

Bernarda Alba Lighting Analysis

In general, each act should have the following look:

- Act 1: Bright, vivid, energetic. Very colorful and fun. Low haze.
- Act 2: A “in-between” look, not as vivid and energetic as the first act but still has some color and value. Low haze.
- Act 3: Black and white. Little to no color. Strong, intense lighting. Lots of haze, especially in the final moments.

Music 1: Prologue

The stage should start dark. As the characters begin tapping their feet and making the rhythm, the stage slowly fades up to a dim intensity. Once the violin is added into the track, the stage quickly illuminates and goes to full intensity. This moment should feel magical, colors should be plentiful and vibrant to indicate the happiness of the family. Spotlights follow Bernarda and the rest of the family as they sing through their lines.

Over the course of the number, the lights should play along with the beat of the music, especially during the instrumental parts between stanzas. Subtle changes in color and/or intensity are perfect for those moments. This song should feel magical; this is the time when the family is at their happiest.

During the AH's, there should be a noticeable shift in color and/or intensity. This moment should feel sad and dark, but not taking too much away from what happened earlier either. Afterwards, the lights return to their previous state.

As Bernarda lists her daughters, the lights on stage should dim, and only highlight each daughter as their name is called. Either a general area light or spotlight should suffice.

Afterwards, as Bernarda's mother is being introduced, the lights and practicals should start flickering, corresponding with the harp being introduced into the score. Possibly a hint of red lighting. This moment should be scary and spooky.

The lights quickly snap back to that happy, fanatical lighting seen earlier in the number. The moment should become even grander as the key changes later in the verse.

On the word “Suddenly”, the lights quickly fade to a dim intensity, with only a light highlighting Bernarda staying at full. As Bernarda says her line, the color of the light highlighting her shifts for the vibrant colors of the past to a reddish tone.

Music 2: The Funeral

As the music transitions, the lights slowly fade up to half intensity. The scene has changed dramatically, it’s gone from a happy happy family to cries and sorrows; the lighting should be dark and bland to represent this. The practicals should be used at a very low intensity. Spotlights focus on Bernarda, fading out slowly after her last “Amen”.

After the number, lights slowly fade up, still at a relatively low intensity. Bland, neutral colors should be used here. This scene takes place in the house, which is old, dirty, and dilapidated, and the lighting should reflect that to a point.

Music 3: On The Day That I Marry (Part 1)

As the number starts, the lights should increase in intensity and have a more vivid color palette. Lighting and spotlights focus on the Young Maid. After the short song concludes, lights fade back to their previous state.

Music 4: Bernarda’s Prayer

Lights slowly fade to a very dim level. Backlight special should focus on Bernarda. Spotlights follow Bernarda throughout this number. Color should be somewhere between neutral and open white, this moment is sad but the plain open white is reserved for the Act III. If Bernarda moves around the stage, dimly light that area in the same color.

As the song introduces new instruments after the first stanza, there is a small bump in intensity and some play in the intensity of the practicals. Some more vividness in the color should also be present, moving to a dark blue color.

Nearing the end of the song, the lights get more intense and move slightly towards a reddish color. All changes should be slow.

Music 4A: On The Day That I Marry (Part 2)

Going through the transition, the lights brighten up and the color becomes more vivid again. A combination of orange, yellow, and light green, or other colors as needed. This is the Young Maid’s moment, she’s fantasizing about the future and should be brighter than the dark, dull moments in the previous number.

Once Poncia exits and the song gets going, the lighting becomes brighter and more vivid. Possibly an effect in the practicals to complement this moment. Color shift to a warm green/purple/pink, this moment should feel happy and magical.

As Bernarda sings the final verse, the lights very slowly dim and return to general house lights, to indicate the return to reality.

Music 5: Love, Let Me Sing You

Spotlight on Amelia during the first stanza of her number. No shift in lighting during the dialogue that follows.

Lights dim and become darker and spookier once the daughters begin talking about Enrique and the violins start. As the characters start singing, the lights return, with more vibrant colors. Lights continue to become brighter and more vibrant as Magdalena and Adela enter; the moment is becoming more magical.

Once the verse is over, lights slowly de-intensify and return to something similar at the start of the song. The characters talk through their dialogue throughout this light.

As the last verse of the song starts, the lights become darker and spookier, perhaps a dark blue or green. This moment is not as magical as earlier moments in the number but is sadder and darker. As the daughters open up, the lights slowly return to a more magical appearance, such as a lighter blue and more intensity.

In the last stanza of the number, the lights slowly return to reality, back to regular house lighting as before. They remain this way for the rest of the scene.

Music 6: Let Me Go To The Sea

As the music gets going, the lights slowly become more intimate and focus on Maria Josepha. This is her moment to roam free and find her lover. Possibly add subtle intensity effects to the lighting or practicals.

Once the music gets louder and more tense in the second verse, the intensity of the lights should increase. At the end of the number, a slow blackout closes out the act.

End of Act 1

Music 7: Magdalena

Natural house lighting starts dim, with a focus on Magdalena. Lighting should be dark and suffocating. After the first verse, lights come up to natural house lighting, albeit slightly less vivid and lit than the last act.

Music 8: Angustias

As the music begins, lights dim but change into a more vibrant color. Practicals at full. This moment should feel sad and deteriorated. Blue color.

At the start of the second verse, the lighting should get sadder and feel suffocating. Darker blue color, with more intensity. Possibly a hint of red color.

After the end of the song, the lights should return to general house lighting for the dialogue.

Music 9: Amelia

The lights should be dreamy and magical, bright, in a red/pink/purple color palette. Possibly some effect with the practicals. This is Amelia's love moment, and should be showcased in a fanatical sense. The intensity should increase at the high and loud points in the music, then returning to the previous look. Spotlights on the main characters singing.

Lights return to the normal house look at the conclusion of this song.

Music 10: Martirio

Lighting dims and focuses on Martirio during this number, should feel weird yet magical. Mix of blue, green, turquoise color. Spotlight on Martirio. Possible color shift as the music picks up if warranted.

Lights slowly return to the normal house look at the conclusion of this song.

Music 11: Adela

As the music starts, the lights remain the same. Once the song picks up with the green dress, the lights should get more spectacular and magical; bringing Adela out of this world. A high intensity with a combination of purple and pink lighting to add to her moment.

The lights should continue to open up as the daughters come in at the end of the number, ultimately leading to a slow fade back to the normal house look as the last stanza is sung.

Music 12: I Will Dream of What I Saw

The lights remain the same as in the end of the previous number, in a normal house look, as the spoken dialogue progresses. Once the singing starts, a

show fade to more intense and vibrant shades of yellow and orange should begin. This moment is happy and joyous, and the lighting should reflect that.

As the happiness drains at the end of the song, the lights return to normal house look. Lighting during the next few pages of dialogue shall be determined by blocking in the space, with the possibility of a few intensity and color effects to highlight the moments of confusion and violence.

Music 13: Thirty Odd Years

The lighting fades down to a low intensity, with center focus on Poncia. The intensity and color should reflect a moment of anger and sadness; color should be blue with a hint of red, or open white.

Lights quickly snap back up to regular house lighting at the end of the number.

Music 14: Limbrada's Daughter

Lights should be dimmer and have a more suffocating atmosphere. Open white color, intense angles and shadows to add to the mood. This could be a good time to crank the atmospherics. Lights open up when the chorus comes on, still in a suffocating atmosphere.

Slow fade to black to end the act.

End of Act II

Music 15: One Moorish Girl

Start with a slow fade up from black. General house lighting from this point forward should be more monotone, less color than the previous act. Spotlight on main characters singing during the number. Practicals at low intensity.

Lights dim as Bernarda sings her monologue. This should feel sad, yet dark and empty. Possibly a hint of color. Once done, lights slowly fade back to the previous look.

Music 16: The Stallion

Lights quickly shift to a warmer look, this song should feel rushed yet worrying. Hint of color, but still sticking to the black and white theme for the act. Lights and practicals dance/chase in intensity at the end of the number to convey the urgency. A slow shift in light back to the general house look follows.

Music 17: Lullaby

As the song starts, the lights slowly shift into a bright and vibrant scene. This scene should look happy and intimate; the last burst of color before the events of the ending. At the end, the lights slowly fade down to a low intensity, with a full focus on Adela.

Music 18: Open The Door

Lights have a hint of color focusing on Adela and the pillars. Spotlight on Adela. Possibly some pink/purple hues, with some blue to represent the nighttime outside.

As the intensity increases at the end of the song, the lights increase in intensity to follow, slowly removing the color and becoming whiter. By the end of the number, the lights should be at full intensity, full white.

Chaos ensues, with flashes of light for the gunshot (to be determined in conjunction with the staging). This is a scary moment, the lights should be bright and sharp.

Music 19: Finale

The lights fade out, leaving on Bernarda lit in the center. This moment needs to be in-human, Bernarda just did something unthinkable. Color is open white with intense lighting. On Bernarda's final line, all lights, except a single back light, should fade out. Afterwards, the backlight slowly fades out, closing the show.

End of Act III