

The good, the bad...

and the
ugly

Ugly Betty star and Golden Globe winner
AMERICA FERRERA talks about the show's
success and how she's coming to
terms with being a role model.



Soap World: What are you enjoying most about working on the show?

America Ferrera:

I think we're super blessed to have such a wonderful cast and crew. The people you work with day in and day out, 12 hours a day, are a big part of your life, and you see them more than you see your own family.

SW: Your character has become a role model for intelligent women and women who don't fit the beauty mould. Do you ever feel it's a burden or is it cool?

AF: No, I just have fun doing it. Betty is such a wonderful character to play. I feel honoured and touched that she's loved and admired by so many people. I love and admire the character, as well. I really do, and I think that the writers are doing a fantastic job of making her a complete person with all sorts of different feelings. She's strong and confident, but she's also insecure at times and weak and embarrassed. So she seems like a very

real person. And I think she's a wonderful role model for many girls out there.

SW: When did you first realise how much the show means to the audience?

AF: People had responded so warmly to the pilot and really took a very strong liking to it because of this character and what it meant to the people who were either excited or skeptical about how different it was and what it was going to mean to television. And I knew that because it was stirring a little bit of controversy both ways, that it was bound to really be meaningful.

Just last weekend, I read a letter from a young girl who had written in to CosmoGirl. She said, "Thank you for putting America Ferrera on the cover. When I watched *Ugly Betty*, it was the first time in my life that I felt beautiful." And that was overwhelming. And I knew then, if it was just one life, and I'm sure that there were others that were affected by it, it's definitely done its job.

SW: Did you spend any time reflecting on the Golden Globe award, how all this began and how far you've come?

AF: Yeah, absolutely. Just this morning, arriving and seeing the cast and crew and letting it settle in and really appreciating the fact that our hard work and the love and the passion that we put into the show has been recognised. It's really most special, sharing it with the people who were there.

SW: What's your favourite part of the set?

AF: I really love the Mode offices. I love the lobby area with the round desk. We do a lot of walking, high activity shots and those are the most fun. They kind of bring energy to the show.

SW: People have said that this is an immigrant show and that it proves that anything is possible. Is that something you guys have talked about?

AF: I think that is what our show is about. *Ugly Betty* is about an underdog whom no one really pays attention to because they don't see the potential. They don't see what's there until she comes up and proves herself and makes people fall in love with her. The show has quietly proved itself, just like Betty.

Interview by Anne Louise Bannon

America scored a Screen Actors Guild Award, just two weeks after picking up a Golden Globe!