Courtesy of Balenciaga

Style

Hudson Williams Wants You to 'Stay Sexy'

In his debut fashion campaign for Balenciaga, the *Heated Rivalry* star exclusively tells GQ about choosing his next roles, his hopes for Shane Hollander, and what's keeping him "most sexy" these days.

By **Trishna Dhaliy**
February 12, 2026

In the weeks since *Heated Rivalry* catapulted Hudson Williams into the upper echelons of celebrity, I've become convinced that his 24 hours must be longer than my 24 hours. It's been a little less than two months since the show's finale and, in that time, the Canadian actor has presented at the Golden Globes, met with world leaders, attended two fashion weeks (plus hosted a ball of a party), carried the Olympic torch, and done more interviews than I can count on two hands—possibly even three. All the while, fans have speculated about how he would approach what has become an increasingly showed-fame-o-meter metric for rising stars: Which luxury fashion brand would officially partner with Williams first? (For example, his *Heated Rivalry* co-star, Connor Storrie, recently inked an exclusive deal with Saint Laurent.)

Now, Williams is joining the ranks as an official "Friend of the House" of Balenciaga, with a debut appearance in creative director Pierpaolo Piccioli's first campaign for the label.

eBay
Find what you love. Sell what you don't.
Shop now

Essential style, wellness, and shopping advice in your inbox
Enter your email
SIGN UP
By signing up, you agree to our user agreement (including class action waiver and arbitration provisions), and acknowledge our privacy policy.

"Balenciaga paired with Pierpaolo was a no-brainer," Williams exclusively tells GQ via email. "Their history of inventing new silhouettes mixed with Pierpaolo's bold designs and sane really excited me and felt like a great fit."

WATCH
See Everything You Missed at GQ Bowl

A no-brainer to some, perhaps, though the actor certainly made other fashion inroads prior to Balenciaga: He wore Giorgio Armani on the Globes, walked the Dsquared2 runway and made a highly publicized stop at Armani's fall 2026 show during Milan Fashion Week, and co-hosted a NYFW bash with designer Prabal Gurung, Kim Shui, and Bach Mai last week. But he's in good company in Balenciaga's "Heart and Body" campaign, which was shot by photographer David Sims and also features established brand ambassadors like Winnona Kyder and Haven Dickinson, as well as fellow new "Friends of the House" Haruna Rose Liu, Labrinth, Danielle Deadwyler, and more.

ADVERTISEMENT
The Playbook For Life's Biggest Moment
Every touchface starts with the best game plan. Blue Nile makes choosing the perfect engagement ring effortless.
Sponsored by BLUE NILE
LEARN MORE

Though Williams was just in New York late last week, he is currently in Canada to begin shooting a new project. When asked to describe this new project, he replied with a single word: "Freaky." Whether it's freaky in a "Shane and Ilya at the corrugated" way or a "This is actually, like, weird" way remains to be seen; the actor was tight-lipped (or rather, light-fingered) on sharing further details about the script. But he did share what he looks for when choosing his roles now.

GQ
GET THE MARCH ISSUE GUARANTEED
SUBSCRIBE NOW

"It starts with the script, and comes down to the director/creator," he says. "No actor can turn shit writing into something great. And at the end of the day, a subpar director can butcher a good performance—and even a good script if they're really bad—by fumbling the movie at so many points along the way."

(This, historically speaking, is not something *Heated Rivalry* fans need to worry about. Although creator Jacob Tierney announced late last year that he had yet to start working on scripts for season two, Williams is already looking ahead for Shane Hollander's arc. "I want to see what Shane looks like when he comes into himself and moves away from fear and stifling of his emotions," the actor says.)

Courtesy of Balenciaga

With Williams embarking on his new project so soon after wrapping up a truly whirlwind round of *Heated Rivalry* press—and performing a pretty damn impressive balancing act of all the adjacent obligations along the way—one has to wonder how he's staying sane these days. "My time and energy is my biggest luxury now and both can be taken away from me pretty quick so it's important to guard both with a strict priority list," he says. "I've always been most zen with the calm arts like reading, writing, and drawing/painting. Wherever right now [because] I'm too lazy to clean up anything, also."

Plus, he adds: "You always hear about people thinking X, Y, and Z are gonna solve their issues, and then they get it and nothing's fixed. But truly, nothing externally gained unfucks your mental state."

Wrapping up his email, Williams signed off with a few parting words of advice,

"Be kind to yourself, be diligent, fix your shit, and stay sexy."

More Great Style Stories From GQ

- GQ Bowl 2026: See Every Celebrity Look from the Gray Carpet
- Zohran Mamdani Wore Custom Carhartt to Tackle His First Snowstorm as Mayor
- Jason Momoa's Watch Sold the Show at The Wrecking Crew Premiere
- Shane Hollander's Viral Canada Fleece Can Now Be Yours, Thanks to a Made-in-Canada Brand
- Mercurial Dancer's Get Much Kinkier Than This
- Sign up for Show Notes to get news on the latest runway shows, parties, and insider events on the international fashion circuit.

Trishna Dhaliy is the associate social media manager at GQ, where she covers fashion and entertainment. Previously, she has written for Vogue, Paper, and 2 and covered menswear and culture for Esquire. She has interviewed A$AP Rocky, Jeff Goldblum, Adrien Brody, Drew Starkey, Kid Cudi, Logan Lerman, and more. She ... Read More
Associate Social Media Manager

RELATED STORIES FOR GQ: #RETROGRAD #NFL

Get the GQ Manual
The latest fashion and culture intel, hand-picked for you by GQ editors every day.
SIGN UP
By signing up you agree to our User Agreement (including the class action waiver and arbitration provisions), our Privacy Policy & Cookie Statement and to receive marketing and account related emails from GQ. You can unsubscribe at any time. This site is protected by reCAPTCHA and the Google Privacy Policy and Terms of Service apply.

Read More

Fashion
Hudson Williams Threw the Best New York Fashion Week Party (Possibly Ever)
By Trishna Dhaliy

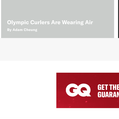
Style
Shane Hollander's Viral Canada Fleece Can Now Be Yours, Thanks to a Made-in-Canada Brand
By Pamela Paganuzzi

Style
Hudson Williams Just Made His Milan
By Savannah Sakowitz

Style
Heated Rivalry's Costume Designer Also Loves Ilya's Leopard Shirt (And Shane's Sexy Reading Glasses)
By Eileen Gunther

BTS Begins Again
By Raymond Ang

The Pitt Season Two Just Locked In
By Frazier Tharpe



Olympic Cutters Are Wearing Air
By Aidan Dhong

7 Magnesium-Rich Foods to Help
By Emily Laurence

GQ GET THE MARCH ISSUE GUARANTEED
GET ONE YEAR OF GQ FOR $19.99 MONTHLY. PLUS, A FREE GIFT.
SUBSCRIBE NOW

© 2026 Condé Nast. All rights reserved. GQ may earn a portion of sales from products that are purchased through our site as part of our Affiliate Partnerships with retailers. The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of Condé Nast. Ad Choices