

CIPHERS

by Dawn King

Director: Harry Medawar

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Play Reading **Monday 23rd February at 7.45pm** at the Mary Wallace Theatre

Auditions **Monday 2nd March at 7.45pm** at the Mary Wallace Theatre

Playing Dates: **Saturday 30th May to Saturday 6th June 2026**

Rehearsals Rehearsals from Sunday 5th April 2026 in the vicinity of, or at, the theatre mainly on Sunday and Wednesday evenings and also including Thursday 30th April and Thursday 28th May (1st Dress Rehearsal) and Friday 29th May (2nd Dress Rehearsal).

SYNOPSIS

Ciphers is a whodunnit set in the world of espionage and inspired by real events. In the play, a woman called Justine dies in mysterious circumstances. Someone knows how but Justine was a spy and, in a world of danger and deceit where no one is what they seem to be, can anyone be trusted to tell the truth?

CHARACTERS:

There are 8 characters in **Ciphers** and none is entirely what he or she seems to be. Doubling has been a feature of some productions but not of this production. Similarly, there will not be any simulation of consensual sex in this production.

SUNITHA (Playing age: unrestricted; medium-sized role) A senior MI6 officer who speaks English fluently and understands Punjabi. We particularly welcome auditions from actors with Indian heritage but all who audition have an equal chance of success. Sunitha seems to be focused on whatever is in Britain's best interests.

JUSTINE (Playing age: 20s-30s; large role) A junior MI6 officer who speaks English, Japanese and Russian (all without an accent), and understands Punjabi. Justine seems not to be focused.

ANTON (Playing age: 50s-60s; small role) A senior Russian diplomat who speaks Russian and accented English. Anton seems to be focused on whatever is in Russia's best interests.

KERRY (Playing age: 20s-30s; medium-sized role) The sister of Justine and daughter of Peter. Kerry manages an art gallery which has held an exhibition of Kai's work. Kerry seems to be focused on finding out who killed her sister.

KAI (Playing age: 20s-30s; medium-sized role) An artist. He speaks English and some Japanese. Kai wants to be a better artist than he knows he could be. Kai seems to be focused on having his cake and eating it.

ANOUSHKA (Playing age: 30s-40s; small role) A socialite and the wife of Kai. She speaks fluent Russian and accented English. Anoushka organised the exhibition of Kai's paintings at Kerry's gallery. Anoushka seems to be focused on being a dutiful wife.

KAREEM (Playing age: teens - 40s; small role): A youth worker. We particularly welcome auditions from actors with African or Hawaiian heritage but all who audition have an equal chance of success. Kareem seems to be focused on staying out of trouble.

PETER (Playing age: 60s-70s; small role). The father of Justine and Kerry, of both of whom he is proud. Peter seems to be focused on staying calm.

In addition, the play will include a brief sound-only recording of two characters speaking in Punjabi. Finally, while the play is performed in English, the director would welcome offers to support the cast from speakers of Japanese and Russian.

AUDITION PIECES

If you would like the audition pieces, or you would welcome guidance or the content of the play, please email the director, Harry Medawar, at lostontheshelf@gmail.com. Alternatively, please feel free to telephone Harry on 07976 065558.

Please note that for plays in copyright we are generally unable to provide text online

RSS is committed to inclusive casting and providing fair and equal access to all.

Casting will not be constrained by any perceived characteristic of a role, e.g. gender or ethnicity, unless specified by the playwright or a condition of the licence.

Our auditions are conducted in the presence of a panel of members of the RSS General Committee; the role of the panel includes ensuring that auditions conform with the Society's Code of Conduct for Members

While auditions are open to all, any offer of a part is conditional. You must be a member of RSS before the offer can be confirmed

Audition Application forms are available in the theatre, can be downloaded from the auditions page of the RSS website, or online: www.richmondshakespeare.org.uk/acting.

Please return completed forms to the Hon. Secretary at the theatre or by e-mail to secretary@rss-mwt.org.uk

Dogs: please note that dogs (except trained and insured service animals) are not permitted in any part of the theatre at play readings, auditions or performances, or other events