

Canada's Paralympic Network

Explore Watch on

Menu



Search

Sign In

Top Stories

Shows

Podcasts

Schedules

Frequency

Listen Live

As It Happens · Q&A

Heated Rivalry costume designer breaks down show's iconic looks — including that Team Canada fleece

'It feels very cozy and wearable,' says Hanna Puley. 'And just very Canadian'

[Sheena Goodyear](#) · CBC Radio · Posted: Jan 09, 2026 5:30 PM EST | Last Updated: January 9



Listen to this article

Estimated 6 minutes



François Arnaud as Scott Hunter, Hudson Williams as Shane Hollander, and Kolton Stewart as Carter Vaughn in the second episode of Heated Rivalry. (Crave)



LISTEN | Full interview with Heated Rivalry costume designer Hanna Puley:

**As It Happens 7:07**

Heated Rivalry costume designer surprised and thrilled by interest in Team Canada fleece

Canadian costume designer Hanna Puley had no idea *Heated Rivalry* would become a massive hit. And she certainly had no idea [fans would become obsessed with the simple fleece sweater](#) she designed for character Shane Hollander.

The steamy hockey romance show follows the relationship between two on-ice rivals, Canadian Hollander (Hudson Williams) and Russian Ilya Rozanov (Connor Storrie). [Created by Jacob Tierney](#) of *Shoresy* and *Letterkenny* fame, and based on the erotic novel series by [Nova Scotia's Rachel Reid](#), it has rapidly become a cultural phenomenon.

Since *Heated Rivalry* premiered in late November, Bell Media says the show's viewership on Crave has grown 400 per cent, becoming [the streamer's No. 1 debut show on record](#). Outside Canada, Variety reports it's [the top-rated non-animated series ever acquired by HBO Max](#).

Puley spoke to *As It Happens* host Nil Köksal about how she used clothing to help bring the characters to life, and the story behind that coveted Team Canada-branded, maple-leaf adorned, white zip-up [Sherpa sweater that Shane wears](#) in the second episode.

Hanna, of all of the looks you and your team put together for these six episodes, did you think that the Olympic sweater Shane wears was going to be the one to take off the way it has?

Honestly, I find it incredible that any of the looks have taken off the way they have. I mean, it's such a surprise, I think, to have worked on such a big hit. No one expected this.

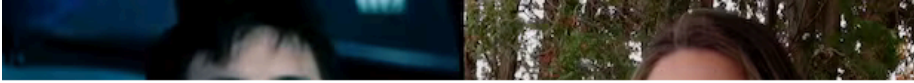
But the fleece, in particular, was one that no one really thought would even get much attention. It was, you know, serving the story in the moment and, no, it's a huge surprise.

People were desperate to get their hands on one, [making TikToks about it](#), even [making their own](#) and posting their replicas. I hear [Team Canada is teasing recreating the sweater](#). Do you have any news on that? I mean, are we going to see Canadian hockey players walk onto the ice in Italy with these?

We're working as hard as we can to try to get something sorted out. All of this stuff takes time and just to make sure that we have the right company making it that represents the values of the show as well, and will do justice to what we want to make along with what the fans want to have.

So it's all a process, and I hope that we can get it done in time for the Olympics. But I really have no idea.

WATCH | Fan makes her own Shane Hollander fleece:



#TheMoment a Heated Rivalry fan recreated Shane Hollander's fleece

▶ January 9 | 1:42

Sylvie Bouffard, a Heated Rivalry fan, and Hanna Puley, the show's costume designer, tell The National about the moment fans created their own version of character Shane Hollander's viral Team Canada fleece and how it represents more than just a sweater.

Why do you think that piece, in particular, has caught on?

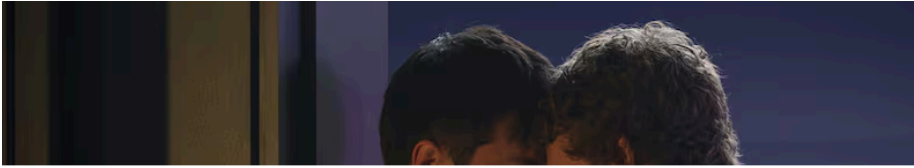
There's something actually about the simplicity of the design that makes it feel really accessible to pretty much anyone. It's really gender-neutral. It's not super fashion forward. It feels very cosy and wearable and just very Canadian.

Because it's such a simple piece I think it's easy to turn it into an iconic representation of the show where it becomes almost a symbol for the inclusivity and the care and the love that we tried to promote with this story and, I think, also serves as a bit of a calling card for all of the fans where they can feel like they're all part of something that's shared.

- [How the Ontario home of a bridal makeup artist became Shane Hollander's love nest in Heated Rivalry](#)
- [Heated Rivalry's Shane is autistic. If you didn't notice, that's the point](#)

What are you trying to do as you come up with all of those outfits?

My job as a costume designer is really to serve the story and the character's internal reality. And my approach has always been — and I think will always be — just to try to service that first.



Heated Rivalry has become a surprise hit both inside and outside Canada. (Bell Media)

When we talk about what is happening that these internal battles these queer hockey players are facing, how did you use the pieces to reflect that struggle?

The character Shane, who plays the Canadian hockey player, he kind of represents it the most because I did a very basic kind of heteronormative jock look for him. He is the boy next door. He wears very basic pieces. He's very under the radar in terms of how he presents himself. Even when he gets a stylist, the choice of suit that he wears has been done a million times before. It's all still very safe and feels very contained within a heteronormative gaze or lens, if you will.

- [Heated Rivalry gave this former hockey player a panic attack — and hope stories like his belong on the ice](#)
- [Everyone's obsessed with Heated Rivalry. Could it change how we see gay sex on screen?](#)

Is there another costume that you want our listeners to know the story behind?

Another great outfit that I think serves the interiority of the character really well is one that has come up a fair bit if anyone's been paying attention to the talk around the show. But it's a vintage Jean-Paul Gaultier button-up shirt that the Russian hockey player Ilya wears to a club.

He sees Shane across the dance floor, dancing with Shane's girlfriend, and Ilya's heart is broken in this moment where he sees this massive divide between them.

And the nice thing about this shirt, and what really spoke to me, was the fact that there's the skin of a leopard on it. So there's this very predatory cat, which in and of itself tells the message about how he perceived himself. But then the fact that it's

Popular Now in Radio

- 1 [Father, 99, and son, 80, feast on free oysters after cashing in on decades-old restaurant promise](#)
- 2 [Drunk Mom author became the 'poster girl for sobriety' — but struggled secretly with relapse](#)
- 3 [At 25, Wikipedia faces a double threat: the rise of AI and the decline of local media](#)
- 4 [IDEAS](#)
[How math and literature are unexpectedly connected](#)
- 5 [43 Canadian fiction books coming out in April to June we're excited to read](#)

just the skin, and in this moment he's powerless, I think is so evocative and metaphorical of the whole state of affairs between them.



Ilya Rozanov (Connor Storrie) rocks a vintage Jean Paul Gaultier shirt during the fourth episode of Heated Rivalry. (Sabrina Lantos/Crave)

Obviously, you want to serve the characters and the story and the feelings of those characters as the season plays out, but ... is there a part of you that, when you make a show, you think, “Oh, I hope you know, something becomes iconic?” Does that ever enter your mind?

I think we don't choose. You can never figure out what the public is going to decide is worth attention. And the fact that, in this case, it's the fleece, I never would have thought it, and I don't know that I would have changed it had I known.

At the end of the day, we just have to serve our vision, our taste, the story, and hopefully [do] some really honest storytelling in general. And if something lands, then that's a win for everyone.

Interview produced by Katie Geleff. Q&A edited for length and clarity

RELATED STORIES

- [VIDEO His real-life Heated Rivalry story wasn't full of joy](#)
- [VIDEO Gay hockey romance Heated Rivalry premieres as LGBTQ+ roles dwindle](#)
- [VIDEO 'I had zero idea': Robbie G.K. on unexpected success of Heated Rivalry](#)
- [VIDEO Why Heated Rivalry is scoring big with viewers](#)
- [Why are women so into the man-on-man romance in Heated Rivalry?](#)