

Presents

Southern Comfort

Book and Lyrics by Dan Collins

Music by Julianne Wick Davis

Director

JD Caudill

Choreographer

Allison Petrillo

Music Director

Robert Ollis

Scenic Design

Jeremy Hollis

Costume Design

Sanja Manakoski

Lighting Design

Shelbi Arndt

Intimacy Choreographer

Sarah Scanlon

Sound Design

Isaac Mandel

Props Design

Kat Moraros

Stage Manager

Shelby Burgus

Featuring:

Mario Aivazian, Taylor Dalton, Benjamin Flores, Justin Harner,
North Homeward, Candice Kight, Kimberly Lawson, Kyra Leigh,
Ricki Pettinato, Lizzy Sulkowski, & Sinclair Willman

Opening March 4, 2019

Southern Comfort is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

The Broadway, Pride Arts Center | 4139 N. Broadway, Chicago, IL 60613
www.pridefilmsandplays.com

CAST LIST

Robert.....	North Homeward
Lola	Kyra Leigh
Jackson.....	Lizzy Sulkowski
Carly	Ricki Pettinato
Sam.....	Benjamin Flores
Melanie.....	Sinclair Willman
Storytellers.....	Mario Aivazian, Taylor Dalton, Justin Harner, Candice Kight, & Kimberly Lawson

SETTING

Location: Toccoa and Atlanta, Georgia

Time: Spring through Winter, 1998

Southern Comfort is performed with one intermission.

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director	JD Caudill
Music Director	Robert Ollis
Choreographer	Allison Petrillo
Stage Manager	Shelby Burgus
Scenic Design.....	Jeremy Hollis
Costume Design	Sanja Manakoski
Lighting Design.....	Shelbi Arndt
Sound Design	Isaac Mandel
Props Design	Kat Moraros
Intimacy Choreographer	Sarah Scanlon
Makeup Consultant	Syd Genco
Technical Director	Evan Frank
Master Electrician	Becs Bartle
Audio Engineer	Justus Wright
Assistant Director	Kaleb Tank

PRIDE FILMS AND PLAYS ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

David Zak.....	Executive Director
Operations Manager	Michael Starcher
Production Manager	Paul Cook
Interns.....	Chase Hauser, Kaleb Tank, Hayley Wallenfeldt

PRIDE FILMS AND PLAYS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rusty Hernandez, *President*
Robert Bailey, Cheryl Cesario, Dan Hickey, Steve Kmetko,
Mike Liska, Christoph Piack, David Zak

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Hello, and welcome to our chosen family!

It has been said that one of the unique and beautiful things about being queer is that we get to choose our family, as many of us have had experiences with our biological families that make us seek out better environments and healthier relationships for our own well-being. This story happens to be about Robert Eads, the subject of an award-winning 2001 Sundance Film Festival documentary. Living in Toccoa, Georgia, Eads pieced together a family for himself, seeking refuge on his little piece of land amidst a world that did not understand or welcome him. Our story picks up right after Eads receives some life-altering news, bringing out the best and worst in both of his families.

Just like with any family, there are jokes we can tell and topics we can discuss because of shared experiences. Some of the conversations that you will see these characters have are about aspects of our lives we often consider incredibly private, such as gender reaffirming surgical procedures and traumatic moments from our past, except to those within our chosen families. We are excited to share these moments with you, because we hope they will shed some light on what many of us in our community experience, both good and bad.

With the advancements in our national discourse surrounding trans identities, even some of the conversations feel dated to us, which is a testament to the wider social acceptance of our community and better understanding of our experiences. Nonetheless, this story from our not-too-distant past still speaks to the unique issues and powerful beauty of those who are transgender.

It's an honor to welcome you into our family tonight, and we hope you enjoy your time with us.

- JD Caudill

SPECIAL THANKS

Sound Equipment and Design generously supported by Geoffrey A. Anderson

**FPF thanks the following donors for their support of
Southern Comfort by 'adopting' the following artists:**

North Homeward and Taylor Dalton, adopted by Jim McDaniel and Kevin Hochberg

Kyra Leigh, adopted by Larry Blust

Lizzy Sulkowski, adopted by Roy Wesley and Mark Weber

Ricki Pettinato, adopted by Jill and Chris Renn

Benjamin Flores, adopted by Dana Preston

Sinclair Willman, adopted by Stuart and Laura Burstein

Mario Aivazian, Justin Harner and JD Caudill, adopted by Robert Ollis and Richard Gibbons

Candice Kight, adopted by Paula and Ed Goedert

Kimberly Lawson, adopted by Nancy Studenroth

SCENES AND SONGS

ACT ONE

Scene One: The Tree / Spring

1. Spring..... Company

Scene Two: Robert's Yard / Barbecue

2. Chosen Family..... Robert, Jackson, Melanie, Sam

3. Grace Robert

Scene Three: Robert's Yard / Sunset

4. Women Jackson, Sam, Robert, Melanie

Scene Four: Lola's Car / Robert's House / Sunset (cont.)

5. Bird Lola, Storytellers

Scene Five: Lola's House

6. Southern Comfort Robert, Storytellers

Scene Five (A): Summer / Transition to Scene Six

7. Summer..... Company

Scene Six: Jackson's House

8. Places That Aren't Even There..... Jackson, Carly, Storytellers

9. Chosen Family (Instrumental)

Scene Seven: Sam & Melanie's House

10. Bless My Heart Sam, Jackson, Storytellers

Scene Eight: Jackson's House / Sam's Journey

11. Barbara Robert, Storytellers

Scene Nine: Robert's House / Jackson's House / Sam & Melanie's House

12. Letter Instrumental

13. My Love..... Jackson, Lola, Sam, Carly, Robert, Melanie

14. I Don't Need Another Father Jackson

ACT TWO

Scene One: Fall / Transition to Scene Two

15. Fall..... Storytellers

Scene Two: The Southern Comfort Conference (SoCo) - Lobby

Scene Three: SoCo - The Passing Seminar

16. Walk the Walk..... Company

Scene Four: The Flower Shop / Lola's Room

17. Flower Shop Interlude Lola

Scene Five: SoCo - Sam & Melanie's Hotel Room

18. I'm With You..... Melanie, Sam

Scene Six: SoCo -Robert's Hotel Room

19. I'm Goin' Robert

Scene Seven: SoCo - The Ball

20. My Love (Reprise) Company

21. Chosen Family (Reprise)..... Robert, Melanie, Sam, Lola, Carly

Scene Seven (A): Winter / Transition to Scene Eight

22. Winter Company

Scene Eight: Robert's House

23. Giving Up the Ghost..... Lola

Scene Nine: Robert's Parents' House

Scene Ten: The Tree

24. Home / Spring (Reprise Jackson, Storytellers



Mario Aivazian (Storyteller) returns to PFP for the spring musical!! He has worked around town with the Hypocrites, Chicago Children's Theatre, and most recently played the Fox with Emerald City. He thanks his fiancée Kelsey, The Dunk, Mom for sure, and also Dad and sister. He also thanks YOU for supporting live theatre!



Taylor Dalton (Storyteller) is honored to be included in PFP's production of *Southern Comfort* alongside this incredible cast! Chicago credits include *The*

Aristophanesathon (The Hypocrites) and *here comes... / there goes...* (Hairpin Arts). Thank you Nora for these sweet strings and Mom for making baby Taylor practice her instruments before rollerblading.



Benjamin Flores (Sam) is warmed to the heart to be in *Southern Comfort*. Chicago credits include *Sweeney Todd* (Stahl Family Theatre), *The Importance of Being*

Gendered (Loyola University), and *Brave Like Them* (About Face Youth Theatre). Benji is an undergrad at Loyola University studying Theatre and Studio Art. "Complete thanks to all my friends and family for the endless support."



Justin Harner (Storyteller) has played piano for *A New Brain*, *[title of show]*, *Now. Here. This.*, and *Little Women* (Brown Paper Box Co.); *Book of Merman* and

Yank! (PFP); *Triassic Parq* and *The View*

Upstairs (Circle Theatre). Check out his band The Moxie Sisters or follow his Instagram (@jayjayach) for further high-spirited activities.



North Homeward (Robert) generally prefers to play cisgender characters, but he is proud and honored to be a part of this amazing story. Recent credits

include *Poe* (Theatre Above the Law), *Midsummer Mayhem* (Shakespeare's Motley Crew), and *Songs for a New World* (Dominican University). This performance is dedicated to Echo Homeward -- all the words were there in you.



Candice Kight (Storyteller) is overjoyed to join PFP for her Chicago debut! Past credits: *Daddy Long Legs*, *Madeline's Christmas* (CATCO); *Eurydice* (The

Garden Theatre); *Into The Woods* (Warehouse Theatre); *HAIR*, *Rocky Horror* (Imagine Productions). Love & endless gratitude to the beautiful SoCo family; Mom, Darin, Seester, Nanny, Nolan, Katy, Noah, Toby.



Kimberly Lawson (Storyteller) is so excited to be working with PFP. Recent appearances include *Woman of the Year* with Porchlight, André De Shields's

Confessions of a P.I.M.P., and *WOZ a Rock Cabaret*. A regular in the cabaret scene, shows include *She Plays the Violin*, *Animated Women*, *Why Can't a Woman*.



Kyra Leigh (Lola) is active as both a musician and actor. She's composed and performed for the prestigious Stewart Ostrow Musical Theatre

Lab, Prop Thtr, and released a full length album, *Transfigure*. She's acted with the Jeff Award-winning Theo Ubique, The National Pastime Theatre, and is making her debut with Pride Films & Plays. She's performed as a solo artist at venues such as Mary's Attic, Park West, The Abbey Pub, and Davenport's. She also directs shows at the Chicago School of Rock and is an active church musician with North Shore Baptist. She is a passionate advocate for trans visibility in the worlds of pop music, classical music, and theatre. She is currently represented by DDO Artists. She would like to thank JD and PFP for this opportunity. You can find her on social media under KyrLeigh.



Ricki Pettinato (Carly) is thrilled to make her Chicago debut with *Southern Comfort*. A proud Jaqueline of many theatrical trades, she cannot believe that

acting paid off first.



Lizzy Sulkowski

(Jackson) is honored to be stepping onto the PFP stage for the first time! Chicago credits include *Collage of a Dystopian Midwest* (Bower Theatre

Ensemble) and *Goldstar* (Broken Nose Theatre's Bechdel Fest). Lizzy is represented by Gray Talent Group. "JD- thank you for taking a chance on me. I am so grateful."



Sinclair Willman

(Melanie) is thrilled to be making her Chicago theatre debut with PFP! A recent graduate of Northwestern University's theatre

program, Sinclair's credits include *Passion Play*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Agamemnon*, *HAIR*, *American Idiot*, and *Stellaluna* (Wirtz Center for the Performing Arts). Love and gratitude to this team & M+D.

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PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

Shelby Burgus (Stage Manager) is so excited to be working with PFP and this amazing cast/team. Chicago credits include *SCRAPS* (New American Folk Theatre) and *The Spitfire Grill* (Refuge Theatre Project). Much love to the family back in Iowa and to my Chicago fam, Travis, Brittney, Alex and Baby T.

JD Caudill (Director) is the literary manager of Broken Nose Theatre, where they directed in *Bechdel Fest 4, 5, & 6*, and assistant directed *At the Table*. They are also a proud company member of Hell in a Handbag Productions. Thanks to their chosen family and Sara Chambers.

Evan Frank (Tech Director) is excited to be returning to PFP where he designed and built the sets for Pride Fest this summer. Other scenic designs include *A Little Night Music* (Boho) and *Plainclothes* (Broken Nose). Next up is *Two Days in Court* with City Lit Theatre. Efrankdesign.com

Syd Genco (Makeup Consultant) was certified at Make Up First School, specializing in theatrical makeup design. She is also available for headshots, film, and special events. She is the resident Make Up Designer, and ensemble member, with Hell in a Handbag Productions. Also an actor, catch her in HIAH's upcoming show, *Poseidon*. www.madcb.com

Jeremy Hollis (Scenic Designer) is a Chicago-based theater designer and production manager. He is incredibly excited to return to PFP, where he previously designed *The Nance* and *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*. Recent credits include *Gypsy* and *Merrily We Roll Along* (Weathervane Playhouse), *Snowgirls* (Hell in a Handbag), *The Mousetrap* and *Boeing Boeing* (Metropolis), *Man of La Mancha* (MadKap), *Fuddy Meers* (Eclectic), and *Fuente Ovejuna* (City Lit). Upcoming productions include *Blackbird* and *Holmes and Watson*. He is a company member

with Brown Paper Box Co. Much love to the company, the Wignall lab and Jason Heyward.

Sanja Manakoski (Costume Designer) is a Chicago based costume designer with the MFA from Northwestern University and BFA from University of Arts in Belgrade. Before relocating to Chicago, Sanja had worked in fashion, theatre and movie productions in Europe. She is one of the creators of the fashion label KLASA which received numerous fashion runway awards. Her costume design for the musical *Hair* received the ULUPUDS award for Outstanding Costume Design, and were exhibited in the Prague Quadrennial. Sanja has been designing for Teatro Vista, Pride Films and Plays, Writers Theatre, Western Stage, Redtwist Theatre, Lifeline Theatre and other theatres throughout the country.

Kat Moraros (Props Designer) is thrilled to be working with PFP for the first time! Recent design credits include *Snowgirls The Musical* (Hell in a Handbag); *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* (Red Theater Chicago), *We Are The Blood* (Midnight Summit Ensemble); *Kimberly Akimbo* (Mad Horse Theatre); and several short films.

Robert Ollis (Music Director) is an Artistic Associate of PFP and served as Music Director for its productions of *YANK! A WWII Love Story*, *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert*, *The Nance*, *The Boy from OZ*, *Songs from an Unmade Bed*, *A History of Summer*, *The Book of Merman* and *Under A Rainbow Flag*. He has also music-directed a number of Chicago Casting Auction productions, including *The Addams Family* recently, as well as countless local theatre-benefit concerts. He served as Music Director for Underscore Theatre's hit musical *Haymarket: A New Folk Musical*. Robert received a Jeff Award for music direction of *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, plus Jeff nominations for four other shows. Robert

PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHIES CONT.

has also served as Music Director for notable productions at Bailiwick Chicago and Bailiwick Repertory Theatre. Robert helped create *Judy & Liza: The London Palladium Concert — a Tribute* for Nancy Hays and Alexa Castelvechi, and has accompanied Donna McKechnie, Capathia Jenkins, Andrea Marcovici, Nick Adams and Alexandra Billings at cabarets and concerts in New York City and Chicago. www.Robert-Ollis.com & www.judylizatribute.com

Allison Petrillo (Choreographer) is thrilled to be making her Chicago choreography debut with PFP's *Southern Comfort!* Her previous choreography credits include *Forever Plaid*, *Hair*, and *Spring Awakening* (Split Stage Productions.) Allison received her BFA in Musical Theater from Shenandoah Conservatory. "Much love to my family and friends for supporting me in this exciting new endeavor!"

Sarah Scanlon (Intimacy Choreographer) is a multi-disciplinary actor and intimacy choreographer and is excited to be back at PFP after IC'ing *I Know My Own Heart*. Recent collaborations in various capacities include Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival, Steep, Lifeline, The Conspirators, Factory Theater, Akvavit, and Redtwist, among others. She holds an MFA in Acting with a movement concentration from the Moscow Art Theatre School. Say hi at sarahscanlon.com.

Kaleb Tank (Assistant Director) is overjoyed to be back at PFP. Directorial credits: *Angels in America* (Pace University) and *Marie Antoinette* (KC Fringe Festival). Kaleb is also a playwright and has written nothing you've heard of, but will soon! Huge congrats to JD, Shelby, Allison, and the cast for creating such an inspiring piece.

ABOUT PRIDE FILMS AND PLAYS

Pride Films and Plays creates diverse new work (or work that is new to Chicago) with LGBTQ+ characters or themes that is essential viewing for all audiences. We accomplish this mission through fully-staged productions, writing contests and staged readings, and filming one short film each season.

PFP is the primary tenant in the Pride Arts Center, which connects and promotes other artists who share our values, creating a safe environment for all. PAC books one-night events or limited runs, cabaret, film, dance, comedy, and other events. In 2015, Huffington Post called PFP "A powerful and empowering entity."

PFP is a member of the Belmont Theater District, League of Chicago Theaters, Buena Park Neighbors, LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois, Northhalasted Business Alliance, and Uptown United. PFP is part of the Smart Growth program at Chicago Community Trust.

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