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Bringing Annie Into the Light — The OLD Way.

When Annie opened in Dubai, the objective was clear:

Deliver a polished, emotionally resonant theatrical experience worthy of both the production and the city's growing performance landscape.

Optimum Lighting Design led the lighting design execution for the Dubai run, refining the show's visual language to suit the scale, rig, and audience expectations of the venue. The design balanced warmth and spectacle with technical discipline, ensuring clarity, depth, and emotional consistency across the expanded stage environment. Strong front light preserved facial intimacy and storytelling precision, while layered backlight and side light introduced dimensionality and movement. Controlled colour palettes supported seamless scene transitions, and moving profiles with dynamic floods elevated musical numbers without overpowering dialogue.

As a story rooted in resilience and optimism, Annie demanded emotional contrast; cooler tones shaped moments of hardship, while rich golden ambers reinforced transformation and hope. Each cue was carefully sculpted so that transitions landed with precision, resulting in a lighting design that felt both theatrical and contemporary, cinematic in impact, yet disciplined in execution.

Performance environments demand more than illumination! They demand intention.

-Sky Bembury (OLD)

COMMANDING THE STAGE WITH LIGHT.

The musical numbers in Annie demanded a shift in tempo and intensity, transforming the stage from intimate storytelling to full-scale spectacle within seconds.

For the Dubai performances, lighting was designed to amplify that energy without losing visual control. Saturated blues, ambers, and theatrical reds sculpted the stage architecture, while layered beam work and dynamic movement introduced rhythm and verticality. Backlight and side light created strong silhouettes during ensemble choreography, enhancing depth and separation, while carefully balanced front light maintained facial clarity under high-output scenes. Practical-inspired glow around scenic elements reinforced the Broadway aesthetic, and cue transitions were programmed to match musical phrasing precisely, allowing lighting to feel choreographed alongside the performers. The result was a stage picture that felt bold, dimensional, and immersive, delivering production value while remaining disciplined and performance-focused.





OPTIMISM. ILLUMINATED

Working with a cast led by young performers changes the entire lighting conversation. Children bring authenticity, spontaneity, and enormous stage energy, but they also require a different level of sensitivity and precision. Light must support them, not intimidate them.

Intensity levels were carefully calibrated to ensure comfort under sustained exposure, while colour temperatures were balanced to maintain natural skin tones and expressive clarity. Because younger performers can shift subtly in blocking and timing, coverage needed to be forgiving without feeling flat. The goal was to create an environment where they felt confident, visible, and emotionally supported, never isolated in shadow, never overwhelmed by glare. In a show driven by innocence and resilience, the lighting had to honour that vulnerability, shaping a stage picture that protected the performers while allowing their optimism to shine.

IT'S A HARD KNOCK... LIGHT



The orphanage may begin in shadow, but optimism never stays there for long. Through carefully sculpted contrast, atmosphere, and beam work, light helped transform struggle into spectacle. Because sometimes, it's not just about lighting the stage, it's about lighting the story.

And as Optimum Lighting Design prepares to take the next step onto Broadway to bring another legendary figure to life, that philosophy continues to guide every performance we illuminate.



OPTIMUM LIGHTING DESIGN

*Tameem House, 2809,
Barsha Heights, Dubai.
United Arab Kindom*

*More Info:
[Info@Optimumlightingdesign.
com](mailto:Info@Optimumlightingdesign.com)*