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Meet the hunky actors starring in the *Heated Rivalry* musical parody

This sexy and hilarious musical is taking things up a notch by casting a hunk from *The Daily Show*.



Jay Armstrong Johnson and Troy Iwata in 'Heated Rivalry: The Unauthorized Musical Parody'./ Austin Ruffer



By Ariel Messman-Rucker

Aug 18, 2026

Fans may currently be in a [Heated Rivalry](#) desert as they wait for season 2 to come out in April 2027, but a musical parody based on the smutty hockey romance could be just the oasis they need. Now, a new hot muscular star is joining the cast and ready to ice skate his way into your heart.

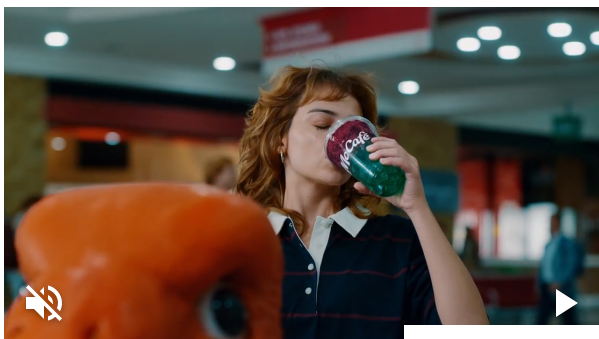
Comedian and actor Troy Iwata is stepping out from behind *The Daily Show* desk to take his place on stage as the newest Shane Hollander in *Heated Rivalry: The Unauthorized Musical Parody*, a role originated by [Jimin Moon](#).

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Iwata is set to take over the role from Aaron Alacarz on August 30 in the cheeky comedic take on the Canadian show based on Rachel Reid's [Game Changer series](#) about closeted hockey rivals Shane Hollander and Ilya Rozanov's secret years-long affair.

The play has become so popular that not only are audiences flocking to see it, but so are [celebrities](#). Susan Sarandon, [Kaden Connors](#), who played Sasha in *Heated Rivalry* season 1, and openly gay *Glee* actor Kevin McHale have all attended the hilarious show.

And it's easy to see why. First-look photos of Iwata as Shane and his co-star Jay Armstrong Johnson as Ilya show the two actors posing shirtless with hockey sticks, and they provide just as much eye candy as the stars they are parodying.



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What is ‘Heated Rivalry: The Unauthorized Musical Parody’?



Jay Armstrong Johnson holding Troy Iwata./Austin Ruffer

Directed by Alan Kliffer, *Heated Rivalry: The Unauthorized Musical Parody* is an Off-Broadway comedy that roughly follows the plot of *Heated Rivalry*'s first season and the romance novel it's based on, while also acting as meta commentary on the immense fanbase that cropped up around the popular show.

After officially opening on May 26, the delightfully unserious play has gotten rave reviews and was extended due to high demand, which is also why Iwata was needed to step into the role of Shane Hollander.

"Because with love, sometimes it comes when you least expect it... and sometimes, it comes hands-free. So, grab a Canada Dry and join us for this hot and steamy romp!" the official synopsis reads. There are also appearances from familiar characters like Rose Landry and even "Ilya's Ass." Clearly, they understand why the fandom loves the show and the books so much.

Who is Troy Iwata?



Austin Ruffer

Not only is Iwata currently a correspondent on *The Daily Show*, but like many of the actors in the musical, he has also starred in Broadway and Off-Broadway plays including *Be More Chill*, *Shrek the Musical*, *La Cage aux Folles*, and *Waitress*.

He has also done plenty of acting for the small screen in Netflix's *Too Much* and *The Perfect Couple*, Apple TV+'s *WeCrashed*, *Dash & Lily*, *New Amsterdam*, and *Ray Donovan*.

And if you're wondering how he'll stack up against the other singers on the musical's cast, don't worry because he has a lot of experience there too. Not only has he been in musicals before on stage, but he also provided vocals for *Wicked*, its sequel *Wicked: For Good*, and [Mean Girls](#).

Jay Armstrong Johnson plays the Hollander's love interest, Ilya Rozanov, in the parody. Johnson is known for major Broadway productions like *On the Town*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, and *Parade*, as well as his television role as Will Olsen on the ABC series *Quantico*. Both actors are openly gay.

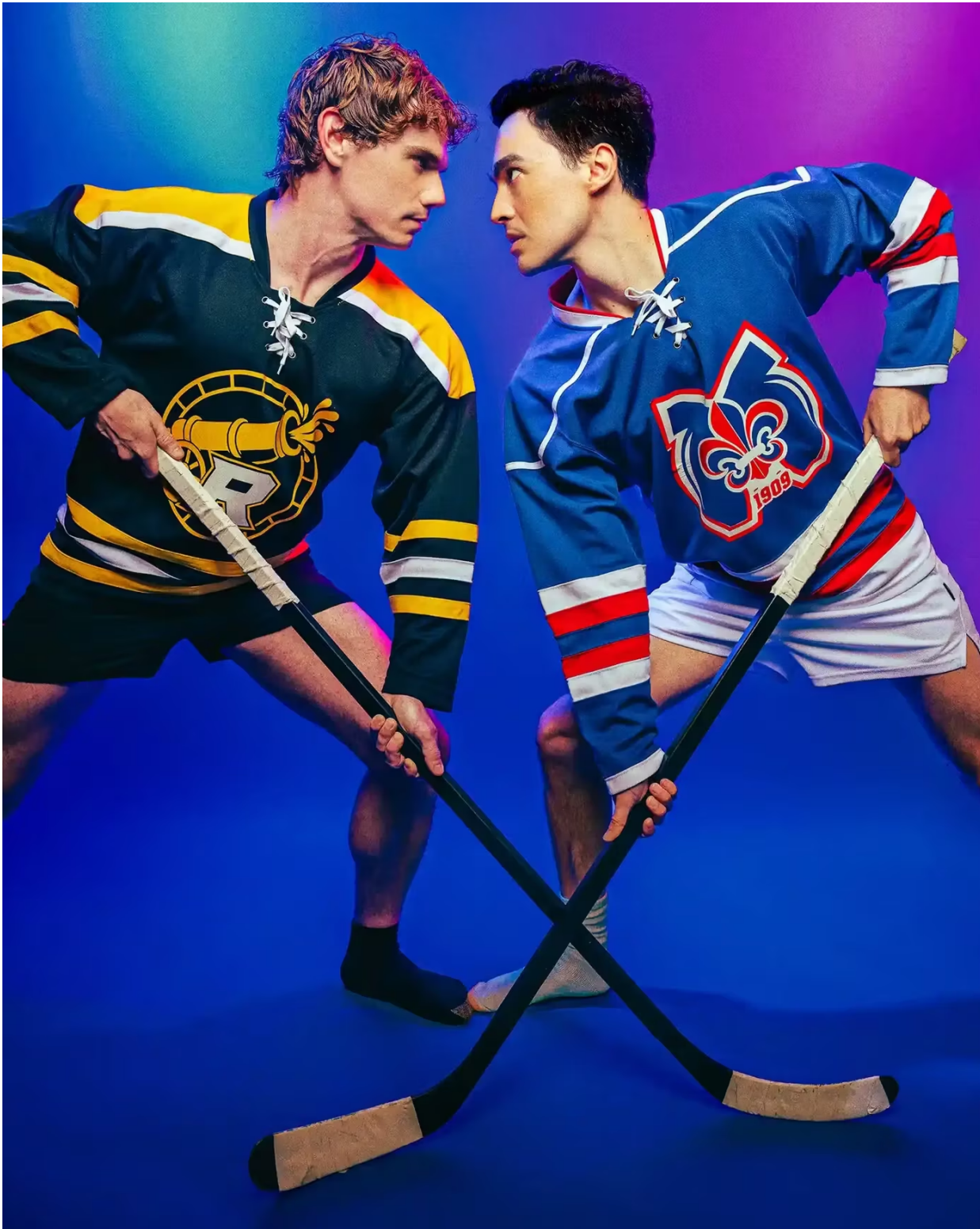


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How can you see 'Heated Rivalry: The Unauthorized Musical Parody'?



Jay Armstrong Johnson and Troy Iwata in 'Heated Rivalry: The Unauthorized Musical Parody'./Austin Ruffer

Heated Rivalry: The Unauthorized Musical Parody was initially planned as an eight-week engagement but it's been so popular — a theme across the books, TV series and now the play — that it turned into a much longer stay Off-Broadway.

The production has since been extended twice and is now scheduled to play The Culture Club in New York City through November 1.

[*Tickets for Heated Rivalry: The Unauthorized Musical Parody*](#) are now on sale through November 1. And if you can't make it to one of the shows, don't worry because the original cast album is being released on September 18.

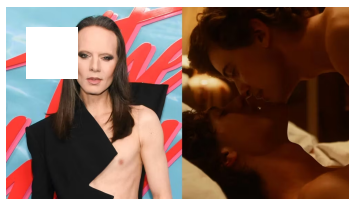
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