—their true X-factor. Applying principles of hospitality aren’t all kumbaya and positive affirmations though. In her speech, she shared a blueprint that goes against conventional wisdom of customer service but is time-tested to pay off in dividends.

These secrets to success didn’t come all at once. Rather, she learned them inadvertently as a doctorate student teaming up with an unlikely mentor: the legendary restaurateur, Danny Meyer.

THE YEAR WAS 1985 AND DANNY Meyer had already proven the impossible. With zero formal training, the young Midwesterner celebrated the one-year anniversary of his now flagship Union Square Café: a refined yet casual eatery in the heart of Manhattan. Often, New York’s restaurant scene is equated to Death Valley with survival rates marginal at best. 26,642 restaurateurs currently vie to prove that their pierogis or pizza are worth eating over their neighbors who are using near identical recipes a block away.

Given that each year thousands of restaurants are opened by the culinary elite, it seemed unlikely that Meyer, at age 27, soft-spoken and inexperienced, would make it in the dog-eat-dog world of New York City. He had a secret deeply ingrained in his personality that it gave him some serious horsepower.

However, it would take the help of Susan, a then-NYU student, to identify exactly what that was.



Union Square Café is directly across the street from a greenmarket where Danny’s kitchen sources their produce and proteins. When Meyer opened his doors, the buzzwords “farm-to-table” and “eat local” weren’t part of our everyday vernacular. Although sustainable agriculture is now an important factor in the restaurant world, the quality of his food isn’t what made Union Square Café catch fire. His workforce had an irresistible congeniality that made patrons keep coming back.

To start off, Danny hired people who possessed a similar Midwestern charm:

Continued on pg.7 →

Red and Greene

Yuletide Roadmap: Making the Menu

by Kellye Coleman & Annie Sheehan
Common House

MATT GREENE, COMMON HOUSE'S EXECUTIVE Chef, remembers celebrating Christmas a few days after the usual fanfare.

His mother was a dedicated church musician and choir director. As you can imagine, Christmas Day meant work for her but she relished in the spirit of the holiday by creating family traditions. Long after most families had eaten their turkey dinners, the Greens would pack their bags and head out of town on December 26th to observe a belated holiday. For Chef, Christmas became a time of travel and whimsy—an epoch of idyllic landscapes that are reflected in his food.

“I have this sort of romantic image in my head of what Christmas dinner is,” he stated, “And it involves this cottage with stone walls. It’s very English countryside.”

That dreamy setting is the inspiration behind this year’s English Christmas Eve Dinner menu. Aside from fish and chips, the English are not particularly well known for their cuisine. In recent years though, their old-school fares have really taken off. As Chef stated, “Something traditional, like a Christmas dinner, is really an opportunity for them to shine.”

Picture this: On a beautifully set table is a family-style roast with carved meat and duck breasts cooked to perfection. Arranged in an elegant design are plates of golden potatoes, poached parsnips, and roasted carrots taken fresh from the oven. Yorkshire Pudding’s warm doughy

crust fills the room with an inviting wave of sugary sweetness. If it sounds like something out of a story book, that’s the point. When Chef creates a dish, the entire experience matters.

Everything Chef makes is done with care and intention, from locally-sourced ingredients to the presentation of each plate. His approach to creating any new menu is remarkable in its simplicity:

“I start with the question: If I were coming in, what would I want to eat?”

He’s less concerned with what he “should” do. Chef is true to his own unique expression, which is an admirable approach that all of us who create might seek to emulate. “It’s the only way that I can really be authentic.” His authenticity is setting the table for even more dishes to come.

House No. 2 will host two restaurants led by Chef Greene and his talented kitchen crew. On the ground level will be a raw oyster bar, opened to any and all purveyors of fresh shellfish. Upstairs will be a dining room lined with cozy alcoves and banquet tables where members can enjoy an array of dishes off a French-inspired menu.



Chef’s background is in French cuisine. Over time, the pretense of the style became tiresome enough to take a step back. It wasn’t until he experienced French Canadian cuisine that he was able to return to his roots. “They made it playful and interesting. It’s not dumbed down but is really approachable by taking some of the classic stuff and using it in more of a contemporary fashion.”

Regardless, an introduction to French cuisine may seem intimidating, between its towering soufflés and rich foie gras dishes. However, backed with Chef’s



**"I start with the question:
If I were coming in, what
would I want to eat?"
-Chef Matt Greene**

philosophy on approachability, RVA's kitchen will provide a perfect entry point to new culinary experiences.

"If you're introducing a new technique or something that isn't widespread, you need to relate it to something that is already understood. If you load up a menu with food and ingredients people haven't heard of—even though they have no reason to have heard of them—they feel silly. People need to feel confident in their decision to choose the right item for them."

Giving that gift to guests could be as

simple as taking care in how things are phrased on the menu, presenting dishes in a way that inspires curiosity instead of confusion. Chef is up for the creative challenge of making unorthodox ingredients and techniques easily enjoyed by any palette.

2020 will bring a melting pot of flavors in House No. 2's restaurants. Until then, we are capping off 2019 by turning our attention to the foodways across the pond to celebrate Christmas Eve.

Yorkshire Pudding is, no doubt, sublime. But the true magic of a holiday meal transcends what is presented on a

plate; it is the chance to ditch the food-on-the-go experience of our daily lives in favor of a familial encounter, sitting elbow to elbow with others and asking them to please pass the potatoes.

"A really incredible meal is a really incredible experience that suspends reality," Chef concluded, "You're not worried about the bills. You're not worried about the kids. You're not worried about work. You are never more present than you are in that very moment."

The best holiday memories are made up of experiences just like that.

→ Continued from pg.4

well-mannered and hard-working. In a matter of months, lines spilled out the door onto 19th Street where people were eager to be a part of a one-of-a-kind dining experience. Danny gathered little tidbits of information on his guests: *Where did they like to sit? When were their birthdays? Were they allergic to dairy?* Together, staff would ensure each meal was personalized and guests felt genuinely cared for with free wine flowing, liberally.

Soon, one restaurant became two. Gramercy Tavern opened in 1994 only four blocks from Union Square Café. It might as well have been light years away, as Danny found himself in a paradox that business owners must face: How do I be in two places at once?

For years, he was an ever-present force at Union Square Café. From opening until closing, he was the doorman, the motivator, the purveyor, the watchful eye. He put equal attention in training staff as he did in ensuring salt shakers were centered on the table.

As his restaurants grew though, Danny struggled to meet his own expectations and performance slipped. Still, he and his newly-formed Union Square Hospitality Group (USHG) muscled their way

through and opened two more restaurants, Eleven Madison Park and Tabla.

ONE NIGHT IN 1999, SUSAN APPROACHED Danny asking if she could study his restaurants for her dissertation in organizational behavior. A regular patron of Union Square Café, she was curious by the dynamism between servers and how that was sustained. Sure, he said, but you will need to work here. She was hired as a Host Reservationist where she was fully immersed in the Meyerian universe of service and hospitality.

"I thought my job was to pick phones and jot down reservations," Susan recounted, "Really, it was to have people call back."

Danny realized the importance of language in a guest's overall experience.

He encouraged his staff to eliminate common phrases 'not a problem' (a double negative) or 'are you still working on that?' (dining shouldn't be work) to generate positivity. Reservationists were instructed to never say "no" when asked if parking was available on site. In the

back office, maps of nearby garages were posted as well as their rates to share. How that information was delivered would make all the difference. Semantics mattered. Semantics would dictate

whether a person would come back.

Because 92% of all business is driven by word of mouth, Danny knew the importance of people as ambassadors to his restaurants. By that logic, it would make sense to place extra emphasis on guests as a top priority to the health of any enterprise. What eventually would become her 161-page dissertation, Susan laid out a three-part methodology to create a remarkable customer experience that underscored an employee's wellbeing first and foremost:

(1) *Create dynamic work environments.*

Research shows that top performing companies use the word "family" rather than "team" to describe their colleagues because a sense of belonging is inextricable to what they do.

(2) *Find people with a high emotional IQ.*

Hard skills can be taught; empathy cannot. USHG hires 51 percenters: Employees with skills that are 51% emotional and 49% technical.

(3) *Establish systems and structure.*

Give order to a vision by providing resources to set employees up for success.

It was a framework that Danny was already using but was having trouble scaling until Susan formalized elements that could be applied across industries. She put words to what Danny had always been intuiting: Treating employees well is step one and that will have a trickle-down effect to everything the organization does. "Bottomline," she stated, "Happy workers make happy

**"Delight guests with an unparalleled experience so that they will create raves and have no choice but to return again and again."
- Susan Salgado**

customers.” When an awesome work mojo is flowing, success becomes a naturally occurring side effect.

With lessons gleaned during her research, Susan could have gone onto business management following her graduation. She didn’t. She recognized the opportunity to grow with USHG and became their first appointed Director of Culture and Learning. The timing aligned just right; the company was on the inflection point of massive expansion.

When she came on board, Danny had just signed a contract to open a restaurant in the MoMA, was in the midst of negotiations to develop a catering branch of Union Square, and set up a humble hot dog stand in the middle of Madison Square Park which would years later become a \$2.4 billion enterprise called Shake Shack.

Under Susan’s guidance, USHG was able to meet the demands of rapid expansion by creating management training programs for employees in each location. In her sessions, she emphasized core values learned from Danny and provided a formalized curriculum to maintain a high standard of care and consistency. As Susan directed leadership, Danny’s bandwidth widened to focus on new creative directions. Together, they built an empire with an unrivaled legacy.

USHG owns and operates 25 restaurants that dominate Zagat’s list as “Most Popular Restaurant.” [Union Square Café has won the number one rating an

unprecedented nine consecutive years.] Many of Meyer’s restaurants have received Michelin stars, and his chefs have racked up 28 James Beard Awards.

In addition to Shake Shack (which became a public company in 2015), USHG offers operational consulting, multifaceted catering (Union Square Events), and a growth fund (Enlightened Hospitality Investments). True to their roots of prioritizing people, USHG is also involved in nation-wide relief programs to end hunger and environmental initiatives to increase the health of our planet at large.

TIDE OF CHANGE ARE INEVITABLE. IN THE age of growth and innovation, a paradox arises: how to deliver a consistent experience while also taking risks to evolve in accordance to new boons in technology and need? Danny’s restaurants prove that striking that balance is possible.

Of his 250 Shake Shacks and 25 restaurants, no two are the same. The architecture of each Shake Shack reflects the city it is in: from Tokyo’s open-air façade to Las Vegas’s Art Deco roof. Blue Smoke’s finger-licking BBQ ribs are a contrast to the knife and folk (and tiny spoon) etiquette of Gramercy’s dining room. As patrons travel to different restaurants, their dietary preferences are itemized on USHG’s reservation system so that a top-quality experience can be executed no matter where they are in the world.

“Hospitality isn’t done for you. It is done to you,” Susan stated after her speech, “Delight guests with an unparalleled experience so that they will create raves and have no choice but to return again and again.”

Cuisine and design are variable but a commitment to hospitality is constant. To impact a broader audience, Susan spun off the consulting branch of USHG in 2017 to open her own firm, Grason Consulting, where she continues to provide organizations with the untapped secrets of business.

Being of service is evergreen. No matter the industry, practices of hospitality will not only sustain a culture but will create a dynamic one. After all, the root of ‘culture’ comes from the Latin *cultus*, which means: to care.

When caring is put at the helm, the effect is indelible to everything the organization can accomplish. What Susan teaches is how to cultivate relationships and head toward a shared goal. It isn’t about finding the best and brightest. It isn’t about delivering an earth-shattering product. Success is measured by a commitment to mutual trust and respect, starting from the ground up.

When the foundations of belonging are laid, only then can we become more than the sum of our individual parts. Only then can we create raves while driving forth a powerful vision: This is who we are. This is what we are made of. This is where we wish to go.

Maker Market

Sunday, Dec 8th, 11am - 2pm

CREATING ART CAN BE A SOLITARY PROCESS. ARTISTS CRAFT beauty and inspire wonder by using their hands, words, and minds. If they're brave enough to share that beauty with the world, often do so online. But comments on Instagram don't quite capture the magic of talking with an artist directly about the creative choices they've made or learning from a maker firsthand the process used to create their products.

This year, we'll have the chance to both engage with Charlot-

tesville-area makers and purchase holiday gifts. The market, open to the public, will feature a variety of beautiful, original items: games, books, screen prints, original artwork, and premium leather goods and stationary. Local businesses will fill House No.1's Vinegar Hall while we sip warm refreshments, connect with makers, and wrap up our Christmas shopping in one afternoon. Grab your friends and neighbors, and join us for fun holiday festivities!

Ryan Trott

Illustrator & Educator • @ryanetrott

CREATING IS AN ACT OF COURAGE, BUT teaching elementary school kids how to explore their own creativity? Now that's brave. Ryan Trott is an artist and educator who has been making from a young age. At this month's market, he'll be sharing original paintings, apparel, and most intriguingly, hand-drawn shower curtains

When did you first identify as an artist? Was there a particular moment or experience that led you to first acknowledge that?

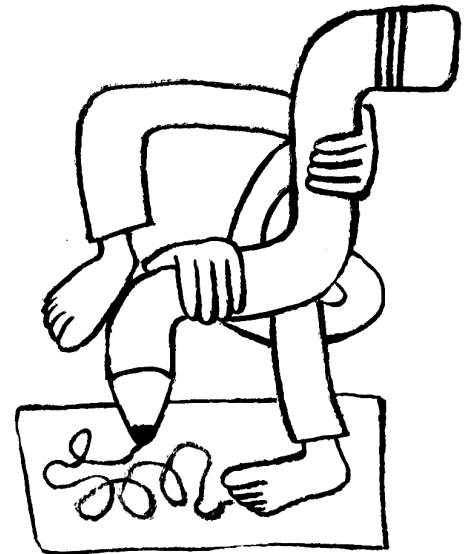
I've always loved to draw and did lots of art in high school and college. I could draw a really good ninja turtle and made comic strips and books with imagined characters. My recent focus on personal art projects is inspired by my teaching: if I'm going to encourage my students to make art then I should be living as an artist myself.

What is the most challenging part of creating for you? What do you enjoy about it?

I don't have an actual studio or designated studio time, so making time for art projects can be the hardest part. I work at night and on weekends, which can actually be a positive because it keeps things urgent. I don't have a lot of time to overthink things, so I often make work quickly and spontaneously.

How has teaching Elementary Art impacted your creative process/philosophy/etc?

My teaching inspires everything I do. I'm constantly inspired by the work of my students; their willingness to create freely and their unique styles. My students are very supportive of my work, they enjoy seeing things I have done in town (murals, exhibits) and often wear shirts with my artwork to school.



How would you describe the pieces you'll be sharing during the Maker Market?

I'm really excited this year to share a lot of work that was made in conjunction with my show at Welcome Gallery this fall. The show was called "Things" and had a little bit of everything: paintings, drawings, prints, t-shirts, bags, books. For the Maker Market I'll be bringing some apparel (t-shirts and sweatshirts), screenprints, original paintings and some hand-drawn shower curtains.

House Perks

Curated discounts specifically for you, our members. Here are a few for the holidays—visit perks.commonhouse.com to view all of your perks (password “206member”).

Tread Happy

"commonhousemembersrun" at a rate of \$115 (unlimited month of treading).

Oakhurst Inn

10% off rooms and a \$30 Food & Beverage credit

Darling Boutique

20% off clothing

Erika Jack

Illustrator & Designer • @erikajack

IN THE MIDST OF PLANNING HER WEDDING, Erika Jack had a dilemma: Spend funds to have someone create bespoke wedding invitations for her. Or dust off graphic design skills from her undergrad classes and create invitations on her own. She had no idea that choosing the latter would change her life.

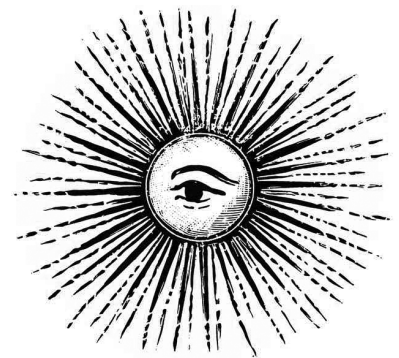
Erika studied interior design in college and worked on high-end residential projects until her move to Charlottesville, where she began working in a shop on Ivy Road. She started designing small graphic pieces to serve as props around the store, her wedding invitations one of the first items put on display. Designing these pieces was a fun way for her to take the mechanisms of interior design—proportion, color, scale—and apply them to a new creative challenge. It didn't take long for shoppers to take notice and inquired about purchasing her pieces.

“It all happened organically,” she said. “Initially, I was shocked that people actually wanted to buy my products and stationary...it was uncharted territory.”

Now, a decade later, Erika has had her bespoke wedding invitations and designs featured in publications like *Southern Living* and *Style Me Pretty*. Thanks to the power of Instagram and word of mouth, her business grew organically. Now, she's worked with brides and brands from across the country to create custom pieces that reflect what is unique about who they are.

She settled into the creative community in Charlottesville, developing relationships with other designers and artists who have supported her as her business has grown. “I have them come over for a session, and we just talk,” she said. “It's such a beautiful space for inspiration from other creatives in the grind like you.”

While running a successful business that kept her busy, Erika began to notice a gap in the stationary industry. There was a group of people looking for beautiful, well-made stationary and day-of wedding materials, but they either didn't have the time to walk through a year-



long custom design process or simply couldn't afford the price tag that comes with a bespoke design. “I was there before. I couldn't afford that,” she says. She made an intentional decision: “I want to be more accessible.”

Weekend Paper Company was born in May, a home to what she calls “bespoke inspired” items—stationary, table numbers, gift tags, and other pieces designed specifically for the person who wants a beautiful creation on high-quality paper. It's Erika's attempt to fill a gap in the industry for grab-and-go pieces designed well, on good paper, and at a good price point.

At the Market, Erika will be selling Weekend Paper Company pieces, all designed by her and printed for us to behold.