

= Song Beneath the Song =

" Song Beneath the Song " also known as Grey 's Anatomy : The Music Event , is the eighteenth episode of the seventh season of the American television medical drama Grey 's Anatomy , and the one @-@ hundred forty @-@ fourth episode overall . It was named after a song by American singer Maria Taylor . Written by series creator Shonda Rhimes and directed by Tony Phelan , it premiered on ABC in the United States on March 31 , 2011 . It is the series 's first musical episode , and features the cast performing songs previously featured within the program . It is accompanied by a soundtrack album , titled Grey 's Anatomy : The Music Event , also released on March 31 , 2011 .

The episode revolves around Callie Torres (Sara Ramirez) and Arizona Robbins (Jessica Capshaw) , just after they are involved in a vehicular collision . Various songs are performed by the cast members , as they attempt to save the life of Torres . Rhimes originally idealized the episode at the conception of the drama , while the show remained untitled . The episode opened to mixed reviews from television critics , and it was the second most watched program of the night . " Song Beneath the Song " was ranked in several " best and worst " lists , and the soundtrack was included on the Billboard 200 .

= = Plot = =

En route to a weekend getaway , surgeons Arizona Robbins (Jessica Capshaw) and Callie Torres (Sara Ramirez) are involved in a vehicular collision , moments after Robbins proposes marriage . Torres suffers severe injuries , which endanger both her life and the life of her unborn child . She and Robbins are taken to Seattle Grace Mercy West Hospital , the institute at which they both work . Their colleagues attempt to save Torres , while Robbins and Mark Sloan (Eric Dane) , the father of Torres 's baby , stand by . Torres 's many injuries include neurological trauma . While barely conscious , she hallucinates an uninjured version of herself standing beside her . The hallucinatory Torres begins to sing , and is gradually joined by the doctors treating her . This singing continues throughout the episode , as Torres 's projection of herself attempts to reach out to Robbins .

Torres goes into cardiac arrest and is taken into an operating room she is temporarily stabilized , pending further surgery . She is moved into intensive care , while neonatal surgeon Addison Montgomery (Kate Walsh) is flown in by helicopter in case the baby has to be delivered prematurely . Robbins and Sloan argue over Torres 's treatment ; Robbins believes that Torres would not risk endangering the baby , but Sloan argues for saving Torres at all costs . The attending surgeons devise a treatment plan , led by trauma surgeon Owen Hunt (Kevin McKidd) . As they do so , Torres dreams about the moments preceding the accident . Her dream self sings to Robbins , interspersed with shots of the hospital staff singing and dancing with their own partners . Dr. Cristina Yang (Sandra Oh) suggests treating Torres with a high @-@ risk but potentially effective cardiothoracic procedure she learned from her old mentor , Preston Burke (Isaiah Washington) . Her current mentor , Teddy Altman (Kim Raver) , refuses to perform it , but when Torres 's condition deteriorates and she is rushed back into surgery , Hunt agrees that Yang should attempt the procedure .

When Torres again goes into cardiac arrest , Montgomery delivers her daughter at twenty @-@ three weeks 's gestation . The baby is initially unable to breathe , so with Sloan 's support , Robbins steps in and is able to revive her . Across the operating room , Torres 's condition begins to improve . Once the surgery is complete , the doctors deal with their own affairs ; Sloan 's former partner Lexie Grey (Chyler Leigh) commits to her new relationship with resident Jackson Avery (Jesse Williams) ; Lexie 's sister Meredith Grey (Ellen Pompeo) confesses that she was jealous of Torres 's pregnancy , which prompts her husband Derek Shepherd (Patrick Dempsey) to promise that they will have a child together ; Altman tells Yang that she can no longer teach her ; Sloan and Robbins bond over their shared parenthood . Later , as Robbins keeps a vigil by Torres 's bedside , the hallucinatory Torres is able to rouse her recovering self . As she regains consciousness , Torres accepts Robbins 's proposal .

= = Production = =

= = = Conception = = =

Since Grey 's Anatomy began , series creator Shonda Rhimes had planned to produce a musical episode . She first vocalized the idea during filming of the pilot episode , when the program was as yet untitled . Rhimes felt that seasons six and seven were the right time for the crew to " try anything and everything [they had] always wanted to do , " and explained that she " finally [had] the right idea and the right talent to make [a musical episode] happen . " Filming began seven and a half years after Rhimes initially raised the idea . The episode was shot in approximately two weeks . Though cast member Dempsey jokingly referred to the episode as Glee M.D. , Rhimes intended for it to differ from other musical television episodes . She called it the opposite of " Once More , with Feeling , " the " all @-@ out , show @-@ stopping , " musical episode of Buffy the Vampire Slayer , as she aimed to " do something that was musical without being a musical . "

Rhimes said she had difficulty getting the network 's permission . She added : " I begged the studio people . I begged the network people . I took these people to dinner and begged . I jumped out at these people in bathrooms and begged . And they all smiled politely but what they were clearly really thinking was , ' This woman is an idiot . ' " Rhimes also explains why it took so long to produce this episode :

The script was written by Rhimes in November 2010 . She centered the episode around Ramirez 's character , Callie , and stated that the storyline would have developed regardless of whether it involved musical performances . Sara Ramirez used the opportunity to launch her career as a singer @-@ songwriter ; an alternate version of " The Story " is included on her debut EP , released four days prior to the episode 's premiere . The episode served to improve the relationship between Mark and Arizona . Capshaw assessed that , " The traumatic circumstance leads to them having a greater understanding of each other and then appreciation , and then need for each other and desire to be in each other 's lives . They come to care , I think , for one another . "

= = = Musical performances = = =

Rhimes , executive producer Betsy Beers and director Tony Phelan selected songs that became famous through their use in Grey 's Anatomy , and chose " the most iconic ones , the ones that best suited [their] singers , and the ones that made the most sense . " The multiple cover versions include the program 's theme tune , " Cosy in the Rocket " by Psapp . The primary vocalists are cast members Ramirez , McKidd , Leigh and Chandra Wilson . The soundtrack also includes " How to Save a Life " by The Fray and " Running on Sunshine " by Jesus Jackson , performed as ensemble pieces by Ramirez , McKidd , Wilson , Leigh , Daniel Sunjata , Scott Foley , Ellen Pompeo , Justin Chambers , Raver , Dane , and Capshaw . Ramirez , McKidd and Wilson also perform together on Snow Patrol 's " Chasing Cars . " Ramirez is the lead vocalist on " The Story " by Brandi Carlile , and " Grace " by Kate Havnevik , which also features the other female cast members , including Leigh and Sarah Drew on the chorus . Capshaw duets with Ramirez on KT Tunstall 's " Universe & U. " Wilson is the lead vocalist on " Wait " by Get Set Go , McKidd on " How We Operate " by Gomez , and Leigh on Anna Nalick 's " Breathe (2 AM) . "

Leigh told that some actors were not " adamant and excited " about singing but still had the possibility to participate in the episode . " There were certain ways in which the scenes were written , even if there was a song in there , that perhaps a line was spoken instead of sung , " she said .

A vocal coach was enlisted to help the cast . Music director Chris Horvath was recruited to arrange the selected songs for the cast . The arrangements took around two months , with vocals recorded over four days in February 2011 . Horvath praised the cast 's response to the episode , noting that only four performers had " serious vocal talent , " while some had " barely sung in the shower " before . Those with professional singing experience include Ramirez , who won a Tony Award for her role in the musical Spamalot , and Wilson , who appeared in the Broadway production of

Caroline , or Change . Cast members 's reactions toward the episode varied . Pompeo initially deemed the idea " crazy , " but rescinded her stance following the first read @-@ through . Recurring cast member Sunjata stated that singing was " a bit out of [his] comfort zone , " but found it an " interesting challenge , " and McKidd deemed it " very exciting to do something that 's completely out on a limb for the show . "

= = Reception = =

= = = Pre @-@ broadcast commentary = = =

Critical response prior to broadcast was mixed . TVLine 's Michael Ausiello assessed that the episode would " either be a show @-@ stopping triumph or a spectacular failure , " with no possible middle ground . William Keck of TV Guide initially had " serious doubts , " which were allayed by a visit to the set , during which he listened to the soundtrack . Keck likened it to the " much @-@ beloved early seasons of Grey 's , when music played a vital role on the show . " Entertainment Weekly 's Dan Snierson predicted heavy use of Auto Tune , though fellow EW writer Jennifer Armstrong was optimistic that the episode would be a success , commenting : " I have faith . I like musicals , I like Grey 's . I 'm rooting for this to work . "

= = = Ratings = = =

During its original broadcast , " Song Beneath the Song " was watched by an average of 13 @.@ 09 million American viewers . It attained a 4 @.@ 9 / 13 Nielsen rating / share in the 18 ? 49 demographic , making it the second highest @-@ rated program of the night , behind only American Idol on the Fox network . The rating was the second highest of the seventh season until that point , and a 30 percent increase from the previous episode , " This is How We Do It , " which was watched by 2 @.@ 4 million fewer viewers .

In Canada , where the episode also aired on March 31 , 2011 , it was watched by 3 @.@ 18 million viewers . Viewership again increased on " This is How We Do It , " which attained 2 @.@ 63 million viewers . However , while the preceding episode was the most @-@ viewed scripted show for the week of its original broadcast , " Song Beneath the Song " ranked second , behind The Big Bang Theory .

= = = Post @-@ broadcast commentary = = =

Following the first minutes of the drama , reactions on Twitter were mixed . Nicole Golden from TV Fanatic gave the episode 4 @.@ 5 stars out of 5 @.@ 0 . She found that " overall , the concept worked since music really has always played a big part in the show . Some songs were more appropriate and / or better performed than others , though . " She also wrote the concept worked in part because it was new but noted " the format would probably not have the same effect if used in future episodes . " Even though Boston Herald 's critic Mark Perigard was not a fan of the concept , saying " the Grey 's Anatomy event proved how tricky it is for an established show , especially a drama , to pull off a musical episode , " he did like several actors 's performances . He wrote : " Chandra Wilson and Chyler Leigh (whom I never have anything good to say about) delivered some impressive vocal work . Eric Dane did some of his best acting of his career last night as an anxious father @-@ to @-@ be terrified he would lose his best friend . " Lyneka Little of The Wall Street Journal wrote , " If Glee and ER had a baby it would be tonight ? s episode of the medical drama Grey ? s Anatomy titled ? Song Beneath the Song . ? " In his review of the episode Alan Sepinwall of HitFix wrote " Like Grey 's Anatomy as a whole , some parts were unintentionally silly , others were surprisingly powerful , and it was rarely dull , at least . "

Patrick Dempsey admitted that the musical episode might not have been showrunner Shonda Rhimes 's best idea . He explained : " It 's very difficult to keep it fresh when you 're doing 24

episodes a year . Shonda Rhimes has a lot of ideas , and she is in a position where she can take more chances . Sometimes that works , sometimes it does not . Last year we had the singing episode , which I think was a big mistake . But you have to try . "

= = = Accolades = = =

In 2011 , the episode was ranked number 19 on the TV Guide Network special , 25 Biggest TV Blunders 2 . It was included in TV Guide 's list " The Worst of 2011 " saying , " Sara Ramirez has powerhouse pipes , but what this episode desperately needed was a better playlist . " BuddyTV , however , ranked it number 43 on its list of 2011 's 50 Best TV Episodes and it also appeared on Digital Spy 's shortlist of " TV 's Best Musical Episodes . " Supervising Music Editor Jennifer Barak and Music Editors Carli Barber and Jessica Harrison were nominated in the Best Sound Editing : Short Form Musical in Television category at the 2012 Golden Reel Awards for their work on the episode .

= = Soundtrack = =

= = = Track listing = = =

= = = Chart history = = =

Grey 's Anatomy : The Music Event debuted at number 24 on the Billboard 200 , with 19 @, @ 000 copies sold . It reached number 2 on the U.S. Soundtracks chart , and was the number 5 Independent Album . " The Story " entered the Billboard Hot 100 singles chart at number 69 , and the Canadian Hot 100 at 72 .