

MADE IN DAGENHAM is a musical book by Richard Bean, Music by David Arnold and Lyrics by Richard Thomas. It is based on the true events and the film of the same name and takes us back to the 60s (1968) when the female workers in Ford, Dagenham had their pay grade dropped to unskilled and follows the women, led by initially reluctant but eventually successful Rita as they seek equal pay and better working conditions. It begins as Rita - as a busy working woman – tries to get the family ready for the day and ends with her addressing the TUC conference in Eastbourne – quite a journey.

The stage design covering various locations: homes, factory floor, conference hall etc – was well conceived and of high quality. There was minimal disruption during the scene changes, sometimes during songs.

The costumes were in keeping with the period. There was great attention to detail and the costumes were well balanced.

The lighting was effective and well controlled throughout. The sound was excellent with voices clear and blended well with the live music.

Experienced Director Richard Cox drew polished performances from his well-drilled cast. With musical direction from Julie Dance, this first-class production had tons of energy and some moving performances. The ensemble singing was excellent and the dancing was even better. Newcomer to BAOS Nicola Morrin was simply charming with her assured performance as Rita and was well matched with Ryan Stevens as her husband, Eddie also making his debut with BAOS.. This was a thoughtful musical with a strong message, bad language (mainly from Alex Stores who gave a gutsy performance as Beryl) and the importance of fighting for what is right. There's plenty of good songs and it was performed with full commitment from the entire company.