

Top Secret Ryan Ellett

It was announced in May 1950 that Ilona Massey had been signed for the NBC summer series *Top Secret*. Massey was a Hungarian-born actress who had appeared on Broadway in the 1943 Ziegfeld Follies and in a handful of Hollywood features including *Rosalie* (1937), *Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man* (1943) and *Holiday in Mexico* (1947).

Top Secret was slated to replace *The Adventures of Christopher London* in the Monday night 10:30 (EST) time slot. Both series featured tales of international intrigue, a genre quickly gaining favor in the post-War landscape. *Top Secret* was one of several summer replacement series on NBC that year, a number of which featured female leads. Others in this summer replacement class included *Kitty Pepper* (with Arlene Francis), *The Penny Singleton Show*, *The Cass Daley Show*, *Sara's Private Caper* (with Sara Berner), and *Tugboat Annie* (with Betty Garde).

Harry Junkin was tapped to direct *Top Secret* and Alan Sloane wrote the scripts. The series was the result of survey data done by NBC indicating listeners were getting tired of the private eye stories that were so prevalent during the 1940s and wanted something different with a bit more realism. Their research department reported back “a strong preference for naturalistic, hard-boiled action without fancy frills.” *Wanted* and *Confidentially Yours* also emerged from this corporate research.

Top Secret aired from June 12 to October 26, 1950. It aired on various days and in different timeslots during that run.