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TELEVISION



Opinion | 'Heated Rivalry' author Rachel Reid signs iconic pink tunnel in Hamilton during Season 2 shoot

Hit show returns to Hamilton to shoot scenes for its second season.

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The Pink Tunnel earlier this summer when the Amazon Prime detective show “Cross” shot a scene in it. The tunnel was the backdrop for a pivotal scene in Season 1 of “Heated Rivalry.” The shooting of Season 2 is underway in Hamilton and other southern Ontario communities.

Daniel Nolan

By Daniel Nolan Contributor

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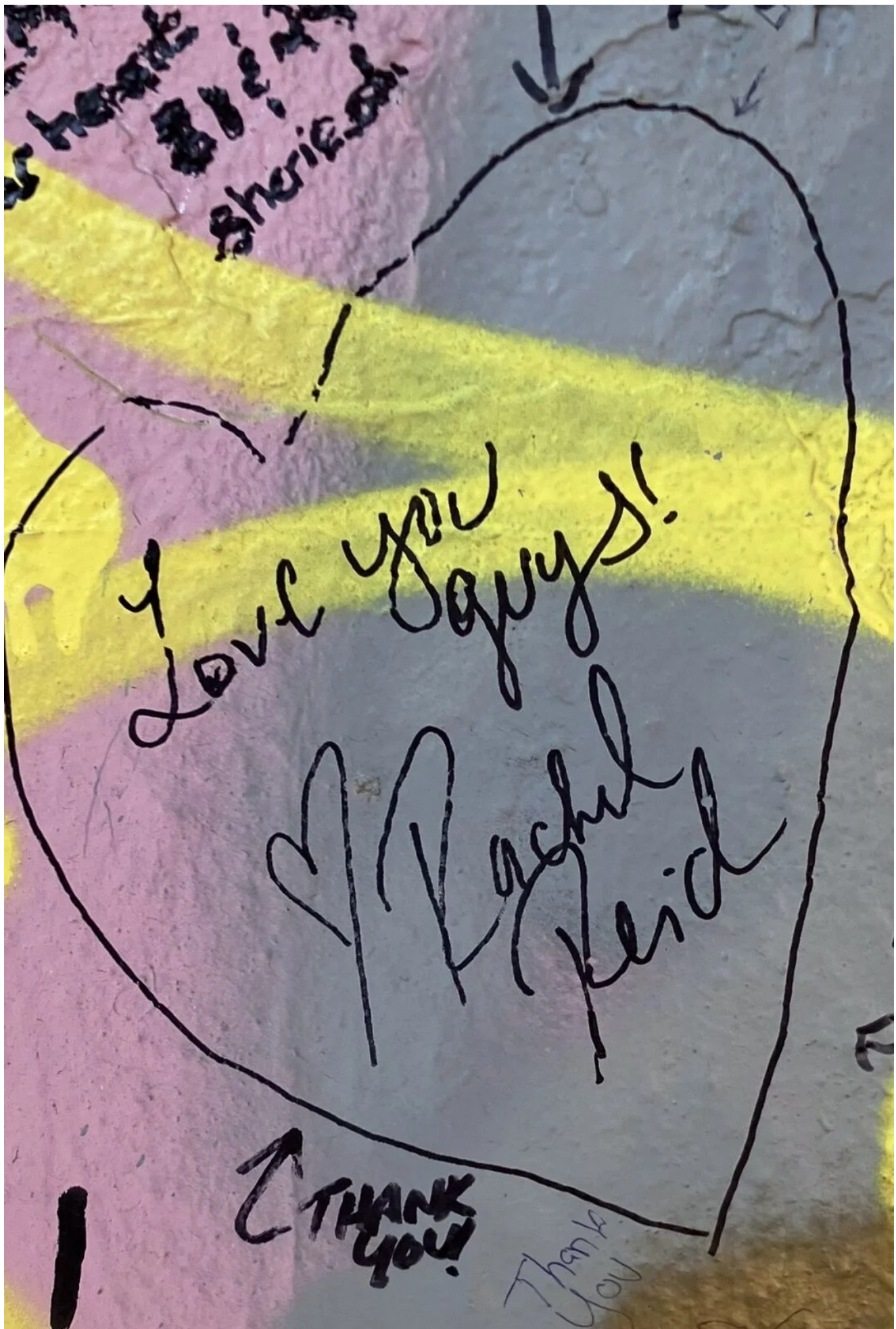
“[Heated Rivalry](#)” author Rachel Reid has left her mark on Hamilton in more ways than one.

First with her gay hockey romance book, which was turned into a hit show on Crave/HBO and filmed across Hamilton for its [first season](#) and, now, its second season. The show has created a [tourism buzz](#) in the city as fans descend on [film locations](#).

And now the Nova Scotia resident has literally left a mark in the city.

One of the locations fans visit is the painted pink pedestrian tunnel (The Pink Tunnel) under the CPKC Rail line, beside the Corktown Pub. There is a pivotal scene in Season 1 where Russian Ilya Rozanov, who plays for the Boston Raiders, pours out his heart in a telephone call from Moscow to his lover Shane Hollander of the Montreal Metros. Many fans leave messages on the walls.

Reid signed the wall while the show shot scenes at the end of August in Hamilton and Dundas. She revealed in a social media post dated Aug. 29 her message was "Love You Guys. Rachel Reid." It's contained in a heart.





"Heated Rivalry" author Rachel Reid's message on The Pink Tunnel underneath the CPKC Rail line, beside the Corktown Pub.

Daniel Nolan

Her note was among those from fans from such places as Australia, Prague, Lancaster, Pa., Washington, D.C., and San Antonio, Texas. Many are just quotes from the show, such as "Stupid Canadian Wolf Bird" but one notes "Ilya sat here" and another laments Connor Storrie, who plays Ilya, chopping off his curls for the second season.

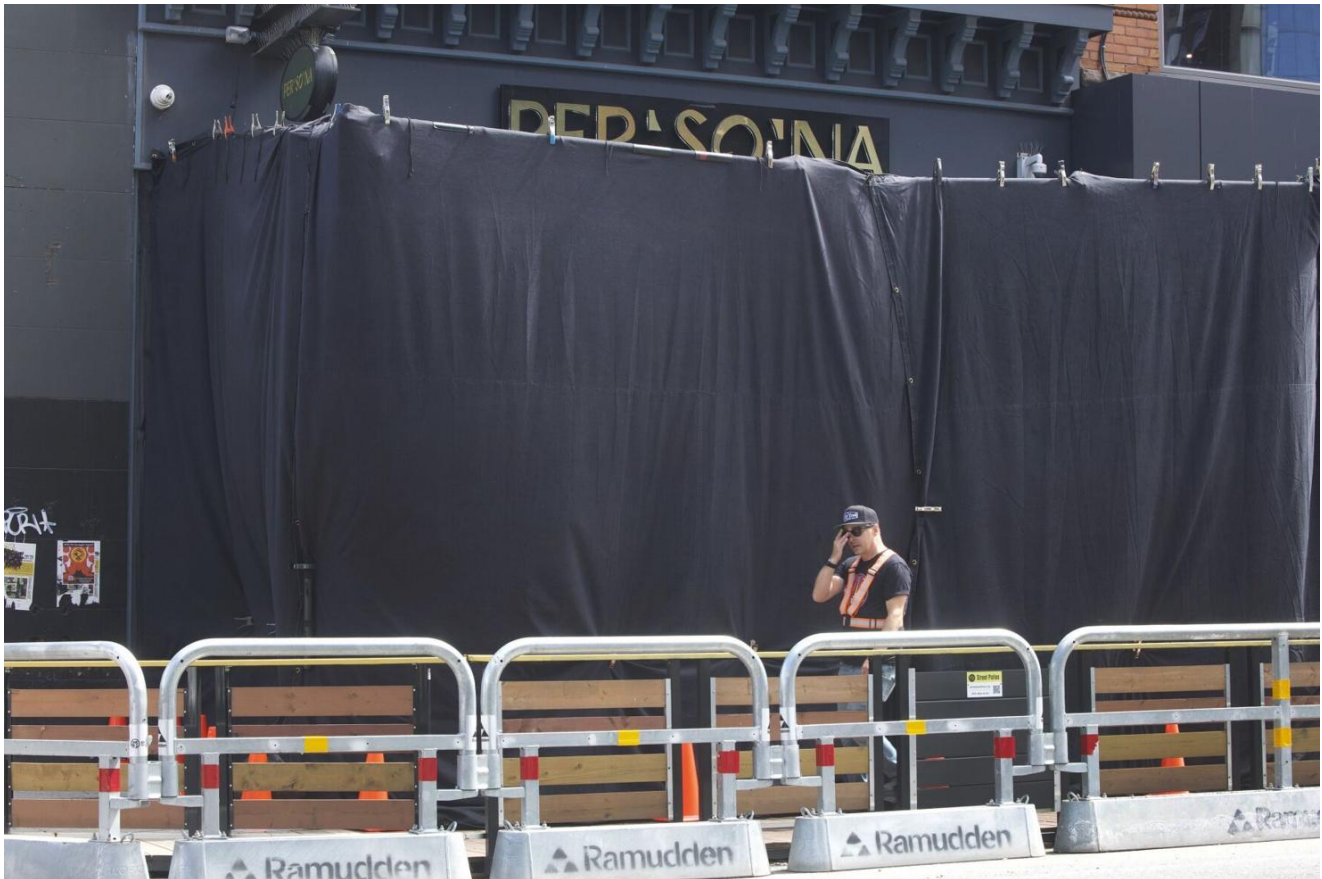


Connor Storrie takes a break from filming a scene from "Heated Rivalry" on the steps of Turner Family Funeral Home in Dundas last month.

Cathie Coward/Spectator file photo

“Heated Rivalry,” which has made breakout stars of actors [Hudson Williams](#) (Shane) and Storrie, was back filming in the city this past week. It filmed scenes at Victoria Park, Homewood Suites on Bay Street North and The Staircase Theatre on Dundurn Street North (a casting call indicates it is portraying a gay bar, plus about 50 extras showed up for the Thursday afternoon shoot). The production came back to Hamilton after shooting scenes in London, Ont., at such sites as the Canada Life Place.

In the last week of August, the show filmed at such locales as the Turner Family Funeral Home in Dundas, the J.L. Grichtmire Arena in Dundas (it filmed on the ice and in a dressing room), Persona Restaurant on James Street North, Hamilton City Hall and Theatre Aquarius. Hamilton is portraying Buffalo in some of the downtown scenes.



“Heated Rivalry” used Persona, a restaurant on James Street North, to shoot scenes for the upcoming second season. The restaurant’s front windows were draped in black curtains for the shoot.

Cathie Coward/The Hamilton Spectator

The show has recently announced new cast additions. This includes Paul Gross, playing the hockey commissioner, and Milla Jovovich as a doctor.

The second season, set to premiere in the spring of 2027, will be six episodes, but there is some speculation the show is also shooting episodes for a third season. Actor Dylan Walsh, who plays Shane's father David Hollander, mentioned in an August social media post that the show was shooting 12 episodes. He later said the post got him into trouble and that he did not have any official information into how many episodes were being filmed.

[“The Testaments,”](#) the sequel to the dystopian drama [“The Handmaid’s Tale,”](#) returned to the area to shoot scenes for its second season on the streaming service Hulu. The show filmed at a home on Victoria Street in Dundas during the first week of September. It filmed scenes at the home last year. Hulu renewed the show in May. It follows three young women as they come of age in the strict religious nation of Gilead, including the daughter of June Osborne (Elisabeth Moss), the protagonist in “The Handmaid’s Tale.”

[“The Bell Jar,”](#) the film featuring singer Billie Eilish in her first starring role, was also back in Hamilton the first week of September, filming at The Westdale Theatre. The movie has already shot scenes at McMaster University, the [Tamahaac Club](#) in Ancaster and the Mount Mary Retreat Centre in Ancaster during July and August. The movie is based on Sylvia Plath’s celebrated 1963 novel about the mental breakdown of a young woman in the 1950s.

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