



Jason Estremera's cool Breda watch, with a graphic black-and-white strap, came from a resale shop.



Bolo ties sell out at Trunk, says Estremera. He really likes this one, a winged silver Aztec figure that he purchased in Columbus. His crisp shirt and jacket are from Express.



Estremera bought this gold nail bracelet (about \$45) from Old San Juan Jewelers in the Clark-Fulton neighborhood.



Graphic buttons are popping up all over in fashion these days. Estremera promotes his favorite bands on his 1980s denim vest. The heavy silver curb chain came from the Cleveland Shop before it closed.



Estremera collects cool shoes. He loves buying Vans, like this black-and-white pair from West Side Skates in Lakewood.

## Fashion Flash

A gallery of Northeast Ohioans with great style

# Jason Estremera

33, Lakewood; director of nonprofit Hispanic Business Center; co-owner of Trunk; board member of Cleveland Public Theatre and Young Latino Network; actor.

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALLISON CAREY  
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**Style:** I am street meets office wear. I'm modern, put-together and often unexpected. I sometimes go to Saks or Nordstrom to buy one crucial piece and then build onto it with things I can buy for a quarter or a dollar elsewhere.

**Fashion icons:** Growing up I really looked up to David Bowie, Trent Reznor, Robert Smith, Johnny Rotten, all musicians who challenged the norms of how men can express themselves through fashion. When I look for inspiration, I turn to music. I also feel inspired by everyday people. There's an amazing energy to Midwest style that I find dynamic, honest and tough.

**Favorite designers:** Vivienne Westwood, Tom Ford, Dsquared2, Marc Jacobs, Jeremy Scott, Rick Owens.

**Shopping:** I go to Urban Outfitters. I love the G-Star brand carried at Brigade at Beachwood Place. I love West Side Skates in Lakewood for Vans. I collect shoes.

**About Trunk:** I love Chicago and I think that aided in the way the store feels and what it is. I did everything by hand at night after theater rehearsals. I was building the store sometimes until 2 a.m. I made all of the fixtures, I did a lot of garbage picking for cool pieces.

There isn't one image or style. Trunk started with just secondhand clothing from estate sales. I go to those on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Now [my best friend and business partner] James [Ventura] and I carry new and used men's clothing at the store. I look for the right fit and condition. We also carry new things from brands like Quicksilver, Puma and Happy Socks, and we carry items from local makers like Wright & Rede, Forest City Portage and Brutal Beard. The biggest thing is that everything needs to be affordable. Our neighborhood is largely low-income and some higher-income people moving into the Battery Park area.

We've partnered with YOU, or Youth Opportunities Unlimited, and Ohio Guidestone, a foster care program. We provide foster care kids with work experience. They get paid to be at the store. We've put four people through the program. When they're at the store, they also put together resumes and do mock interviews. Now they've been hired out to other jobs. We identify where their interests are and teach them all the functions of running a store.

## Flash Points

**Background:** I was born in Cleveland; we moved to Chicago when I was 2 years old. I got my bachelor's in textiles, apparel and merchandising from Northern Illinois University. My original journey was to work in fashion. I had a corporate position with Kohl's and then went into banking with JPMorgan Chase. I moved back to Cleveland seven years ago while still in banking. I stayed with banking for a few years and got my MBA from Cleveland State University. Then I was recruited by the Hispanic Business Center. We work with anyone, and we can do most of our services in Spanish. We work with folks who are starting or growing their businesses. That's my 9-to-5 job.

**Theater:** My personality is very theatrical! I was in "Johanna: Facing Forward" [at Cleveland Public Theatre] It was the story of Johanna Orozco, the Cleveland teen who survived a gunshot to her face by her ex-boyfriend [a story chronicled in The Plain Dealer]. I played Juan Ruiz, the ex-boyfriend.



Jason Estremera likes his looks to be a little unexpected. He found these cool gray overalls (\$60) and baggy mauve T-shirt (\$20) at Urban Outfitters; his chocolate-brown overcoat (\$9) and rust-colored suede boots are from secondhand stores.

Go to [cleveland.com/fashion-flash](http://cleveland.com/fashion-flash) to view a gallery of photos and to nominate someone for this feature.

## Clotheslines

# Bulletproof wear is available, but pricey

MARYLOU LUTHER  
Special to The Plain Dealer

**Dear Marylou:** With terrorists "everywhere" and suicidal bombings rampant, why don't designers offer protective clothing?

— W.M., New York, New York

**Dear W.M.:** For most designers, protective clothing means long-sleeved dresses, high necklines, caftans and bomber jackets that don't shield anyone from bombs or bullets.

Real protective clothes, as in bulletproof T-shirts, vests and jackets, are available online, but so far the only body armor designers show are embroidered shields on tops and jackets — shields that look like the ones worn by dueling knights of yore. One reason for designer reluctance to pursue real bulletproof clothing? The cost of the technology and workmanship results in T-shirts that sell for \$2,023 and

blazers for \$4,353.50 — the prices at Munich, Germany-based miguelcaballero-fashion.com, where all items are handmade and come with a five-year warranty.

Bulletproof clothing is also available at Israel-catalog.com, where prices range from protective vests at \$395 to bullet- and stab-proof vests at \$579. Go to the website to request a catalog of bulletproof items.

**Dear Marylou:** Every time I wear a suit or sport coat and tie to work, everyone asks me if I'm interviewing for a new job. Should I continue to flout the general dress-down look in my office or go with the casual aka athleisure normcore?

— J.S., Baltimore, Maryland

**Dear J.S.:** The best advice I heard back in the day is: If you want to be accepted at work, wear what the boss wears. So what does your boss wear?

If he or she believes in the cause of casual, you're probably better off to shed your suits and ties in favor of athletic jackets, shirt jackets, military jackets, polo shirts and sweaters. If you still want to wear your suits and ties, tell your inquisitors you're going to lunch at a private club that requires jackets and ties.

**Dear Marylou:** We all read about cheap knockoffs of designer clothes and accessories, but do designers ever knock off cheapies?

— S.H.O., Newark, New Jersey

**Dear S.H.O.:** Yes, beginning with jeans and T-shirts. The list now includes sweats, hoodies, drop-crotch pants, overalls, aloha shirts, coveralls aka jumpsuits, moto jackets and more.

**Dear Marylou:** What piece of clothing do you see as the best cost-per-wear item?

— R.L., Pacific Palisades, California

**Dear R.L.:** The T-shirt. It can be worn by itself in the summer, layered under a jacket in the fall and worn as a thermal lining under wool sweaters in the winter. It can go to the gym. It can be bulletproofed (see question above). It can be printed with graphics, landscapes, graffiti, hearts, flowers, etc. It can be sequined or Lurexed for evening. And you can wear it to bed.

Have a fashion question? Send it to: Clotheslines, Fashion Department, The Plain Dealer, 1660 West Second St., Suite 200, Cleveland, OH 44113.

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