CITATION

NEW AMSTERDAM THEATRE
New York, NY

Lighting Designers
Fisher Marantz Renfro Stone, Inc.
Richard Renfro, Daina Yurkus

Architects
Hardy Holzman Pfeifer Associates

Owner
Walt Disney

The success of the New Amsterdam Theatre restoration was the blending of the historical refurbishment prerequisites with the visual expectations of our modern eye. To achieve this, the new lighting system had to overcome the glare and high contrast created by the original lighting design. To that end, the integration of contemporary lighting technology with the historically recreated fixtures was essential.

The New Amsterdam Theatre was the first theatre in New York to feature the latest invention of the time, the light bulb. Using only historical photographs, historical chandeliers and decorative lighting were recreated. For example, in the entry foyer, the fixture canopy was designed to conceal MR 16 lamps which discretely highlighted the terra cotta friezes on each side of the foyer. This creates the illusion that the room was illuminated entirely by the historic chandeliers.

This approach of concealing the supplemental lighting to complement the original historical fixtures was used throughout the theatre. This allows the visitors to see the splendid historical texture and drama of the original building while experiencing a comfortable visual environment.