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‘Heated Rivalry’ Costume Designer Talks Creating Style for Steamy Gay Hockey Drama: “It’s a Little Bit Queer Coded”

From that comfy fleece jacket gone viral online to brash Hawaiian shirts and tank tops, Hanna Puley dishes on Shane and Ilya’s outfits.

BY ETAN VLESSING JANUARY 12, 2026 4:17PM



Hudson Williams as Shane Hollander (center) wears a virally popular fleece zip-up jacket with iconic maple leaves in an episode of 'Heated Rivalry.' COURTESY OF CRAVE

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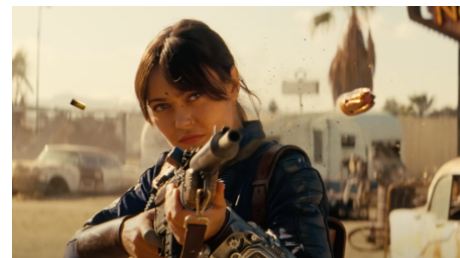


Heated Rivalry breakout stars Hudson Williams in an Armani tuxedo jacket and Connor Storrie in Saint Laurent formal wear may have wowed

Hollywood with their surprise appearance on Sunday night at the **Golden Globes**. But fans of the hit queer Canadian romancer know the closeted pro hockey players they play on the steamy Crave and **HBO Max** drama have closets with no designer threads or brands in sight. And that’s down to *Heated Rivalry* costume designer Hanna Puley, who has the job of clothing the forbidden lovers in mostly

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“I didn’t lean much into fashion really in this show. I tried to keep it really grounded, but still aspirational,” Puley tells *The Hollywood Reporter* about creating styles for Williams and Storrie. So she was caught entirely by surprise when fans of the Canadian TV phenomenon recently flooded social media with comments about one particular garment Puley created: the Team Canada Sochi Olympics fleece cardigan worn in the second episode by Hollander, the Montreal Metros star player played by Williams.



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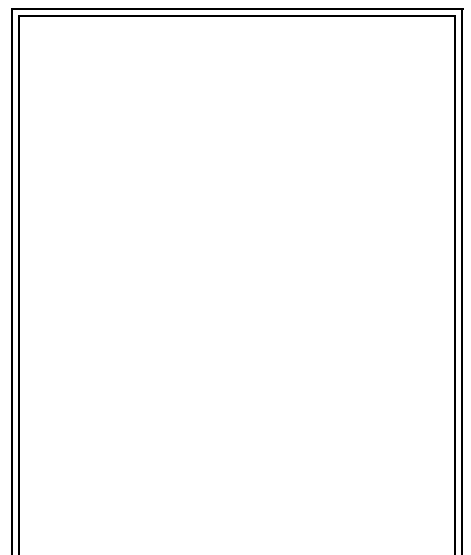
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'Heated Rivalry' stars Hudson Williams and Connor Storrie. COURTESY OF CRAVE

“I don’t know that we always get to choose what becomes iconic,” Puley says of her original wardrobe design going viral after Ottawa’s Sylvie Bouffard made her own version of the garment and posted it online. That led to social media calls and even an online petition signed by nearly 4,000 people urging Team Canada, the country’s elite hockey players headed to the 2026 Winter Olympics next month, to make Hollander’s fleece zip-up jacket part of its upcoming Winter Olympics merchandise.



Puley insists she set out to design a basic and cozy jacket for Hollander's understated, yet over-achieving character that underlines his Canadian roots. "I wanted to make something that felt wearable, something that felt comfortable, and something that would contrast with what Ilya was wearing," she adds.

That's a nod to Ilya Rozanov, the cocky Russian hockey player portrayed by Storrie, who like Shane is relentlessly competitive on ice as they battle as rivals to become the next Wayne Gretzky or Sydney Crosby. But away from the rink, Shane and Ilya as gay lovers have hearts in dramatic conflict with ice hockey's decidedly masculine vibe.

That had Puley filling Ilya's closet with decidedly colorful and often extravagant clothing like Hawaiian aloha shirts and tank tops that reflect his Slavic upbringing, but also distract and play with his hidden gay lifestyle. "This tends to be more form fitting and a little bit more ostentatious, and it's a little bit queer coded in some ways that's hidden. In Slavic culture, I don't think that's something they're trying to do. But for us it reads that way," she argues.

Of course, it helped Ilya's muscular chest and arms made Storrie a fashion muse for Puley when it came to fitting him with original designs or vintage clothing acquired in local Toronto shops. And helped by *Heated Rivalry* director Jacob Tremblay and Rachel Reid, writer of the *Game Changers* book series from which the TV series was adapted, Puley and other series creatives with their audience success have managed to buck received industry wisdom that it's impossible to turn a steamy gay hockey players romance into a global TV hit.

Connor Storrie as Russian hockey player Ilya Rozanov in 'Heated Rivalry'

COURTESY OF CRAVE

That's also down to female viewers embracing the gay characters on *Heated Rivalry*, something Puley anticipated when designing her first season wardrobe for Shane and Ilya. "I was thinking while making the show, I would love for boyfriends or husbands to sit down and be like, oh, you're watching the game. And then all of a sudden it turns into this smutty romance show that we could fool the men into watching. That was a win for me," she recalls.

Now that *Heated Rivalry* has received a second season order, Puley's ambition could yet be realized as she looks to expand her fictional closets for Shane and Ilya. But don't expect either character to wade into RuPaul's *Drag Race* territory as they continue shooting to score playing their sport and accessorize for true love during the upcoming season.

Puley hasn't seen any new scripts for *Heated Rivalry* season two, but she doesn't expect Ilya to change that much as fashion continues to reflect his inner character. "There's something to how people grow up and the way that they see themselves and how they dress that is so related to comfort and to a sense of identity, and there's reinventions of self that can happen at certain points," Puley insists.

For Shane, on the other hand, more subtle queer fashion choices may set himself apart from the straights in any upcoming season. Puley speculates, "I don't think it would be very fashion forward. It may be something that feels pretty under-stated, baby steps. Maybe he starts wearing a necklace."