

= Asian F =

" Asian F " is the third episode of the third season of the American musical television series Glee , and the forty @-@ seventh overall . Written by series co @-@ creator Ian Brennan and directed by Alfonso Gomez @-@ Rejon , it first aired on Fox in the United States on October 4 , 2011 . The episode features the introduction of Emma Pillsbury 's ( Jayma Mays ) and Mike Chang 's ( Harry Shum , Jr . ) parents , and the final auditions for the McKinley High production of West Side Story , in which the competition between Mercedes Jones ( Amber Riley ) and Rachel Berry ( Lea Michele ) leads the former to quit New Directions .

An advance copy of the episode was released to several reviewers , and received a highly enthusiastic response . Once the episode aired many others were equally impressed , though not all . Brittany 's ( Heather Morris ) " Run the World ( Girls ) " performance was hailed , and the entire Mike Chang storyline , especially his rendition of " Cool " and his initial solo dance sequence , also received favorable notice . The musical numbers were generally greeted positively , among them the three that featured Mercedes , particularly " It 's All Over " . However , her storyline had its detractors , mostly due to the recurrence of the Mercedes versus Rachel plot , and the inconsistency of her characterization with past appearances .

All six songs were released as singles , available for download , and two , " Fix You " and " Run the World ( Girls ) " , charted on the Billboard Hot 100 , and " Fix You " also charted on the Canadian Hot 100 . Upon its initial airing , this episode was viewed by 8 @. @ 42 million American viewers and garnered a 3 @. @ 6 / 10 Nielsen rating / share in the 18 ? 49 demographic . The total viewership and ratings for this episode were down slightly from the previous episode , " I Am Unicorn " .

= = Plot = =

After Mike receives an " A ? " on a chemistry exam , his father ( Keong Sim ) is upset by this " Asian F " and the danger it poses to his chances of attending Harvard , and insists that Mike focus more on his studies and give up glee club and his girlfriend Tina ( Jenna Ushkowitz ) , who has been helping him improve his singing . Mike begs for one more chance and promises to meet with a tutor , but later decides to follow his dreams and auditions for the role of Riff in West Side Story , performing " Cool " . He misses a tutoring session and is confronted by his mother ( Tamlyn Tomita ) , and when he admits he wants to be a dancer rather than a doctor , she reveals that she gave up dreams of becoming a dancer and doesn ' t want her son to do the same .

To promote her candidacy for senior class president , Brittany ( Heather Morris ) sings a rousing song of female empowerment ? " Run the World ( Girls ) " ? at an impromptu assembly , with the help of the Cheerios and Santana ( Naya Rivera ) , who has rejoined New Directions unbeknownst to cheerleading coach Sue Sylvester ( Jane Lynch ) . The enormous enthusiasm of the school 's entire female population worries Kurt ( Chris Colfer ) , the other candidate in the race . Kurt has given up his dream to play Tony in the musical , and gives a bouquet of roses to his boyfriend Blaine ( Darren Criss ) , the likely choice as Tony .

Will ( Matthew Morrison ) is insecure about his relationship with Emma because she hasn ' t asked him to meet her parents , so he invites them to dinner without telling her . They mock their daughter ' s OCD , which angers Will , and display an extreme hair @-@ color obsession ? Emma refers to them as " ginger supremacists " . Her OCD suffers a severe resurgence under the stress of their visit . A helpless Will apologizes , and joins Emma when she prays .

Mercedes ( Amber Riley ) , supported by her boyfriend Shane ( LaMarcus Tinker ) , auditions for the role of Maria and impresses the directors ? Emma , Coach Beiste ( Dot @-@ Marie Jones ) and Artie ( Kevin McHale ) ? with her rendition of " Spotlight " . They schedule a callback between her and Rachel ( Lea Michele ) to help them decide who should be cast in the role . Mercedes is angry about what she perceives as continued favoritism shown to Rachel , especially in the awarding of solos , and when Will pushes her in the glee club 's extra dance rehearsals that Rachel is excused from , she decides she has had enough and quits glee club . When Mercedes and Rachel compete by singing " Out Here On My Own " in the callbacks , Mercedes gives a performance that Rachel

privately concedes was better , which prompts Rachel to begin a last @-@ minute candidacy for senior class president to improve her college prospects ; this dismays Kurt , who now has another rival to campaign against . The three directors decide to offer the role of Maria to both contenders , with each to do half the performances , but Mercedes is convinced she deserved to win the part outright and refuses to accept half a role . She withdraws from contention , which leaves Rachel as the sole Maria , and volunteers to join Shelby Corcoran 's ( Idina Menzel ) new glee club . The cast list is posted , with Rachel as Maria , Blaine as Tony , Santana as Anita , Mike as Riff , and Kurt as Officer Krupke .

= = Production = =

The episode began filming on August 29 , 2011 ; the finale was filmed on September 16 , 2011 . The script was written by series co @-@ creator Ian Brennan and the episode was directed by Alfonso Gomez @-@ Rejon .

Two new sets of parents are introduced during the episode . Emma 's parents , Rose and Rusty Pillsbury , are played by Valerie Mahaffey and Don Most . Mays was very excited when she learned Most , who played Ralph Malph on the 1970s sitcom Happy Days , had been cast , and exclaimed , " What ? He 's my father ? ! " Both Most and Mahaffey were so funny during the shooting of their sequence that she had to apologize for causing a portion to have to be reshot , telling them , " I 'm so sorry , the back of my shoulders were shaking because I was laughing so hard . "

Mike 's parents , who may become recurring characters , are Tamlyn Tomita in the role of Julia Chang , and Keong Sim as Mike Chang , Sr. Recurring guest stars appearing in the episode include Principal Figgins ( Iqbal Theba ) , football coach Shannon Beiste ( Dot @-@ Marie Jones ) , student Lauren Zizes ( Ashley Fink ) , teacher Shelby Corcoran ( Idina Menzel ) and football players Shane Tinsley ( LaMarcus Tinker ) and Azimio ( James Earl ) .

This episode features the show 's first Coldplay cover , " Fix You " . Coldplay had previously refused to license their music for use on Glee , but later changed their minds . Five other songs are covered , including Beyoncé 's " Run the World ( Girls ) " sung by Morris , Jennifer Hudson 's " Spotlight " sung by Riley , " Cool " from West Side Story sung by Shum in his first solo , " Out Here On My Own " from Fame sung by Riley and Michele , and " It 's All Over " from Dreamgirls performed by Riley and most of New Directions . Riley appreciated the opportunity to perform " Spotlight " , a modern pop song , " because Mercedes usually does the old diva @-@ ish " songs . She found the episode challenging , as she " really had to think about who Mercedes is . "

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" Asian F " was first broadcast on October 4 , 2011 in the United States on Fox . It garnered a 3 @.@ 6 / 10 Nielsen rating / share in the 18 ? 49 demographic , and received 8 @.@ 42 million American viewers during its initial airing . It was second for the third week in a row in its timeslot to NCIS on CBS , which earned a 4 @.@ 2 / 12 rating / share in the 18 ? 49 demographic , and also by the third episode of New Girl , which follows Glee on Fox , and brought in a 4 @.@ 3 / 11 rating / share and 8 @.@ 65 million viewers . The Glee numbers were down slightly from the previous week 's episode , " I Am Unicorn " , which netted a 3 @.@ 7 / 11 rating / share and 8 @.@ 60 million viewers .

Viewership increased markedly in other countries . In the United Kingdom , " Asian F " was watched on Sky1 by 1 @.@ 10 million viewers , up over 10 % compared to " I Am Unicorn " in the previous week , when 995 @,@ 000 viewers were watching . In Australia , " Asian F " was watched by 843 @,@ 000 viewers , which made Glee the eleventh most @-@ watched program of the night . The viewership was up significantly from " I Am Unicorn " the week before , which drew 729 @,@ 000 viewers , and also an improvement over the season premiere 's 760 @,@ 000 . In Canada , 1 @.@

82 million viewers watched the episode , and it was the fourteenth most @-@ viewed show of the week , up four slots and 21 % from the 1 @.@ 50 million viewers who watched " I Am Unicorn " .

= = = Critical reception = = =

Kristin dos Santos of E ! Online and Michael Ausiello of TVLine heavily praised screener copies of the episode . Dos Santos called it " arguably the best episode of Glee , not just this season but in the history of the series " , while Ausiello praised the episode as " a standout hour " . Tim Stack of Entertainment Weekly also viewed the episode in advance , and was similarly impressed ; he wrote that it was " one of the series ' best episodes ever " .

A number of critics who viewed the episode when it aired were equally taken with " Asian F " . The Atlantic 's Kevin Fallon called it Glee 's " best ever " , while others , including Erica Futterman of Rolling Stone and Abby West of Entertainment Weekly said it was the best one of the new third season . Vanity Fair 's Brett Berk wrote , " This week 's episode stands out as one of the most cohesive and well acted in the series 's pantheon " , though he wondered what had happened to the show 's humorous side , something also noted by Futterman , who found it to be a significant problem : " Glee 's own identity crisis of not knowing whether or not it 's a sitcom has made it hard to get deeply invested in its characters . " Amy Reiter of The Los Angeles Times wrote that " the producers hit every note ( emotional , musical , character , plot ) as squarely as Rachel Berry auditioning for a coveted role " , and the episode " had emotional truth , character growth , new revelations and really good musical numbers : the kind that seem to emerge organically from the plot and deepen and advance it . " AOLTV 's Crystal Bell said the episode delivered on the setup in the previous " I Am Unicorn " outing , and said " it definitely seems to echo the glory days " of the first season . TV Guide later included " Asian F " in its list of 2011 's Top TV Episodes .

Others were not as impressed . Although he praised " fantastic performances by Harry Shum as Mike Chang and Jayma Mays as Emma " , Anthony Benigno of The Faster Times criticized the " hackneyed storytelling that moves nobody forward " , and IGN 's Robert Canning noted that the show 's " inconsistent character development " was on display , though he gave the episode his best grade so far in the season , a " great " 8 out of 10 . Samantha Urban of The Dallas Morning News likened " Asian F " to a " half @-@ hearted meal " : while she said the subplots featuring Mike and Emma " worked really well " , the main storyline featuring Mercedes " was offensive in how lazily it was executed " .

The Mercedes storyline was met with widely divergent reactions , though her musical numbers were generally given high marks . In addition to Urban , many reviewers were unhappy with the return of the Rachel versus Mercedes rivalry , including Bell , who lamented that it had " been done every season " . Nearly as many expressed the hope that Mercedes was not pregnant given her nausea in the first " booty camp " scene , including Vicki Hyman of The Star @-@ Ledger , BuddyTV 's John Kubicek , and West . Benigno felt Mercedes was acting " wildly out of character " in the episode . Michael Slezak of TVLine was also puzzled at her change , and asked , " When has Mercedes ever been anything other than a team player and New Directions MVP ? Seriously , nobody 's going to cut her slack for a bad week ? " Canning agreed , and wrote : " Schue 's tough love with Mercedes came out of left field " , and felt it added to the " inconsistency of these characters " , even though " it ultimately made sense " in the context of setup for " It 's All Over " . Time 's James Poniewozik wrote that having the story " turn on her resentment at being overlooked by the glee club is an apt meta @-@ touch , since she 's been overlooked by the show for some time now . " Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club was the most enthusiastic about her storyline , and called it " the best part of the episode " : it was " all about how she now feels appreciated ? because she has a boyfriend , sigh ? and so she 's willing to take on Rachel for the role of Maria ( and , actually , beat her ) and push for what she feels is rightfully hers , which involves more respect from New Directions . "

Mike Chang 's first major storyline was the most widely praised of the episode . West said Shum " really showed his acting chops " , and Urban thought the " plot worked well " , though she heaped scorn on the notion that " any college would consider glee club a detriment " in an application . Mike 's " Cool " performance was very well received . Berk called it a " spectacular audition " and Bell said

it was " one of the highlights of the episode " ; she also noted that the episode " really solidified " Mike and Tina 's relationship , though she also pointed out that Tina was " the most neglected member of the entire cast " . Mike 's scenes in the dance studio were even more highly praised than " Cool " . The first , when Mike " dances alone and imagines Tina and his dad in the room with him " was described as " really beautiful " by Benigno . Fallon characterized it as " a standout scene " : " the performer dances out his life frustrations , pirouetting @-@ as @-@ catharsis until he realizes that the only place he feels happy is on stage . It 's a trademark Glee moment . " Hyman agreed , and wrote , " When he ducked into the studio and started dancing by himself , without music , it reminded me of how special a show Glee can be " . Lesley Goldberg of The Hollywood Reporter lauded the subsequent scene in the studio with his mother as the " most touching part " of the storyline , and more than one reviewer admitted shedding tears , including Reiter .

Poniewozik stated that the Will and Emma storyline " again shows how Glee handles adults much worse than teens " , and added , " there 's no reason this couldn 't have been a rewarding plot " . Hyman called it a " bizarre subplot " , and Berk stated that the " patent absurdity " of the " ginger eugenics " of Emma 's parents " felt out of whack , tonally , with the rest of the episode " . VanDerWerff felt that the story failed to work " despite featuring Don Most and Valerie Mahaffey doing their very best " . Canning thought Most 's role as Emma 's " racist Ginger Supremacist father was perhaps the greatest bit of casting I 've seen on television all year " . Urban thought the subplot " worked really well " , though she added that there were " missteps " . Brittany 's campaign rally flash mob , complete with her performance of " Run the World ( Girls ) " , was a huge favorite ; Poniewozik called it " an excellent Brittany dance showcase " . Hyman was critical of the " ridiculousness " of Rachel 's run for senior class president , a development Urban said " made absolutely zero sense " . VanDerWerff lauded the " montage of the kids finding out who was cast " in West Side Story , and said it " might be the best thing the show has ever done . " Amy Lee of The Huffington Post wrote , " The football team is dancing again . This can only be good . " Urban mentioned that seeing " Cool " performed by the football players made her realize that " we haven 't seen Karofsky this season . " Benigno was more direct : " where the hell is Karofsky ? "

= = = Music and performances = = =

The episode 's musical performances were generally well @-@ received , though a few reviewers , including Benigno , chafed at the continued emphasis on Broadway showtunes . Both of the major dance numbers came in for considerable praise , and " Run the World ( Girls ) " garnered the most superlatives : Fallon wrote , " Brittany 's performance of " Run the World ( Girls ) " was thrilling . It was the most adrenaline @-@ pumping musical number the series has produced : intricately choreographed , expertly shot and edited , perfectly woven into the story , and performed exquisitely by Heather Morris . " VanDerWerff " enjoyed the ginormous production number built around it quite a bit " , and The Wall Street Journal 's Raymund Flandez called it a " stellar performance " . Kubicek stated , " this was unbelievably superb , easily my favorite performance of the entire season " . Futterman noted that " Brittany 's vocals are nowhere near the power of Beyoncé 's , but they 're just fine for this performance , the real focus of which is the dancing . "

Mercedes featured in three of the episode 's musical numbers . Flandez said of her solo , " She blew Jennifer Hudson 's ' Spotlight ' out of this world . " Benigno wrote that it was " great " , but added that it was " not much of a stretch for Amber Riley to hit this one " . Berk praised her " amazing voice " and gave the performance four stars out of five , and Goldberg characterized the rendition as " flawless " . Other reviewers were more critical , including VanDerWerff , who said that this was the only song in the episode that " really didn 't work " . Slezak felt that the arrangement used was not distinct enough from the original , though he gave the performance a " B + " , as did West , who wrote , " Mercedes looked fantastic and carried herself well , and her voice was as strong as ever but it felt a little lacking . " In her " Maria @-@ off " with Rachel , Benigno said they " both kill it " , characterized it as " easy but fun " , and gave it an " A ? " , as did Slezak and West , the latter of whom " didn 't feel that Mercedes was the clear winner " but thought both singers were " fantastic " . Kubicek thought that " Mercedes clearly won " and Flandez maintained that she " clearly

outshone her rival " , and continued , " You just believe so much of what she sings . " Berk agreed , and contrasted the two singers with his rating scale of one to five stars : " Two stars for Rachel , who sang this like Barry Manilow ; four for Mercedes , who sang this like she lived it . " Futterman had a slightly different take : " Rachel puts on a diva front , but inside she 's scared and nervous , while Mercedes is just a diva . " However , Hyman thought that the two " were evenly matched " , while Canning and Billboard 's Rae Votta both thought Rachel was the victor ; Votta stated , " While the show wants us to believe otherwise , Rachel clearly outsang Mercedes " . " It 's All Over " from Dreamgirls received the most enthusiastic commentary , including an " A + " from West , who wrote " Mercedes was at her best in this performance " , a sentiment echoed by Benigno when he awarded the song an " A " . Hyman called it " pretty awesome " and Flandez a " cleverly amusing take " , while Futterman said Mercedes " fully embraces her inner Effie White " and that the song was " on par with the best of Glee 's Broadway songs in terms of plot relevancy and vocal arrangements " . She also praised " the first group showtune the New Directions have done " and added , " we want more " . Votta characterized it as " a flawless fantasy homage " and stated , " It 's the perfect use of the non @-@ realism of " Glee " and the power of musical theater to express a storyline " . Kubicek agreed it was " like a real musical " in these regards and praised Mike 's short solo , and West liked the segment where Santana confronts Mercedes in the number . Slezak was not enthusiastic about the rendition , and wrote that he wished that the " scene gelled better than it did " , and questioned why Mercedes was the character Effie while all the other members of New Directions were themselves . He gave the number a " C + " .

Votta wrote of " Cool " that " for Mike Chang 's first solo it 's impressive " , and added , " maybe he should play Tony instead of Blaine " ; Slezak also thought he should have been considered for Tony since it was " performed with such verve and swagger and charisma " . Even so , he conceded that Mike ( and Shum ) was " not the strongest singer " , an assessment echoed in the " decent singer " characterizations from Hyman and Kubicek , and the former called the performance a fine job while the latter wrote that " Mike Chang is the total package " . Flandez said Mike 's singing " wasn 't so terrible " , but while Lee said his is " not , by any means , a wonderful voice " she also said " he still pirouettes with the kind of easy grace that makes each move a joy to watch . " Futterman wrote , " He 's got the smooth dance moves down ... but , most impressively , his slick vocals are on point , hitting nice rises and falls at certain moments but mostly staying ' real cool ' , as the song calls for " , and Berk gave the performance five of five stars . " Fix You " received the least warm reception of the songs in the episode . Benigno criticized it for being " exactly like the original " , though he gave it a " B " and noted that the " last bit is kind of chillingly good in Matthew Morrison 's hands " . Flandez felt that the show 's version " pales in imitation to the original " . Futterman thought it was " thematically appropriate " but " not Schuester 's finest singing moment " , and Lee stated that " the song does not fit Morrison 's range comfortably " . Kevin P. Sullivan of MTV called it a " surprisingly tragic and moving rendition " , but Kubicek characterized it as an " emotionally manipulative song " , and West did not like the " implied condescension " of Will singing the song to Emma and gave it a " B " , though she thought Morrison " sounded good " and it was a " good way to close out the show " . In December 2012 , TV Guide listed the rendition as one of Glee 's worst performances .

== Chart history ==

Two of the six cover versions released as singles debuted on the Billboard Hot 100 : " Fix You " debuted at number fifty @-@ three and " Run the World ( Girls ) " at number ninety @-@ one . " Fix You " debuted at number seventy @-@ six on the Billboard Canadian Hot 100 , and was the one song from the episode to appear on that chart . Both " Fix You " and " Run the World ( Girls ) " were featured on the soundtrack album *Glee : The Music , Volume 7* .