Heterotopia may be relatively easy to identify in site-specific performance (where the creation of a ‘constructed space’ that is a necessary precondition is fundamental to the genre), but it is also an effective interpretational tool in performance that takes place in theatre buildings. Whereas the previous chapter explored performance that spoke directly to a community by situating it amid its social context, bypassing a traditional theatre venue altogether, the remaining chapters present different approaches to possible heterotopias, examining them in various generic, social, and historical contexts. This chapter focuses on the National Theatre of Scotland (NTS), a company that has side-stepped being identified with a specific, flagship theatre building. NTS lives by the motto that it used widely in its early years: ‘Theatre without Walls’. While the company no longer advertises itself this way, it continues to build on this ethos. The rejection of a fixed venue has enhanced NTS’s success to the extent that the National Theatre Wales has adopted a version of this model.

NTS inevitably foregrounds space in their work, precisely because they do not occupy a fixed venue: the performance site changes for just about every production. The productions I address here – Black Watch, Aalst, and 365 – deploy stage space strategically to investigate alternative ways to configure on-stage and off-stage locations (both concrete and metaphoric). The multiple award-winning and internationally touring Black Watch stages the regiment’s final tour of duty in Iraq before it was amalgamated into a single Scottish regiment; Aalst is about a couple who murdered their children; and 365 deals with young people in state care. They effectively push through
the metaphoric walls of the theatre to challenge theatrical convention and received notions of cultural identity. By experimenting with different socio-cultural options in performance, these plays stage heterotopias that spatialize how to perform a diverse cultural identity and how to frame responses to larger social dilemmas. As in many other countries, out-dated signifiers of identity have long defined Scotland, whereas NTS productions like these tend to deconstruct conservative history and practice, live and in performance. An additional attraction for me in analysing these productions is that they are touring pieces, which requires further attention to spatiality and has the potential to yield different results in performance in subsequent locations. I raise other connections between them as they occur.

I briefly contextualize this company and its significance in Scotland before arguing the capacity of NTS to offer heterotopic analysis. Founded in 2004 and mounting its first productions from 2006, NTS has taken seriously its brief to intersect with a very broadly defined community. It performs in town halls and other types of venues as well as theatres, across Scotland (in addition to touring internationally). It attempts to match plays to the venues for which they are best suited, while keeping a practical eye on touring possibilities. The NTS launched an ambitious first year: Vicky Featherstone, Artistic Director from 2004 to 2012, could write in the *Summer-Autumn Brochure* for 2007 that ‘in its first 13 weeks, NTS [...] toured 38 separate productions to big theatres, small theatres and places where theatre has never been in 26 different locations across Scotland and beyond’ (p. 1). NTS has continued its prodigious output, but perhaps the most remarkable production to date was its first: *Home* comprised ten separate, free productions that opened on the same night, 25 February 2006, across the country in venues such as a dance hall, the disused Caithness glass factory, and a private home. The Glasgow production was a site-specific promenade through tower blocks in the city, while *Home Shetland* took place on the Northlink ferry. The geography of Scotland made it impossible for anyone to see the full set of performances but ‘people all over the country could connect to the National Theatre of Scotland on its opening night’ (Newall 2008) and experience ‘different voices and discourses – “the competing versions” of Scotland’ (Imre 2008, p. 88).5 Robert Leach called it ‘[p]erhaps the biggest, most far-flung “opening night” in theatre history’ (2007, p. 176).