

= Grey 's Anatomy (season 6) =

The sixth season of the American television medical drama Grey 's Anatomy , commenced airing on the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) in the United States on September 24 , 2009 , and concluded on May 20 , 2010 . The season was produced by ABC Studios , in association with ShondaLand Production Company and The Mark Gordon Company ; the showrunner being Shonda Rhimes . Actors Ellen Pompeo , Sandra Oh , Katherine Heigl , and Justin Chambers reprised their roles as surgical residents Meredith Grey , Cristina Yang , Izzie Stevens , and Alex Karev , respectively . Heigl was released from her contract in the middle of the season , while T.R. Knight did not appear as George O 'Malley , because Knight was released from his contract at the conclusion of season five . Main cast members Patrick Dempsey , Chandra Wilson , James Pickens , Jr . , Sara Ramirez , Eric Dane , Chyler Leigh , and Kevin McKidd also returned , while previous recurring star Jessica Capshaw was promoted to a series regular , and Kim Raver was given star billing after the commencement of the season .

The season follows the story of surgical interns , residents and their competent mentors , as they experience the difficulties of the competitive careers they have chosen . It is set in the surgical wing of the fictional Seattle Grace Hospital , located in Seattle , Washington . A major storyline of the season is the characters adapting to change , as their beloved co @-@ worker Stevens departed following the breakdown of her marriage , O 'Malley died in the season premiere ? following his being dragged by a bus , and new cardiothoracic surgeon Teddy Altman is given employment at the hospital . Further storylines include Shepherd being promoted to chief of surgery , Seattle Grace Hospital merging with the neighboring Mercy West ? introducing several new doctors , and several physicians lives being placed into danger ? when a grieving deceased patient 's husband embarks on a shooting spree at the hospital , seeking revenge for his wife 's death .

The series ended its sixth season with 13 @.@ 26 million viewers , ranking # 17 in terms of ratings , the lowest the series had ever ranked up to then . The season received mixed critical feedback , with the season 's premiere and finale given heavier critical acclaim , in contrast to the middle . The season was one of the least acclaimed in terms of awards and nominations , being the show 's only season not to warrant a Primetime Emmy nomination . Despite the negative aspects of ratings and awards , the season managed to receive a spot on Movieline 's top ten list . Buena Vista released the season onto a DVD box @-@ set , being made available to regions 1 and 2 .

= = Cast = =

The sixth season had thirteen roles receiving star billing , with twelve of them returning from the previous season , one of whom previously in a recurring guest capacity . The regulars portray the surgeons from the fictional Seattle Grace Hospital as new rivalries and romantic relationships begin to develop after the hospital 's merger with Mercy West . Meredith Grey , a surgical resident and the protagonist of the series , is portrayed by Ellen Pompeo . Fellow residents Cristina Yang , Izzie Stevens and Alex Karev are portrayed by Sandra Oh , Katherine Heigl and Justin Chambers , respectively . Attending general surgeon Miranda Bailey was portrayed by Chandra Wilson whose main storylines throughout the season focus on her divorce and the development of new romantic relationships . Seattle Grace Hospital 's Chief of Surgery and general surgeon Richard Webber was portrayed by James Pickens , Jr . , who returns to alcoholism after being sober for twenty years .

Sara Ramirez acted as bisexual orthopedic surgeon Callie Torres , Eric Dane played womanizer plastic surgeon Mark Sloan , Kevin McKidd continued his portrayal of trauma surgeon Owen Hunt , while Patrick Dempsey acted as chief of neurosurgery Derek Shepherd . Meredith 's half @-@ sister and second @-@ year surgical resident Lexie Grey was portrayed by Chyler Leigh . After having previously appeared in a multi @-@ episode arc in a guest star capacity in the show 's fifth season , Jessica Capshaw began receiving star billing in the season 's premiere episode in the role of attending pediatric surgeon Arizona Robbins , love interest to Callie Torres . The ninth episode of the season marked the introduction of the new chief of cardiothoracic surgery Teddy Altman , portrayed by Kim Raver , whose mysterious romantic past with Owen Hunt develops into one of the

season 's main stories . Starting with the nineteenth episode of the season , Raver began receiving star billing .

The sixth season introduces several new recurring characters who start to develop progressive and expansive storylines throughout the season . Mercy West surgical residents Reed Adamson , Charles Percy , April Kepner and Jackson Avery were portrayed by Nora Zehetner , Robert Baker , Sarah Drew and Jesse Williams , respectively . Jason George portrayed Miranda Bailey 's love interest , anesthesiologist Ben Warren . Thatcher Grey (Jeff Perry) and Sloan Riley (Leven Rambin) have been part of the season 's main story arcs , while numerous episodic characters have made guest appearances : Sara Gilbert as Kim Allen , Demi Lovato as Haley , Marion Ross as Betty , Mandy Moore as Mary Portman , Ryan Devlin as Bill Portman , Nick Purcell as Doug , Michael O 'Neill as Gary Clark , Danielle Panabaker as Kelsey , Adrienne Barbeau as Jodie Crawley , Héctor Elizondo as Mr. Torres , Amy Madigan as Dr. Wyatt , and Missi Pyle as Jasmine . Former series regular Kate Walsh returned to the series as a special guest star , portraying neonatal surgeon and obstetrician @-@ gynecologist Addison Montgomery .

= = Production = =

The season was produced by Touchstone Television ABC Studios , The Mark Gordon Company , Shondaland and was distributed by Buena Vista International , Inc . . The executive producers were creator Shonda Rhimes , Betsy Beers , Mark Gordon , Krista Vernoff , Rob Corn , Mark Wilding , Joan Rater and James D. Parriott . The regular directors were Shonda Rhimes , Krista Vernoff , Stacy McKee , William Harper , Debora Cahn , Allan Heinberg and Peter Nowalk . At the conclusion of season five , T.R. Knight was released from his contract , following a disagreement with Rhimes . When asked to make a ' flashback ' appearance in season six , Knight declined . Heigl 's appearances in the season were sporadic , seeing Stevens depart and return twice . Although she was scheduled to appear in the final five episodes of the season , Heigl requested that she be released from her contract 18 months early , and made her final appearance on January 21 , 2010 . Heigl explained that she wanted to spend more time with her family , and did not think it would be respectful to Grey 's Anatomy viewers to have Izzie return and depart yet again . The season 's two @-@ hour opener showed the doctors of Seattle Grace Hospital , grieving the loss of their deceased friend , O 'Malley . The special 's writer , Vernoff , commented : " It 's heartbreaking . I fell in love with George , like many of you did , in season one . "

The ninth episode of the season , " New History " , saw the arrival of Altman , which ended up forming a love triangle between her , Hunt , and Yang . Raver commented on this : " She was in Iraq with Owen . She 's a cardiac surgeon . She 's really good at what she does . There 'll be some interesting stuff between Teddy , Cristina , and Owen . " The episode 's writer , Heinberg , offered his insight :

" Teddy 's arrival at Seattle Grace unleashes all manner of complications for Owen , Cristina , and herself . Cristina 's immediately suspicious that Owen and Teddy were more than friends during their time together in Iraq . Teddy confesses to Owen that she apparently misread their mutual history , and walks away from him , mortified . And Owen 's left haunted by Teddy 's confession , now forced to re @-@ examine his own history -- and his feelings for both Teddy and Cristina .

" I Like You So Much Better When You 're Naked " saw the departure of Stevens , following the breakdown of her marriage with Karev . Series ' writer Joan Rater commented on this : " Izzie getting the clean scan back gives Alex the freedom to leave . Because he never would have left her when she was sick , he 's a good guy . And I 'm not saying that Alex ever consciously thought , I can 't leave her while she 's sick , but now that she 's not , now that she seems like she 's going to get better , it just comes to him . He deserves more . He 's a good guy and he deserves more . But loving Izzie showed him that he can be good , is good . So it was a little gift . And when he tells Izzie he 's done , he 's not bitter or angry , he 's just done . " The writing of the two @-@ part season six finale , caused struggle to Rhimes . She elaborated on this :

= = Reception = =

Grey 's Anatomy 's sixth season opened up to 17 @.@ 04 million viewers with a 6 @.@ 7 / 17 Nielsen rating / share in the 18 ? 49 demographic . Although the rating was a 1 % decrease from season five 's opener , it managed to rank first for its time @-@ slot and the entire night , in terms of both ratings and viewership , and served as the season 's most viewed episode . " Sympathy for the Parents " was the season 's least viewed episode , and up to that point , the series ' as well , garnering only 9 @.@ 87 million viewers . The season 's finale garnered 16 @.@ 13 million viewers , and received a 6 @.@ 2 / 18 rating , ranking first for its time @-@ slot and the entire night , in terms of both ratings and viewership . Although the finale was a success for the night , it was a 1 % decrease from season five 's finale , but served as the season 's second most viewed episode . Overall , the season ranked at # 17 for the year , and had an average of 13 @.@ 26 million viewers , a 5 % decrease from the previous season 's ranking .

The season received mixed reviews among television critics . Speaking of the premiere , Glenn Diaz of BuddyTV noted that the special foreshadowed a " very dark " season , adding : " The talk between George 's mom and one of the surgeons [Torres] proved to be one of the more heart @-@ breaking scenes in an episode that in itself is heartbreaking enough . " In contrast , Kelly West of TV Blend was critical of the premiere , writing : " I don 't think based on the first episode that we can say that Grey 's is headed in a new direction , nor do I think the writers are making much of an effort to bring the series back to the greatness that was its earlier seasons . That said , this is Grey 's Anatomy and with that comes the usual drama , sex , love and whacky medical mysteries thrown in the mix to keep things moving . If that 's what you 're looking for , I think you 'll enjoy the season premiere just fine . " Capshaw 's performance this season was praised , with The TV Addict calling her " immensely likeable " . Although " Sympathy for the Parents " was the least viewed episode , TV Fanatic called the episode " touching " , praising Chambers ' performance . TV Fanatic 's reaction to the season was fairly mixed , with Steve Marsi saying that Grey 's Anatomy was facing an identity crisis after viewing " Give Peace a Chance " . He said that : " Still popular but lacking its past magic , it 's trying to decide what to become . All we can say is that if it becomes what we saw 12 hours ago , we are all for it . Last week saw the doctors plunging into ER @-@ style chaos with 12 different doctors giving 12 different accounts of one case . Last night , we saw something else equally unusual . " He praised Patrick Dempsey 's performance , saying : " Again , it was a single case that took up the entire hour , but instead of 12 doctors ' version of events , the focus was largely on just one , and the best one : Dr. Derek Shepherd . Patrick Dempsey 's McDreamy character may be eye candy , but he 's got substance . Last night 's episode proved that in spades , and was one of the series ' best in some time . "

The season 's finale Death And All His Friends was highly praised . Marsi gave the episode five stars , and expressed that it may have been the best episode of the series , adding : " The writing and acting were absolutely stellar , and may lead to many Emmy nominations , but even more impressively , despite a killing spree , it remained distinctly Grey 's . Some of the back @-@ and @-@ forths between the characters were truly memorable , and some of the developments so heartbreaking that we don 't even know where to begin now . Seriously , the Season 6 finale left us laying awake afterward thinking about everything , a feeling we haven 't had from Grey 's in years and rarely achieved by any program . " John Kubicek of BuddyTV also noted that the finale was the best episode , adding : " [It was] two of the best hours of television all year . It was certainly the best Grey 's Anatomy has ever been , which is saying a lot since I 'd written the show off for the past few years . No show does a big traumatic event like Grey 's Anatomy , and the shooter gave the show license for heightened drama with five major characters being shot over the two hours . It was emotional , expertly paced and had me in tears for most of the finale . " Entertainment Weekly wrote , " At any rate , now you can at least see where it all began . And while you 're still pondering how Grey 's can still be so damn good sometimes , "

The season was one of the least acclaimed of the series , in terms of awards and nominations . Despite not being nominated for a Primetime Emmy , the show received two Creative Arts Emmy Awards : Outstanding Prosthetic Makeup For A Series , Miniseries , Movie Or A Special for " How Insensitive " and Outstanding Makeup For A Single @-@ Camera Series (Non @-@ Prosthetic) for

" Suicide is Painless " . The season also received a nomination for Outstanding Drama Series at the GLAAD Media Awards . Wilson was awarded the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Directing in a Dramatic Series for her directing in " Give Peace a Chance " . The season also ranked at # 10 on Movieline 's top ten list .

= = Episodes = =

The number in the " No. in series " column refers to the episode 's number within the overall series , whereas the number in the " No. in season " column refers to the episode 's number within this particular season . " U.S. viewers in millions " refers to the number of Americans in millions who watched the episodes live . The sixth season 's episodes are altogether 1032 minutes in length .

= = Ratings = =

= = = Live + SD ratings = = =

= = DVD Release = =