

= Lauren Zizes =

Lauren Zizes / ˈzɑːsiːz / is a recurring fictional character from the Fox musical comedy @-@ drama series , Glee . The character is portrayed by actress Ashley Fink , and has appeared in Glee since the season one episode " Wheels " , first broadcast on November 11 , 2009 . Lauren was developed by Glee creators Ryan Murphy , Brad Falchuk , and Ian Brennan . She is a member of New Directions , the glee club at the fictional William McKinley High School in Lima , Ohio , where the show is set . Her storylines have seen her interact with other members of the glee club and form a relationship with Noah Puckerman ( Mark Salling ) . Lauren is also the president of the AV club , and a member of the school 's wrestling team . She joins the glee club in the show 's second season , putting her in close contact with some of the shows main characters .

Following the character 's significantly expanded role in the second season , Fink 's portrayal has received predominantly positive reviews . Rosie O 'Donnell criticized the character , saying that Fink was unattractive and therefore a bad representation of fat people , but later apologized for these remarks . Lauren made her solo musical debut in the second season , performing The Waitresses ' " I Know What Boys Like " in the episode " Comeback " . The song was well received by critics , and was released as a single , available for download ; it was subsequently included on the EP released in September 2011 through the Target chain , Glee : The Music , Dance Party . Although Lauren also appears in ensemble musical performances , Fink is not credited as a vocalist on the series ' soundtrack albums . Lauren 's role was reduced in the beginning of the third season , and she made a final , non @-@ speaking appearance in the third episode , " Asian F " . After this , it was confirmed she would appear once again in Glee and doing so in the fourth season 's episode " Sadie Hawkins " , which premiered on 24 January 2013 . After this , she made numerous appearances in flashbacks before appearing one final time in the series finale , " Dreams Come True " , during the performance of OneRepublic 's " I Lived " by the glee club 's alumni .

= = Storylines = =

Throughout the first season of Glee , Lauren makes numerous guest appearances . She is a member of the McKinley High wrestling team , as well as president of the AV club . She first appears in the episode " Wheels " , where she unsuccessfully tries out for a spot on the cheerleading team . She reappears in " Hell @-@ O " , when cheerleading coach Sue Sylvester assembles a group of unpopular , lonely students , whom she dubs the " Old Maid 's Club " . Lauren later helps glee club co @-@ captain Rachel Berry ( Lea Michele ) to rig hidden microphones in the choir room to prove that the rest of the glee club are not pulling their weight in rehearsals . She is later seen as the leader of a group of goths who idolize Twilight character Edward Cullen .

Lauren 's role becomes more prominent in the second season . Glee club member Puck ( Mark Salling ) asks her to join New Directions so they will have enough members to qualify for a show choir competition . Lauren accepts , on the condition that she gets seven minutes in heaven with him , though it is later revealed that she became bored with Puck 's kissing style after three minutes . In the Valentine 's Day @-@ themed episode " Silly Love Song " , Puck reveals that he has fallen in love with Lauren , and serenades her with Queen 's " Fat Bottomed Girls " . She finds his song choice insulting and stands him up on a pre @-@ Valentine 's date , but eventually agrees to spend Valentine 's Day with him as friends . Lauren makes her solo debut in the following episode , where she performs a rendition of " I Know What Boys Like . " Puck helps her , by advising her to picture the other members in their underwear , which she does in her timid @-@ turned @-@ confident performance . In the episode , " Sexy " , Lauren enlists Puck to make a sex tape with her , as she believes the publicity will make her a star , but they give up the idea when they learn it would constitute child pornography , as both are underage .

In " Born This Way " , Lauren reveals to Puck that she 'd been a child beauty queen , " Miss Tiara Toddler " , before she gained weight and became ineligible ; Puck tells her he will run a campaign for her to become prom queen , and be her king . When Quinn , who is prom queen frontrunner , sees Lauren putting up posters for her own candidacy , she confronts Lauren , and the ensuing

encounter is heated . Lauren decides to dig up dirt on Quinn as a campaign tactic , and aided by Puck , discovers that Quinn used to be overweight and unpopular before slimming down and transferring to McKinley ; Lauren then plasters the school with pictures of the old Quinn , humiliating her . But the tactic backfires , making Quinn more popular , and hurting Lauren 's candidacy . Lauren apologizes to Quinn , Quinn says she respects Lauren , and the two reach an understanding . Neither Lauren nor Puck win the race for prom queen and king , but they remain a couple ; they fly with the rest of New Directions to the nationals competition in New York City , where the glee club comes in twelfth out of fifty teams . This defeat leads Lauren to quit the glee club at the beginning of the third season and break up with Puck .

= = Development = =

= = = Casting and creation = = =

Lauren is portrayed by actress Ashley Fink . She made routine guest appearances throughout the first season , and became a member of the McKinley High glee club in the episode " Special Education " . Upon receiving the script in which Lauren joins the club , Fink initially reacted with disbelief . She commented , " I didn 't quite believe it at first , I thought I was getting Punk 'd . " She said that being cast in Glee makes her feel like " the luckiest girl in the world " . Fink 's favorite element of Glee is how series creator Ryan Murphy manages to take the underdogs and make them shine . She said , " In life , there 's so much diversity , and it 's not necessarily represented on television . I think Glee is one of the few shows that actually displays the diversity and it ? s just so inspirational . " When asked about her casting process , Fink said :

I auditioned for the pilot and they brought me in a bunch , which was exciting for me because they kept bringing me in . Eventually I got the Lauren Zizes part ! They had me sing for the pilot and it was very on the fly because Glee works very quickly . The first episode I appeared in I was the wrestler and I was trying out for cheerleading . Then they asked me to come out and sing for Ryan Murphy and the director and I sang and they were like , " Okay , great ! " We shot it and then I just kept coming back .

Fink does not know how long her character will be featured on Glee . When asked about what she likes about her character , Fink said : " I think what I love about Lauren is she 's so strong and so confident and she knows what she wants and I feel very blessed to play a role model for people who have ever felt other or different . I remember how I used to feel watching TV and seeing Sara Rue on Popular because she was an inspiration to me . It 's funny because what I love about Lauren is that she 's unapologetic and she 's confident and she 's making Puck work for it and she 's not just looking for a roll in the hay . I think that they are very sweet together , there is this vulnerability when they are both such bad asses and you put them together and I think there is something really special there . What I appreciate about Lauren is that she 's like I don 't need to give it to you , you 're going to work for it , and I think that 's a great message to send to young girls . I think that he is smitten and she is probably a little smitten too but I think she has enough self esteem not to give everything up for the charming cute boy that 's kind of after her . " Kevin Fallon , a writer for The Atlantic , reacted favorably to the casting of Fink : " Glee hit the trifecta this year with its three major cast additions . First there were Darren Criss ? who 's exploded with popularity ? and Chord Overstreet . Now there 's Ashley Fink 's Lauren . And while the tough @-@ only @-@ on @-@ the @-@ outside Lauren can deliciously out @-@ sass Santana Lopez , it 's her straight @-@ talking that really has me sold . "

= = = Characterization = = =

In her first episode , it is revealed that Lauren is a member of William McKinley High 's wrestling team . TV Squad has said that " Lauren can deliver a zinger with the bite of Sue Sylvester and the humor of our beloved Brittany Pierce . " Seth Abramovitch of TV.com expressed his dissatisfaction

with her attitude : " Zizes isn 't just a heavy , supremely confident girl . She 's also extremely violent . She ? s on the wrestling team , speaks regularly of injuring Puck , and , in one hallway smackdown against the jealous Santana Lopez , proved she was a lot more than just bark . And you did catch that part about Zizes wanting to be famous for famous ' sake , right ? That she was willing to give herself up to Puck purely in pursuit of a reality show and fragrance line ? There ? s a word for people who do things like that in the real world : It 's ' asshole ' . " He went on to add : " Zizes has been hailed by feminists groups ( well , by Bust Magazine ) as a new kind of plus @-@ sized heroine ? an obese female role model who for once doesn 't hate herself . On the contrary , she thinks she 's the bee 's knees . When ' Puck serenaded her with Queen 's " Fat @-@ Bottomed Girls , " she rebuffed him , saying , ' I look like America looks , and just like America , I need more than just a song to get my juices flowing ' . "

Journalist James Poniewozik of Time magazine commented of the episode " Silly Love Songs " : " It was the kind of twist Glee can sell , partly because of the way the characters are established ( in retrospect , you can see how a really strong woman who rejects him is a turn @-@ on for Puck ) and because of how well its cast ( Ashley Fink has been killing it as Lauren , and sells her confidence and abrasiveness in a way that makes her a person , not an engineered positive @-@ body @-@ image model ) . And while Glee sometimes stretches to pick on @-@ the @-@ nose song choices , " Fat Bottomed Girls " was just a perfect choice and performance ? not just on topic but actually in Puck 's musical wheelhouse . "

= = = Relationships = = =

Over the course of Glee 's second season , Lauren forms a relationship with local bad boy and football star Noah Puckerman . As the season progresses , Lauren and Puck 's relationship continues to grow stronger . Their relationship begins to form in the ninth episode of the second season titled " Special Education " . After Puck attempts to recruit new members for the William McKinley High School glee club , members of the football team lock him in a port @-@ a @-@ potty . After being discovered by Lauren , he convinces her to join New Directions , despite her belief that show choir is stupid . Ashley Fink said of their relationship : " I think Ryan Murphy has a master plan and we 're all kind of along for the ride . I know what you mean , but I wouldn 't count us out just yet on that front . We all have to laugh at ourselves but it 's going somewhere . Ultimately , it comes down to whether audiences will buy a relationship between Puck and Lauren . I think there 's a really hilarious chemistry between Puck and Lauren . I think he 's a badass , she 's a badass . I don 't know , I think they 're funny together . There 's something about the two of them together that I like , so I hope it 's not outside the realm of possibility . "

Television critics have responded positively to the pairing . Robert Canning of IGN said of the episode " Silly Love Songs " : " The absolute best part of " Silly Love Songs " was Puckerman 's unexpected longing for Lauren Zizes . Actress Ashley Fink has been fantastic in her small role , delivering great one @-@ liners with ease . She was equally strong in this , the first episode to truly give Lauren a larger role and fill out her character more . Heck , it was nice to even see her smile a few times . The casting on Glee has either been very smart or very lucky since so many background characters have shined as they 've been given bigger parts . The Lauren and Puck pairing came with a lot of laughs , but just as much heart . Puck singing Queen 's " Fat Bottomed Girls , " induced a chuckle at first , then some toe tapping . But it was Lauren 's reaction that truly made the moment : ' That 's the first song you 've sung to me and it made me feel like crap . ' I can 't decide if I want to root for this couple , but I certainly know I 'm going to be rooting for Lauren . " Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club commented : " For me , the episode 's highlight was the very sweet , funny courtship between Puck and Lauren . This may be because the writers have trouble writing for a self @-@ professed bad boy , even though his escapades are straight out of Archie comics and not actually all that ? bad ? at all . But it ? s always fun to watch Salling sing , and it ? s always fun to watch him be smitten . Fink ends up being a good match for him , chemistry @-@ wise , as she projects a confidence and certainty that makes it immediately obvious just what Puck sees in Lauren . The storyline also played out like both characters had something approaching real feelings . " In the

following episode , VanDerWerff found her relationship with Puck " a lot less assured " than before , but Entertainment Weekly 's Sandra Gonzalez deemed their scenes " as endearing as they are unrealistic " , and E ! Online 's Jenna Mullins wrote that " the ice around [ her ] heart melted just a bit when Puck mouthed Lauren that little bit of encouragement at the start of her solo . "

= = Reception = =

Lauren has received mostly positive reviews from television critics . Canning praised Fink 's performance in the episode " Silly Love Songs " , as well as Lauren 's dialog . Lisa Respers France of CNN commented that she is beginning to really like Lauren , noting : " for me Lauren represents how Ryan Murphy is able to take the concept of the outcast , flip it on its ear and shove it back in our faces with a side order of fabulousness . " Reiter felt that in " Comeback " , new characters Lauren and Sam " managed to shine " .

Rosie O 'Donnell reacted negatively to Fink 's casting and first solo musical performance . In an interview with Access Hollywood , she deemed her rendition of " I Know What Boys Like " underwhelming , and stated that it failed to meet her expectations . She called Lauren " so unlikable " , " and questioned why the producers had not cast a " pretty heavy girl " . Fink brushed off O 'Donnell 's comments . O 'Donnell later apologized , and said , " Oh , Ashley ? I love your swagger ? your acting ? your face ? your heart ? as a famous fat person ? I am often asked about the issue ? I love the story line ? I love the show ? and if in any way something I said hurt you ? I apologize MORE . You are so talented , and I can 't wait to hear you belt it ? as I know you can ? the often misquoted Rosie . " Fink was defended by Justin Thompson of Socialite Life , who commented : " I 've loved her character and how they 've developed her and she 's just become a source of great comedy ? is that because she 's full @-@ figured ? No . Is it because her character is well @-@ written ? Yes . It ? s kind of sad to see Rosie lambaste what the show is trying to do . "

Raymund Flandez of The Wall Street Journal called Lauren 's performance of " I Know What Boys Like " the highlight of " Comeback " . Gonzalez was less than enthused . She graded it " C ? " , after " deductions " , and said the only reason it started with a " C " was due to it being interspersed with shots of the cast in their underwear . Patrick Burns of The Atlantic was also unimpressed , and questioned Lauren 's spot in the glee club , commenting " her brazen character never ceases to please , but it 's just not believable that she would join the glee club if she cannot sing . "