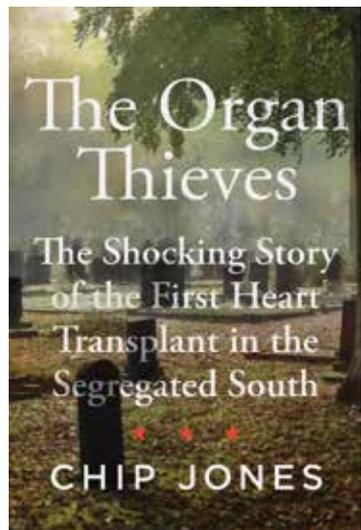


**Author Chip Jones, a former Richmond Times-Dispatch reporter, has written three other books.**



SCOTT ELMQUIST



“The Organ Thieves” explores the troubling story of the first heart transplant at MCV in the late 1960s – when a Black man’s heart was put into a white businessman without the consent of the donor’s family.

by Peter Galuszka

# Telltale Heart

AT ABOUT 3 P.M. ON FRIDAY, MAY 24, 1968, Bruce Tucker finished his job for the day as an egg sorter at a plant in downtown Richmond.

He walked to meet some friends behind a gas station at 2200 Venable St. where they chatted and passed around a bottle of wine.

As a thunderstorm began rolling in, Tucker, 54, suddenly fell off a wall where he had been sitting and struck his head. Upset, his friends called an ambulance that rushed him to the Medical College of Virginia, now part of Virginia Commonwealth University.

Tucker was in trouble. Emergency room staff noted that he had a serious brain injury. They made perfunctory efforts to find his family, but somehow failed to dig into his pocket and discover the card of his brother, a cobbler named William Tucker, who owned a business not far away. After about a day and a half, Bruce Tucker was dead.

But ambitious surgeons had a plan for him. During this time in the 1960s, MCV was caught up in a global status grab of doctors transplanting organs. So they went ahead and cut out this Black man’s heart and placed it into the body of a

needy patient, a white corporate executive from Orange County – a first transplant for MCV.

All the while, Tucker’s brother William was frantically calling the hospital and other sources to locate him. MCV had already begun touting its medical triumph through standout articles in the Associated Press and the Richmond Times-Dispatch that left off the name of the organ donor.

This is the story that begins the engrossing new book, “The Organ Thieves: The Shocking Story of the First Heart Transplant in the Segregated South” by Chip Jones, an

author and journalist who reveals many important details of the little known and horrific scandal that the medical school is still apologizing for today.

Jones worked as a reporter for the Richmond Times-Dispatch and was part of a Roanoke Times reporting team named a Pulitzer Prize finalist in 1990 for work on the Pittston coal strike in southwest Virginia.

As a high school student in the 1960s, Jones had been fascinated with Christian Barnard, the world-famous South African surgeon who performed the first human heart transplant in 1967, and who had studied at MCV a year earlier.

Years later, Jones would work in communications with the Richmond Academy of Medicine, and his interest was renewed. Having started researching the university's archives, he was puzzled when files did not reveal the name of the donor of the school's first heart transplant. He contacted the medical school and was told "it was against regulations to reveal his name," Jones tells *Style Weekly*.

The Times-Dispatch eventually did reveal Bruce Tucker's name but the story did not get much attention. Tucker's family members sued the school for not informing them about the transplant. They hired L. Douglas Wilder, a 37-year-old lawyer who later became a pioneering politician and the state's first African American governor.

While writing the book, Jones found that Wilder, who lost the case, was reluctant to talk with him, as was Tucker's family.

But eventually, Wilder came around. Jones was off and running.

## A History of Grave Robbing

Organ snatching was a hot business in Europe and the United States in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Adding fascinating background to his story, Jones' deeply reported, highly readable book reviews the history of robbing graves and snatching bodies so aspiring physicians would have specimens to dissect.

Those activities were euphemistically dubbed "resurrections." Robbers were "resurrectionists" who were assigned their jobs by brokers called "demonstrators" who were often students or professors at medical schools.

Burial spots were status symbols and the rich usually got choice lots that were near churches. The farther from the church, the better chance for robbery. Some of the best opportunities were provided at cemeteries for people of African descent.

Jones notes that in Richmond and other places, Black families referred to the

### The Weather

Today: Considerable cloudiness, chance of showers in southwest. Fair elsewhere. High in 70s and 80s.

Local Data, Page B3

118th Year

Number 147

Volume 118

# Richmond Times-Dispatch

200,831

Largest Sunday Circulation in Virginia

Richmond, Virginia, 23211, Sunday, May 26, 1968

20 Cents



Volunteers Cleaned Up Rue Gay-Lussac After Friday Riots

## Viet Cong Holding Out In Suburbs of Saigon

SAIGON (AP) — Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces struck on three fronts Saturday, probing on Saigon's fringes, attacking three U.S. outposts in the Central Highlands and blowing up an American fuel dump near the demilitarized zone with a 100-round artillery attack.

In a northeastern suburb of Saigon, Viet Cong took over a villa in a house during an apparent attempt to penetrate the city. A South Vietnamese armored column blocked the

way to Saigon, and U.S. Army helicopter gunships blasted the enemy pockets with rocket fire by the light of flares.

On the southern fringe of the capital, troops of the U.S. 9th Infantry Division fought another Viet Cong unit near Y Bridge, where enemy troops seized a residential block in the May 3 offensive against Saigon.

15 of Foe Slain

The infantrymen and national police reported killing 15 Viet Cong. One American was

killed and five were wounded. Eight government troops were slain.

Other enemy forces fired 300 mortar rounds at the district capital of Ben Cat, 25 miles north of Saigon, wounding one American soldier and 12 Vietnamese.

Most military officials expressed doubt that the enemy was preparing any major offensive in the capital.

Specialist Fighting

The fighting on the northeastern fringe began in daylight and continued

## 35% Boost in Minimum Wage Is Given French Workers

From Wire Dispatches

PARIS — France's striking workers gained an unprecedented 35 per cent increase in minimum wages early Sunday after six hours of negotiations with Premier Georges Pompidou and representatives of the National Employers' Association, The New York Times reported.

The first break in the negotiations to end the 19-day-old strike came shortly after midnight. It concerned wages only, with many other demands still pending. The other demands involved the union's freedom to organize and abrogation of last summer's government decree raising medical contributions by workers under the national social security program.

Pompidou apparently had bowed under all but irresistible pressure. The country's economy has been almost totally paralyzed by the strike.

France an Hour

The minimum industrial wage will rise from an average 2.22 francs (roughly 41 cents) to three francs (just over 60 cents) an hour. There are slight regional differences, The Times said.

The increase will give about three million workers raises totaling \$1 billion a year.

It is presumed that substantial increases due will be given to workers already earning more than the new minimum wage. The total increase in the nation's payroll cost may be \$4 billion or \$5 billion a year.

It is believed that a large part of the workers' pay raise

speculators and helped police to clear away felled trees, cobblestones, chunks of structural steel and other debris.

But fighting broke out anew in Bordeaux, 350 miles southwest of Paris. Students mounted roadblocks and hampered police with rocks and roofing tiles. Police countered with tear gas grenades. Three students and three policemen were hospitalized.

Death in Latin Quarter

In announcing suspension of the right of assembly, Pompidou told a news conference that the measure applied particularly to the Latin Quarter, where Philippe Matheron, 26, a real estate agent and former student of electronics who had remained interested in university affairs, was found dead in a street of stab wounds in the heart and abdomen.

Informants said the bill would go to Pompidou's

The other riot victim was a police commissioner in Lyons. Hundreds have been injured in clashes across France.

277 Injured

Officials said 130 policemen and 447 civilians were injured in the Paris disorders. Of the civilians, 176 required hospitalization. The police rounded up 750 persons and jailed 45. The rest were sent to the Benjumin police station for examination of their identity papers.

President Charles de Gaulle, meanwhile, was preparing a law detailing changes to modernize France's economy and education system. He announced Friday night that it would go to the people in a referendum next month for a yes-or-no vote. If the vote is no, he said, he will resign.

Friday night's disorders

Continued on Page 4, Col. 3

Cabinet Monday for approval. There was speculation that the vote would be held Sunday, June 16.

The French Communist party was the first to take a formal stand against the referendum. It called on French voters to say "no" to the referendum of "the harmful Gaullist power, which has lasted too long."

The Communist vote in France has been 30 to 35 per cent in recent years.

Trade union leaders, opposition politicians and some of the country's top editorial writers complained that the referendum will in effect be a plebiscite for or against De Gaulle, who has four more years to serve in his latest term as chief of state.



Dr. Richard E. Lower Pioneered Transplant

## Heart Transplant Operation Performed Here by MCV

A heart transplant was completed at the Medical College of Virginia yesterday. The patient is reported to be in satisfactory condition.

A statement was issued by Ralph M. Ware Jr., director of development at the Medical College, about 8 o'clock last night confirming that the transplant operation had been completed. The statement said that

"there will be no further bulletin issued until the end of next week."

The hospital declined to identify the patient or the donor. The Associated Press early today, however, said an official source identified the recipient of the heart transplant as Joseph G. Klett, 54, of Orange.

Klett had been hospitalized

about a month—twice at Charlottesville and later at the Medical College of Virginia Hospital.

A former purchasing agent at the Virginia Metal Products Co. at Orange, Klett moved to Virginia from New York City about 20 years ago.

Dr. Richard E. Lower, chairman of MCV's division of cardiac and thoracic surgery,

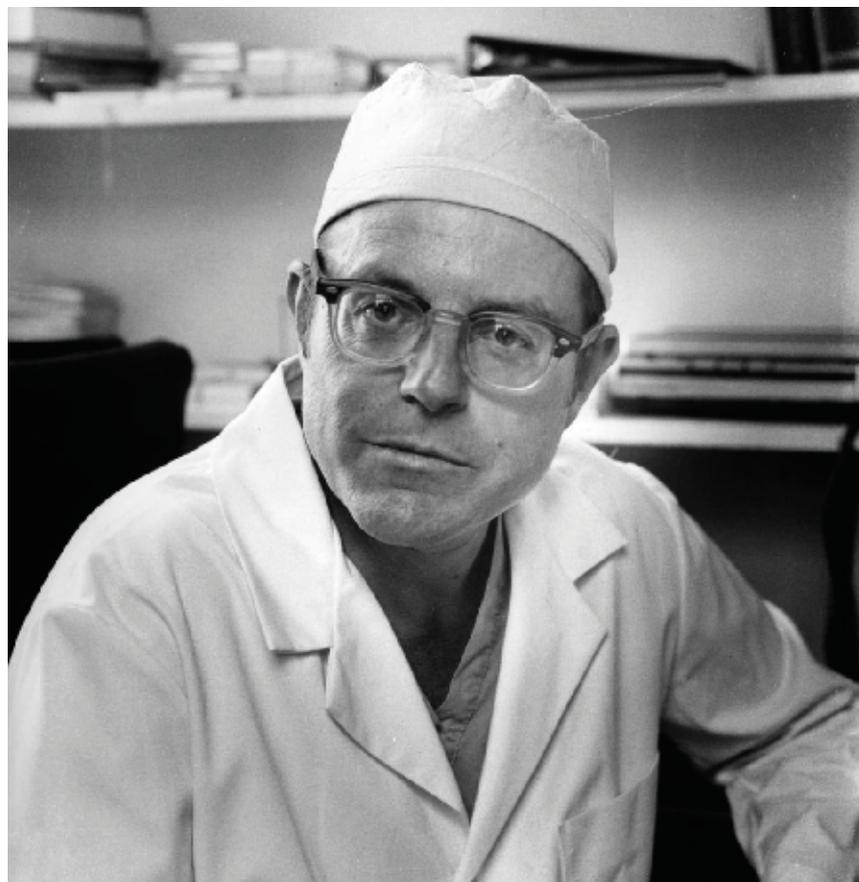
transplanted organ is more likely to occur than later.

Dr. Humm is a noted authority on the problem of organ transplant rejection and methods of overcoming it.

The transplant was the world's 10th. The first was performed by Prof. Christiana Barnard at Cape Town, South Africa, on Dec. 3, 1967.

Dr. Barnard was at the Medi-

The Times-Dispatch put MCV's first heart transplant operation on the front page of its May 26, 1968, issue.



Dr. Richard Lower, shown in 1977, was recruited to MCV from Stanford University.

VCU LIBRARIES

August 19 2020 STYLE WEEKLY

5



The pioneering heart surgery was performed at VCU's venerable West Hospital.

they were being had by “criminal elements” who stole at will and defied promises to be exclusive cadaver providers to each medical school. MCV got its start in 1838 as the medical department of Hampden-Sydney College and “soon got into a competition with the University of Virginia over which could steal the most Black bodies,” Jones told *Style*.

When the public found out what was going on there were riots against grave robbery in cities where there were medical schools. Among those schools was Yale University. In Richmond, the grave robbing practice ended years later – but only after the Richmond Planet,

an African American newspaper, lobbied against it.

Although it was prominent in the “resurrection” business, Richmond’s medical school did not have the panache of more prestigious institutes in the Northeast, mid-Atlantic and Far West.

About 20 years before the Civil War, the city had started to grow quickly with factories, an ironworks and the second largest slave market in the country after New Orleans. As more wealth flowed into the city, the first medical school was built in 1844. It was an ornate structure known as the Egyptian building. The department at Hampden Sydney changed its name to the Medical Col-

lege of Virginia in 1854.

In the ensuing years, MCV wasn’t known as a research school. Its chief purpose was to produce general practitioners and doctors of all trades who could bring new professionalism to medicine. Before then, barbers often moonlighted as medical doctors.

Like many other schools, MCV’s faculty was made up of doctors who had outside practices and acted much like adjunct professors. The best research was often done at schools out of state with full-time professors.

## Hard Partying Docs

In the mid-20th century, a wave of medical research breakthroughs won global attention. Hidden heart disease issues got more panache when President Dwight Eisenhower didn’t hide his ailment after nearly dying of a heart attack while playing golf in 1955. But MCV was behind the curve on this pivot in research.

In his book, Jones ably explains what happened in the chapter, “Breaking the Heart Barrier,” a play on the title of Richmond-born Tom Wolfe’s popular book and movie titled “The Right Stuff” about glamorous pilots and astronauts, he says.

One way to generate fresh buzz as research hot spots, medical schools found, was to move into transplanting organs, skin or limbs. Doing so had been tried for centuries but recent successes made it sophisticated and stylish. And if a medical school didn’t have homegrown talent, it could import some.

That’s what MCV did in 1955. School Dean John Truslow had graduated from Harvard Medical School and asked an old colleague to identify an upcoming research star. The answer was easy: Dr. David Hume, 38, was part of the medical team that won a Nobel Prize for transplanting a kidney from one twin to another at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, a teaching hospital at Harvard.

Hume had the right stuff. He was internationally known as a transplant expert and since “they were somewhat limited by their own modest budget” they wanted someone “who was affordable,” Jones writes.

Rules on patients’ rights weren’t that advanced and it was common for Hume’s assistants to rush just-removed organs from patients for transplants up stairs or in elevators. This cowboy approach was intended to raise MCV’s reputation. Both MCV and the University of Virginia medical schools had been “stuck at half mast,” Jones writes.

Hume was a wild man in other ways. He was famous for raucous staff parties at his suburban farm and spots such as the Valentine museum where some of Hume’s rat pack got so drunk they vomited on the floor. The museum permanently banned the MCV surgical staff. Hume, Jones says, “built up an extraordinary success with transplants but he also stepped on a lot of Richmond toes and Richmond sensibilities.”

Hume’s alter ego would arrive a decade later.

Another transplant whiz, Richard Lower was recruited from Stanford University, where he developed innovations such as leaving part of the heart’s upper chambers in the donor to shorten the surgery. Compared to Hume, Lower “was much more cerebral and reluctant,” notes Jones.

MCV’s star had been rising so quickly that Barnard, who would perform the first heart transplant, spent time studying at the school, drawn there by Lower’s reputation.

It was Lower who performed the transplant with Bruce Tucker’s heart.



**VCU celebrates its success with this marker but offers an apology on its website for not informing Bruce Tucker's family.**

## A Formal Apology

For months, Richard G. Klett, 54, had been warning friends and family that he wouldn't have long to live. The white corporate executive from Orange, Virginia, had serious, chronic heart problems and had been in an out of the University of Virginia Hospital. He was considered a good candidate for a heart transplant.

Late in the evening on May 24, 1968, things were not going well for Bruce Tucker, either. His fall had caused bleeding and a contusion. Lower had been in touch with MCV's cardiology team about Tucker, Jones writes.

About 3 a.m., the MCV staff called the Richmond police who had twice driven by Tucker's home address but came up empty. No one found his brother's business card in his pocket. The next day, Tucker's health continued to worsen.

At 2:30 p.m., William Tucker was in his shoe repair shop when he got a call from MCV, telling him to drop by. He would go, but was delayed by customers in his shop.

A little more than an hour later, Bruce Tucker was pronounced dead. About that time, his brother called MCV and was told by an unhelpful receptionist that Bruce was in the "recovery room."

At 4:30 p.m., he called and was told that Bruce was at St. Philip Hospital, an all-Black segregated hospital nearby. William went there but could not find him.

Finally, he learned his brother would be having an autopsy and that he could

have the body later and he should make funeral arrangements. Shocked by the news, he was bewildered that he didn't even know what his brother's ailment had been. It would be some time before he was told they had cut out his brother's heart for a transplant without Bruce's or his family's knowledge and consent.

Klett lasted only seven days with Bruce's heart before dying.

Shortly after, the Tucker family contacted Douglas Wilder, who is key to "Organ Thieves" book. Jones told *Style* that Wilder was reluctant to participate in the project but relented and gave Jones a trove of documents that helped the author fashion a proposal for a publisher.

At the time, Wilder dug into the case and came up with enough to file a lawsuit seeking \$1 million with William as the plaintiff. If that sum sounds paltry, it got worse: A judge lowered available compensation to only \$100,000, saying that they had missed a deadline for filing court papers.

According to Jones, there was an outpouring of sympathy for MCV. Times-Dispatch science reporter Beverly Orndorff revealed Bruce's name in print and then was ostracized by the MCV surgical staff, Jones says.

"They were very unhappy that I had done that," Orndorff tells *Style*. "They felt that my story glorified [Tucker] because I had spoken with his boss and learned he

was a good worker."

Orndorff explains that the Tucker trial had national implications because it helped to better define medical death. "Is it when the brain stops, or the cessation of the heart?"

During the trial, the powerful medical community, including visitors from Harvard, closed ranks in favor of the brain being the determining factor.

Medical ethicists Robert M. Veatch and Lainie F. Ross note in the book that the case "leaves many questions unanswered including issues related to the lack of consent for procuring organs."

Orndorff doesn't believe that first heart transplant really hurt VCU's reputation because it has developed such a strong international record for transplants.

The MCV Foundation, however, does include an apology on its website explaining the first heart transplant:

"The foundation acknowledges with regret the lack of consent from Bruce Tucker's next of kin before his heart was used in the first transplant performed at MCV. The reality of this incident complicates the legacy of a medical breakthrough and underscores a collective and ongoing imperative for all of us at VCU Health on the MCV Campus to listen to an accept criticism and to learn from our past as we work to honor the dignity of all whom we serve."

Jones says that what happened to Tucker was "abominable." New regulations, procedures and laws should prevent it from happening again. But the legacy of abusing and underserving the African American community is deeply rooted, he notes.

In 1951, Johns Hopkins University Hospital in Baltimore harvested Henrietta Lacks' cervical cells before she



**Douglas Wilder, then a young lawyer, filed suit against MCV on behalf of Tucker's family.**

died of cancer, and then grew them in a lab for researchers. Billions were sold without her permission. That story was the basis of an excellent 2010 book by Rebecca Skloot ("The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks") that compares well to Jones' work.

Utsey says that he doesn't believe the Tucker story will hurt VCU "because they are telling the same story in a different way. The best approach is for the school to own up to what it did and make things right."

He was pleased to learn of the MCV Foundation's website apology, but he says more must be done since the African American community has contributed so much to the success of medical science.

That may seem ironic since there is so much evidence that Blacks are still badly underserved on health matters. Jones points out that Black Americans are currently facing COVID-19 infection rates that are three times the normal average. **S**



**Hard-partying Dr. David Hume (far right) and his staff led MCV's research renaissance.**

# news & features



## Game On

If the Pamunkey tribe goes the federal route to open its Richmond and Norfolk casinos, the properties would be tax-exempt.

by Sarah King

Last week, the Pamunkey Indian Tribe announced plans to purchase four parcels in the Manchester neighborhood and Jefferson Davis Highway corridor on which it plans to develop a casino and resort starting as early as next.

The proposed \$350 million destination spot would include a four-diamond, 275-room hotel tower, a spa, steak and seafood houses and a parking garage accommodating 1,000 spaces. “Not only does this help fulfill the government’s intent to use gaming to help us secure our future, but it will also be a great economic boost to the City of Richmond and its citizens,” says Pamunkey Chief Robert Gray.

The project mimics a larger-scale resort and casino project in Norfolk

announced by the tribe last year, and it would create 1,000 construction jobs in addition to the 1,500 full-time positions needed to staff the Richmond venue.

Gaming is not currently legal in Virginia, but the tribe has flexibility and options other developers don’t. The Virginia General Assembly last year passed a bill that would allow commercial gaming, but the measure requires re-enactment by the legislature this year. The tribe will not know until March whether it will pursue the commercial gaming route should it be legalized in Virginia.

“As a federally recognized tribe, they

also have the inherent right to do gaming, so if the state does not authorize commercial gaming, the state route may include the requirement of a referendum [at the local level], which would put it on the

ballot as early as November,” says Jay Smith, a spokesman for the tribe.

The tribe has only recently begun talks with City Council and the city’s economic development department, Smith notes, adding that the properties were purchased privately

— three parcels totaling 36 acres in Ellen Robertson’s 6th District in Manchester and another 13 acres on Jefferson Davis Highway, currently a vacant strip mall in

**Casinos** on page 6

## Casinos from page 5

Reva Trammell's 8th District. The latter location would be used as a training facility for the 1,500 employees the casino and resort would require.

Once operational, the latter facility would be converted into "something the community needs," Smith says, such as a grocery store or health clinic.

"This will change the skyline of Richmond's South Side," Smith says. "No longer do all the exciting new projects have to be north of the river — this is something that will show that growth and development can happen on the South Side, too."

Another distinguishing factor, Smith says, is the lack of any incentives from the city in exchange for a multimillion-dollar investment and thousands of job opportunities.

"The tribe, different than a typical developer, is interested in doing gaming not for the sake of gaming, but it allows them to help improve the lives of their tribe and other disadvantaged communities," Smith explains. "Unlike a lot of developments, we're not asking for any incentives, tax breaks, anything like that — and if it goes the commercial route, where it's not tribal land, then we would simply pay regular taxes like any other property owner."

In other words: if the tribe pursues the federal route for opening the Richmond and Norfolk resorts, the properties would be tax-exempt, much like the large swaths of downtown that don't pay taxes due to state-owned or nonprofit tax exemptions.

Smith is quick to clarify that the tribe isn't necessarily the one pushing the legislature to pass gaming. There are other players such as Hard Rock or MGM, which want the legislature to approve the measure to pursue plans in Bristol or Danville, where the Pamunkey would not be competing because their ancestral lands fall primarily along the Tidewater region — east of Richmond to the coast, up to the Potomac River and down to the North Carolina border.

"We have the flexibility," Smith says. "Our anticipation is we're going to bring millions of visitors to this every year that will have an economic impact in Richmond."

He notes that if the tribe chooses to pursue the federal route, it will still have to contract with the local government for services to remain operational on an annual basis despite not having to pay property tax. Regardless of how development proceeds, the tribe would not begin submitting engineering plans or building permits to the city until at least 2021, Smith says.

While the Pamunkey have been native to Virginia for 10,000 years, the tribe only gained federal recognition in 2016, which

it had been seeking since 1982.

"They are anxious to get started [on development] because their people need this opportunity — they can't afford to wait," Smith says. "It's gaming for the sake of economic development and improving their lives and other disadvantaged communities in the process which is why they

picked this location off Jefferson Davis Highway."

Since gaining federal recognition in 2016, the tribe has been aided by grants and federal programs. So far, the tribe has used those resources for housing and shore retention projects, but ultimately doesn't want to be dependent on the gov-

ernment for members' livelihoods.

"Federal programs or federal grants can dry up or go away and they want to be independent," Smith says. "And the government — that's why they gave this opportunity to do gaming to tribes — they want them to be self-sufficient as well." **S**



# Pandemic Piouette

## Dance community pivots with online streaming and social distancing.

by Brent Baldwin

**R**ichmond is unusual in the world of dance. Home to the Richmond Ballet, the State Ballet of Virginia has its own downtown building and studio on Canal Street, rare among professional organizations around the country. And this means everything during the time of coronavirus.

The company is one of the very few professional ballet organizations preparing a fall season. Founding Artistic Director Stoner Winslett says she was “super-excited and thrilled” to open its live performance Studio Series a few weeks ago.

“It could not have gone any better,” she says of the first performance in the Studio Theatre space that normally holds 250 people but with socially distanced, single seating now holds roughly between 50 and 63. The company is following the governor’s health restrictions, the Centers for Disease Control and also has a three-person medical task force of its own local doctors.

The ballet has two more Studio Series – Oct. 13 - 15

and Nov. 10 - 22 – but did have to reschedule a world premiere to next May and also canceled its December production of “The Nutcracker,” a major undertaking that requires hundreds of dancers and crew. It will be the first time Richmonders will not have that annual holiday tradition since 1980.

Winslett explains that, because the Richmond Ballet is so far ahead of most dance companies in putting on performances, already other companies are reaching out for advice. “We’re doing 16 shows of this in front of a smaller number of people,” she says. “And we are very, very sad about canceling ‘The Nutcracker.’ We couldn’t figure out a safe way to do it. ... I like to think of it as a little rest this year.”

To sustain the 16 shows and ensure the safety of the artists, the company has been divided into two independent pods, Winslett says. Company class is held onstage with one pod, the other pod is downstairs in a studio space that receives a Zoom feed of the instruction. Each pod learns the same repertory, different ways.

Because the shows have been reduced to one-hour, without intermissions, Winslett says it’s been challenging programming with seven to eight dancers going straight through with costume changes. The ballet is also limited in terms of what it can do with duets and partnering, based on current health guidelines. Winslett says one advantage is that several local dancers

are getting a chance to practice their own choreography.

“I like challenges,” she says. “In some ways it’s been excruciating to try to program these shows, but in other ways it’s kind of fun.”

Winslett says the Richmond Ballet’s mission is “to awaken and uplift the human spirit,” and she can’t think of a better time for that.

“I think basically what artists do is take what is in front of you, whatever you have, and make something out of it,” she says. “The way I’m looking at this whole COVID-19 thing is, we have no idea how it will end. We have to figure out what ballet and dance looks like in this time.”

Dogtown Dance Theater, the local nonprofit that is mostly centered on community dance classes and performances at its studios in Manchester, reopened its doors in August. Executive director Jess Burgess also serves on the presenters council for Dance USA, the national governing body for the dance sport.

“All the stuff we normally plan for fall we hopefully will push into spring and summer of 2021,” she says of Dogtown’s regular schedule, “which is a lot of what I’m hearing from different organizations

see **Dance** on page 12

SARAH FERGUSON



**Dogtown Dance Theatre has been holding free community classes online and in person, socially distanced.**

MICHAEL KEELING PHOTOGRAPHY

September 30, 2020

STYLE WEEKLY

11

**Dance** *from page 11*  
around the country.”

Dogtown went from more than 60 classes this time last year to around seven classes a week and nothing on the calendar in terms of performances, she says.

The organization has a diverse income base primarily built around money from classes and performances, but it's also always relied on charitable income: grants, foundations and donors. Burgess says it's currently in a stable place thanks to Paycheck Protection and Economic Injury Disaster loans and some big grants, including the National Endowment for the Arts providing a \$50,000 coronavirus grant.

“We're very lucky. ... That's why I haven't felt any enormous pressure. We can come at this in a really thoughtful way,” she explains. “We are very community-oriented, so the last thing we want to do is put anyone in harm's way.”

Currently it is offering a couple free community classes in person and online that have been attended by around 20 people, socially distanced by 10 feet. “Teaching classes in masks is definitely not the best thing I've ever done,” Burgess says, laughing.

She says the next couple years will likely involve a hybrid model of online classes and limited in-person events and classes. “We haven't had any bad experiences, we've put in a lot of safety precautions based on what CDC and Dance USA has put together.”

Since March, the Latin Ballet of Virginia has canceled its live activities but is continuing to serve schools, civic programs and workers in local businesses virtually at least until January, according to founder and artistic director Ana Ines King.

It is encouraging dancers to continue training and studying at home, while instituting a video collaboration among young choreographers around the world.

“However, our revenue is way down because schools, most of the presenters and parks are paying half the regular fees,” King says via email. “The plus between all present challenges is that by virtual dance/culture learning we are reaching audiences from other states and countries as well.”

The Latin Ballet applied for all the aid that has been offered, she says, receiving a \$50,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. It has two live events with limited audience and social distancing that will also be offered online: “Dia De Los Muertos” with the Richmond Symphony at the Carpenter Theatre on Oct. 31, and “Enigmas” at Piedmont College theater in Demorest, Georgia, on Nov. 7.