From Theory to Practice:

the National Theatre of Scotland,

1999 – 2009.

Rebecca Charlotte Robinson

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University of Glasgow

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Department of Theatre, Film and Television

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Abstract

The National Theatre of Scotland is a unique, non building-based, commissioning and producing cultural institution, established in the wake of the devolution of the Scottish Parliament. This thesis explores how the NTS responded to its 'national' remit within the context of both post devolution Scotland and an increasingly globalized world in which the significance and boundaries of the 'nation' are often ambiguous and contested. The public sphere in the United Kingdom has always held a tension between the interweaving national identities of its four constituent nations. However, the constitutional changes since 1999, have allowed the possibility for a more distinctive public sphere to be defined in Scotland. This thesis examines how the NTS, over a relatively short period of time, has played a role in helping to mark out and define the nature of this new national public sphere and argues that the company was particularly well placed to accommodate and reflect heterogeneous imagining's of identity and respond to contemporary expressions of belonging. However, the thesis also charts changes to the company during these early years and, most significantly, notes the potential effect that the change from arms length to direct government funding might have on the company's long-term development. The thesis argues that direct funding aligns the arts too closely to political agendas rather than supporting artistic freedom and expression. As such, rather than helping to mark out a democratically representative and critical public sphere in Scotland, the NTS is in danger of becoming entangled by competing conceptions and perceptions of nationhood in Scotland.

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Abbreviations

NTS	National Theatre of Scotland
SAC	Scottish Arts Council
SE	The Scottish Executive
SG	The Scottish Government
NPC	National Performing Companies
FST	Federation of Scottish Theatre Companies
SNTIWG	Scottish National Theatre Independent Working Group
RSAMD	Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama
NPCU	National Performing Companies Unit
UN	United Nations
US	United States of America
UK	United Kingdom
OPCA	Office of the Commission for Public Appointments
OPCAS	Office of the Commission for Public Appointments in Scotland
NDPB	Non-Departmental Public Body

Introduction

Although McConachie suggests that the category of National Theatre[1] is a "fuzzy one",[2] Carlson argues that, "the common image of a National Theatre is of a monumental edifice located in a national capital, authorized, privileged and supported by the government, and devoted wholly or largely to productions of the work of national dramatists".[3] Carlson acknowledges that while some National Theatres are faithful to this ideal model, "the vast majority depart from it in one way or another and the reasons for their doing so provide interesting insights into how the ideas of nationhood and of the theatre operate in different times and different places".[4] This thesis explores how the idea of nationhood and the theatre have operated in Scotland before and during the formative years of the National Theatre of Scotland, the first national cultural institution to be formed in post devolution Scotland.

Architecturally constructed buildings, through their particular articulation of space, act as mediators of how we communicate with each other. Buildings both reflect and affect particular ways of being. However, Mitchell argues that in the 21st century it is the concept and reality of 'networks', mediated by information technology and cyberspace, that are now perhaps more central to social organisation and structure than buildings: "we make our networks and our networks make us".[5] Perhaps reflecting the website (the NTS's most immediate public façade)[6] the NTS also exists, essentially, as a network of relationships and it is through the fusion of these that the performances are created.

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[1] In this thesis, 'national theatres' refers to all those theatres and theatre companies – large and small, building and non-building based – that exist within a territorially defined area. 'National Theatres', on the other hand, in this thesis, refers to specific theatre companies that have been designated or widely perceived of as a National Theatre.

[2] McConachie, B., (2008), 'Towards a History of National Theatres in Europe', in Wilmer, S. E. (ed), *National Theatres in a Changing Europe,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p51.

[3] Carlson, M. (2008), 'National Theatres: Then and Now', in Wilmer, S. E. (ed), *National Theatres in a Changing Europe,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p21.

[4] Carlson, M. (2008), 'National Theatres: Then and Now', in Wilmer, S. E. (ed), *National Theatres in a Changing Europe,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p21.

[5] Mitchell, W. J., (1996), *City of Bits: Space, Place and Infobahn,* Cambridge MA: MIT Press, p49.

[6] According to the *NTS Business Plan, 2008 to 2011* the NTS website receives "an average of around 300 visitors per day….Over a third of visitors come to the site directly, which indicates both a high level of awareness of the Company and a high rate of visitor loyalty" (p26).

Unlike the permanent and unchanging threshold to an architecturally constructed building, a website provides a fuzzy, virtual border, inviting access to its virtual visitors through words and images that can be constantly adapted and changed. Originally,[7] before entering the NTS website proper, the *URL[8]* directed web users to an introductory 'splash' page which displayed the company's logo (see figure 1, below). The National Theatre of Scotland's name was contained within all-inclusive square brackets, the brackets acting as a visual symbol of the company's aspirations towards inclusivity - both in terms of its intended audience and its approach to collaborative productions. The background colours of the splash web page were vibrant pink and black – vibrant pink, according to online web designers Sibagraphics, conveying the sense of "high spirits, energy and youth" while black "assists targeting a sophisticated high-end market or a youth market to add mystery".[9]

Figure 1: NTS Website Splash Page.

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[7] From 2008, NTS website 'splash' page was removed and visitors were directed straight to the homepage. Other intended future developments to the website can be found in the NTS Business Plan, 2008 – 2011.

[8]   URL   –   'uniform   resource   locator'   or   internet   address. http://www.nationaltheatrescotland.co.uk/content/splash.htm

[9] http://www.sibagraphics.com/colour.php (last accessed 9/4/09).

The splash page then flashed up three successive text boxes that briefly summarised what the NTS was, where it could be found and why it exists. (figure 2, below).

What?

[It is Scotland's first ever National Theatre working with the best.

Scottish actors, directors and theatre companies, we will produce

unmissable nights out].

Where?

[Everywhere. With no building of its own, NTS will tour to big

theatres, small theatres and places where theatre has never been,

across the whole of Scotland and beyond.]

Why?

[Because Scotland has the talent and the audience to have a world-

class National Theatre.]

Figure 2: NTS Website Intro.

After entering the splash page, web users entered the default home page of the NTS. The home page, as with the rest of the NTS website, is devoid of clichéd images or

iconography of either Scotland or theatre, such as tartan, bagpipes, heather or thistles, masks, velvet curtains or stars. Rather, the website and the NTS marketing in general, through brochures, programmes, leaflets etc., appeared to be aiming to create a contemporary, relatively stark brand identity using bold colours and a distinctive style.

At the beginning of the 21st century, it has been suggested that identity can now be consumed or negotiated at will.[10] While even supposedly 'stable' identities, such as gender, age and the body, can, with developments in bio-technology, be reconstructed, other subjugating categories of identification, such as race, have undergone processes of, at least, intellectual deconstruction. [11] Nevertheless, the concept of national identity – whose construction has been well documented[12] and demise often heralded[13] – remains surprisingly resilient and is still the subject of critical and political discourses as well as the focus of economic, social and cultural mobilisations. However, the forces of globalisation have problematised the political ethics or cultural desirability or even viability of identifying or promoting any essentialist notions of a 'national identity'. Yet, with political devolution in the UK, in 1999, the Scottish Executive, as part of their cultural manifesto, agreed to fund the establishment of Scotland's first National Theatre. However, rather than any expectations of the National Theatre helping to consolidate a sense of 'a' national identity, the non-building-based, commissioning and producing National Theatre of Scotland appeared to be particularly well placed to reflect diverse imaginings of identity and the nation.

Indeed, in many ways, the NTS model appeared to be a departure from the prototypical building-based National Theatres that appeared in many parts of Europe in the latter

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[10] See, for e.g., Bauman, Z. (2004), *Identity,* Cambridge: Polity Press; Bauman, Z., (2005), *Liquid Life,* Cambridge: Polity; Bell, E. & Miller, G. (eds) (2004) *Scotland in Theory: Reflections on Culture and Literature,* New York: Rodopi; Hall, S. & DuGay, P., (eds), (1996), *Questions of Cultural Identity,* London: Sage.

[11] See, for e.g., Miles, R (1993), *Racism after 'Race Relations',* Routledge: London

[12] See for e.g. Hobsbawn, E.J. & Ranger, T. (1983) *The Invention of Tradition,* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge; Ernest Gellner, (1992) 'Nations and Nationalism: New Perspectives on the Past" Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; Anderson, B. (1996) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso; London.; Norman, W. (2006) *Negotiating Nationalism: Nation-Building, Federalism and Secession in the Multi national State,* Oxford University Press: Oxford ; Delanty & Kumar (2006) *The SAGE Handbook of Nations and Nationalism,* Sage; London: Lane Bruner, M. (2002) *Strategies of Remembrance: the Rhetorical Dimensions of National Identity Constructions,* University of South Carolina Press: Columbia.

[13] See for e.g. Hobsbawn, E.J. (1990) *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.; Featherstone, M. (ed) (1990) *Global culture: Nationalism, Globalisation and Modernity*, Sage: London; Lash, S. & Urry, J. (1994) *Economies of Signs and Space,* Sage: London.

centuries of the last millennium. These traditional National Theatres were often perceived as elitist – representing and reaching a narrow, predominantly bourgeois constituency in a country's capital city. The NTS, however, both structurally — as a non-building based, commissioning and producing body — and strategically – as evidenced through its stated aims and objectives — appeared, from the outset, to be created to both reach and represent a wider public. Indeed, through its early focus on site-specific and risk-taking performance, through its objective to actively involve participants in theatre making and through the company's intent to imbed diversity in all aspects of the company's work, the NTS appeared well positioned to create a democratically representative national public sphere.

This thesis begins by charting the birth and development of National Theatres in Europe in the context of the evolution of the ideology of nationalism and the process of nation building. National Theatres are examined with regard to their connection with, what Habermas terms, the bourgeois public sphere; a theoretical domain between civil society and the state through which public opinion can be formed and informed, debated, expressed and contested. The public sphere is not, as Eriksen argues, "an institution, but rather a *communicative network*"[14] and, as such, provides a particularly fitting theoretical analogy for an institution – i.e. the NTS – which itself exists through a series of communicative networks. The concept of the public sphere also provides a useful analytic tool for the constructivist methodological approach that understands all aspects of social reality as being continually constructed and reconstructed. While there does exist criticism of the idea of the public sphere,[15] nevertheless, as a means to conceptualise a communicative or expressive arena particular to modern, complex societies, the public sphere remains, as Fraser writes "an indispensable resource".[16]

This thesis offers a snapshot of the NTS during its formative years and examines the ways in which this particular public sphere has been created from within, and influenced by, the specific cultural, political and economic context and circumstances from within which it was borne. As the thesis argues, at the outset, the company adopted a broad interpretation of its national remit and did not appear to be bounded

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[14] Eriksen, E. O., ibid, p31
[15] See, for e.g., Calhoun, C. (1992), *Habermas and the Public Sphere,* Cambridge Mass: Mitt Press.
[16] Fraser, N. (1992), 'Rethinking the Public Sphere: a Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy', in Calhoun, C. *Habermas and the Public Sphere,* Cambridge Mass: Mitt Press, pp109-142 (p110).

by any particular borders that the company's national status might suggest. However, influenced by a variety of factors and forces over the period of this research the NTS's more radical edge began to appear more dulled. Exploring some of the forces and factors that have affected the NTS during its formative years, the thesis concludes by suggesting that the introduction of direct government funding in 2007 has allowed the potential for party political agendas to interfere with the NTS's artistic freedom. While, after little more than three years since its inauguration, it is too early to make any definitive statements as to the NTS's future, the changes in the funding structures of the NTS would appear to have little long-term benefits to the development of the company as a critical, representative and inclusive public sphere.

Chapter One: In Theory

Introduction

In order to contextualise the emergence of the National Theatre of Scotland in post devolution Scotland, this chapter offers a broad socio-historical overview of the establishment and development of National Theatres in Europe from the seventeenth century and beyond. Exploring the role of National Theatres in the nation-building process, the chapter touches on the ways in which these centralised and monumental cultural institutions were part of an emerging liberal, bourgeois public sphere that, at least until the end of the nineteenth century, represented, without challenge, only a limited conception of 'the public'. The chapter then charts the emergence, in the twentieth century, of decentralised national theatrical projects that, in their form, sought to create more democratically representative public spheres. These decentralised theatre projects mirrored a broader transfer from hierarchical and centralised systems of government in Europe towards de-centralised and multi-level forms of governance which reflected the gradual shift in focus from national, to a complex interaction between local, regional, and supra-national perspectives, processes and identities. Nevertheless, while World War Two appeared to have stretched to the limits justifications of ethnic nationalism, the Westphalian paradigm of nation-state sovereignty appeared to maintain its influence.

In the United Kingdom, the devolution of state powers at the end of the twentieth century reflected the way in which the United Kingdom had, historically, been normatively constituted. The United Kingdom was originally constituted as a union state formed through the varying alliances of four separate nations, with England being the hegemonic partner in this alliance, not least because of its greater size and population, relative to its constituent parts. Thus, the public sphere in the United Kingdom has always held a tension between these interweaving identities and the ways in which recent constitutional changes have been implemented reflects the historical relationship between the separate nations towards the stronger partner. As this chapter examines, Scotland always retained a degree of institutional autonomy from England and the devolution settlement builds on this legacy. Four years after devolution, the new Scottish Executive released funding for the establishment of Scotland's first

National Theatre. This non-building based, commissioning and producing body appears to be in contradistinction to the monumental National Theatres that helped legitimise the nation. This chapter concludes by asking whether this new cultural institution, and the nation that it represents, is better placed than conventional National Theatre models to create a public sphere that can embrace the always-incomplete conceptions and processes of democracy.

Nation Building and National Theatres

At a time when the absolute authority of the Church and the monarchy in Europe was threatened and new constellations and reconfigurations of social order and power were sought the idea of the nation was mobilised as an assembly through which 'the people' could be governed. [17] According to Anderson a nation is an imagined community: "imagined because members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion". [18] While Smith argues that, in most cases, the modern nations of Europe have, to varying degrees, pre-modern "ethnic antecedents", [19] many commentators agree that the ideology of nationalism developed and spread from the eighteenth century, following the American and French Revolutions. [20] Revolting against the authority of the monarchy, the clergy, the aristocracy and foreign overlords, with whom political power had rested, the ideological impetus of nationalism was the self determination of 'the people': rule of the nation by the nation. [21] From this time, the nation became imagined as an assembly through which individuals could negotiate a

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[17] Since the Copernican revolution and the destabilising of the 'traditional order of things', new ideas of government and of the dispersals of power began to emerge. According to Foucault, during the 16th century, five questions became central within political and economic discourses of the time: "how to govern oneself, how to be governed, how to govern others, by whom the people will accept being governed, how to become the best possible governor". Miller, T & Yudice, G. (2002) *Cultural Policy,* London: Sage Publications, p3.

[18] Anderson, B. (1991), *Imagined Communities,* London: Verso.

[19] Smith, Anthony D. (1991), *National Identity*, London: Penguin Books. p32

[20] see for e.g. Hobsbawn, E.J. & Ranger, T. (1983), *The Invention of Tradition,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.; Ernest Gellner, (1992), *Nations and Nationalism: New Perspectives on the Past,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.; Anderson, B. (1996), *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* London: Verso; Norman, W. (2006), *Negotiating Nationalism: Nation-Building, Federalism and Secession in the Multi national State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.; Delanty & Kumar (2006), *The SAGE Handbook of Nations and Nationalism,* London: Sage.: Lane Bruner, M. (2002), *Strategies of Remembrance: the Rhetorical Dimensions of National Identity Constructions,* Columbia: University of South Carolina Press.

[21] Habermas, J. (2004), 'Learning from Catastrophe', in Pensky, M (ed. and translator), *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays*, Cambridge: Polity. p52

particular and communal sense of both cultural and civic identity and, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, political and cultural elites embarked on a process of nation or state building. Thus the imagined community of the nation became actually defined by territorial borders and the search for an 'authentic' and consolidated sense of national identity began.

Nation building was concerned with mobilising the masses to support the new configurations of power exercised through the modern state; [22] a state which was legitimised through its supposed expression of the 'will of the people', rather than the divine authority of the King or the Church and the many National Theatres that were established during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries may be seen as a part of this movement. [23] Housed in large, often neo-classical[24] buildings, they sought to both promote an image of the nation abroad and to stage the nation – to help consolidate a sense of national identity. [25] As Wilmer writes;

> normally situated in a major edifice with an impressive façade in a prominent position in the capital city, the National Theatre [took] on the role of representing the national culture…thus, regardless of whether they were producing the most innovative or popular or professional work, the National Theatres… have been part of the national(ist) apparatus to establish a hegemonic interpretation and appreciation of the nation.[26]

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[22] See Pierson, C. (2004), *The Modern State*, 2nd Edition London: Routledge.

[23] The oldest national theatre company in Europe is the French Comédie-Française established in 1680 by Royal decree. National Theatres were established in Denmark (c. 1746 – 48), Sweden (c.1765 – 89), and Russia (c.1812) and in the non-independent nations of Poland (c.1765), Hungary (c.1837), Romania (c.1840), Croatia (c.1860), Finland (c.1870s), and Norway (c.1876). The Abbey Theatre (1904) in Ireland was the first National Theatre to be opened in the English-speaking world.

[24] The Neo-classical architecture of the late eighteenth century "sought effects of solidity and permanence, of solemnity and rigidity, of a stillness and silence evocative of timeless truths from which …architectural principles were drawn" (Honour, H. (1977), *Neo-Classicism*, London: Penguin. p20).

[25] see Kruger, L. (1992), *The National Stage: Theatre and Cultural Legitimation*, *in England, France and America*, London: The University of Chicago Press.

[26] Wilmer, S.E. (2004), 'On Writing National Theatre Histories' in Wilmer, S. E. (ed), *Writing and Rewriting National Theatre Histories*, Iowa City: University of Iowa Press. p17.

In general, National Theatres either arose as a form of political/ cultural protest against the imposition of a dominant culture[27] or they arose as the result of the desire of an educated elite to spread the ideals of Enlightenment rationality and morality. The first type of National Theatre – those that were a protest against political and cultural domination – are exemplified by the National Theatres of Finland and Hungary – both of which were under the political control of, respectively, Russia and Austria. Although neither National Theatre was, or was able to be, overtly politically nationalist they both reflected a desire to reject the dominant ideology and assert or replace it with a new national "structure of feeling".[28] For example, in Finland, where Russian and Swedish were the official languages, the National Theatre was established by Finnish speaking people as a public site for the revival of the Finnish language, even though, until that time Finland had no well established tradition of literary drama. In Hungary, too, the building of a National Theatre was also related to the preservation of the language as well as a form of protest and resistance to political and cultural domination. Pusic states that, for many of the non-German nations within the Hapsburg Empire, theatre "became an important substitute for political activity, statehood, and educational system. It also served as a space for linguistic, cultural and national identification and an area of distinction from dominant neighbouring cultures, particularly German and Italian".[29]

The second type of National Theatre - established to spread the ideals of Enlightenment rationality and morality – was the result of the intentions of an intellectual elite or monarchy. Examples of these types of National Theatres can be

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[27] See Carlson, M. (2008), 'National Theatres: Then and Now', in Wilmer, S. E. (ed), *National Theatres in a Changing Europe,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p22. Carlson states, "the major spread of the National Theatre concept during the nineteenth century was into Central and Eastern Europe, where it most commonly appeared as a central element in challenging the political and aesthetic hegemony of the French, German and Russian languages and the political systems that they represented" (p22). Indeed, Carlson notes that the only National Theatre to be established beyond Central and Eastern Europe during the first half of the nineteenth century was the National Theatre of Portugal – founded in 1846. By the latter part of the nineteenth century National Theatres began to spread to Northern Europe, (e.g. Finland 1872, Sweden 1876, Norway 1850 and Ireland, 1904). During the twentieth century, the National Theatre concept spread beyond Europe, with a National Theatre established in Siam in 1935 and, later, others emerging, mainly in Asia and Africa, in what Carlson describes as a "local imitation of European cultural values" (p24).

[28] Raymond Williams coined the term "the structure of feeling" to define "the particular living result of all the elements in the general organisation [of a community which]…any formal description would be too crude to express" Williams, R. (1961), *The Long Revolution,* London: Chatto and Windus. p65.

[29] Pusic, B. (2004), 'Nationalism, Tradition, and Transition in Theatre Historiography in Slovenia' in Wilmer, S.E. (ed), *Writing and (Re) Writing National Theatre Histories*, Iowa City: University of Iowa Press. p66.

seen in Poland and Russia, in the German Hamburg and Mannheim National Theatres and also in the texts and debates that predated the formation of the National Theatre in Britain. For example, in Poland, before its partition, King Stanislas Augustus founded a National Theatre that, he hoped, would aid in the spread and promotion of Enlightenment ideas and moral attitudes. In Russia, too, for a time Catherine the Great patronised the National Theatre - through money, buildings and even her own scripts - using the stage as a site for expressing her commitment to the ideas and ideals of the Enlightenment within Russia and also a way of promoting Russian as an enlightened nation within Europe.

Highly influential in the promotion of the idea of national cultural purity were the writings of, amongst others, Herder, who encouraged intellectuals to search for "the unique aspects of cultural expression amongst their peoples that would testify to separate and distinct identities". [30] The construction of a uniform and cohesive sense of national identity involved the search for 'authentic' origins through the mobilisation, and sometimes falsification, of myths and folklore, as well as the invention of traditions. [31] In Scotland, for example, the infamous 'discovery' by James Macpherson of the apparently ancient epic Gaelic *Poems of Ossian,* provided inspiration throughout Europe and the United States[32] for the romantic search for 'authentic' origins and was quoted at length by Goethe in his *Sturm und Drang* novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther.* [33] According to Wilmer, Herder, and the German romantic tradition in general, had a significant influence on both dramatic literature[34] and theatre production throughout Europe in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the work of the National Theatres of that time there was, states Wilmer, an "attempt to 'awaken the nation' to what was professed as its natural sense of nationhood and to promote and foster a notion of national identity". [35]

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[30] Wilmer, S. E. (2005), 'Herder and European Theatre' in Gounariduou, K., (ed), *Staging Nationalism: Essays on Theatre and National Identity,* North Carolina: McFarland & Co Pub. p63

[31] see Hobsbawn, E. & Ranger, T. (eds), (1983), *The Invention of Tradition,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[32] See Hook, A., (1987), 'Scotland and Romanticism: the International Scene' in Craig, C. (general ed), *The History of Scottish Literature*, Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press. pp307-321

[33] See Wilmer, S.,E. (2005), 'Herder and the European Theatre' in Gounaridou, K. (ed), *Staging Nationalism: Essays on Theatre and National Identity*, London: McFarland & Co.

[34] As examples, Wilmer cites the work of "Oehlenschlager in Denmark, Victor Hugo in France, Kisfaludy and Katona in Hungary, Pushkin in Russia, Alfieri, Manzoni, and Niccolini in Italy, Kivi in Finland, and Yeats in Ireland", Wilmer (2005), ibid, p70.

[35] Wilmer, ibid, p 73.

In the texts and documents leading to the establishment of the National Theatres in Northern and Eastern Europe, Schiller's famous essay[36] on the moral benefits of the theatre is often "quoted, adapted and referred to frequently". [37] Schiller's essay, *The Stage as a Moral Institution,* spoke of a kind of enlightened universal morality depicted through a drama that could transcend national borders: "such a theatre would offer ideal emancipation through aesthetic education, which ought to include *and* transcend political freedoms". [38] Nevertheless, Schiller, like many intellectuals of the time, saw the nation as a legitimate political entity through which to spread this universal rationalism. So, while on one hand this period was underpinned by the universalistic aspirations of the Enlightenment and democratic ideals, at the same time a contradictory process of forming a homogeneous and particularistic idea of the nation occurred.

The Public Sphere

Within the territorial borders of these developing nation-states there emerged, for the first time, according to Habermas, what he terms the public sphere. [39] The public sphere arose and became actualised, Habermas argues, by an emerging secular bourgeoisie who were developing the conditions through which to engage in a form of democratic politics. The emergent bourgeoisie "gradually replaced a public sphere in which the ruler's power was merely represented *before* the people with a sphere in which state authority was publicly monitored through informed and critical discourse *by* the people ". [40] The concept of the public sphere refers to those environments through which people could debate and engage with public authorities "over the general rules governing relations". [41] The public sphere was, therefore, conceived of as a space

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[36] Brandt, G. & Wiebe Hogendoorn, (1993), *German and Dutch Theatre, 1600 – 1848,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp 217 – 221; Schiller, F. (1784), 'The Stage as a Moral Institution' (anonymous translation) in Gerould, D. (ed), (2000),*Theatre Theory Theatre: the Major Critical Texts,* London: Applause.

[37] Senelick, L. (1991), *National Theatre in Northern and Eastern Europe,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p3.

[38] Kruger, L. (1992), p85.

[39] Habermas, J. (1989), translated by Burger, T. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society,* Cambridge: Polity Press.

[40] Habermas, J. (1989), introduction, pxi.

[41] Habermas, J. ibid, p26.

between private individuals, formed into a critical 'public' or 'publics', [42] and the state. In this burgeoning communicative realm – in the coffee shops in Great Britain [43] and *salons* in France, the societies, the press, the journals and newspapers - the bourgeoisie critiqued, debated and formed opinions on the workings of the state and public authority and, by so doing, brought influence to bear on its workings. Habermas argues that it was during the early decades of the eighteenth century that 'art', now understood as a commodity within a capitalist commercial economy and, therefore, an "object of free choice and changing preferences"[44] came to be a truly public activity and the National Theatres were also appropriated as a platform of this new public sphere. [45]

An example of the emergence and concrete manifestation of the bourgeois public sphere can be observed in the changing aesthetic of the theatre building. Carlson argues that the architect may be seen as an interpreter and historian of humanity "because the dominant architectural elements of each society have revealed the focus and values of that society". [46] The façade and spatial arrangement of the theatre building – the auditorium, stage and public areas - may be seen to reflect and reinforce, to varying degrees, the social order of the time and place in which they were built. For example, the hierarchy of enclosed boxes in the auditoriums of princely Renaissance theatres in continental Europe were a visual manifestation of the stratified and segregated society of that period; with the high aristocracy occupying the upper boxes and those socially 'below' being placed in a, literally, descending order, with the 'general public' seated, or standing, in the pit at ground level, or in the high galleries - the 'gods' - above. [47] Over the course of the nineteenth century, the replacement of "the courts' publicity of representation with the institutions of a public sphere in civil society"[48] is reflected in the monolithic, grand buildings that housed the National Theatres of this period. These monumental theatre buildings built in elegant residential

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[42] see, for e.g, Love, H. (2004), 'How Music Created a Public', in *Criticism, Special Edition: 'When is a Public Sphere? 46: 2..* Love suggests that rather than a singular public sphere or public, there were, in fact a multiplicity of both. Love also suggests that these distinct public spheres did not necessarily interact.

[43] "By the first decade of the eighteenth century London already had 3,000" Habermas, ibid, p32.

[44] Habermas, J. ibid, p40.

[45] Habermas, J. ibid, p14.

[46] Carlson, M. (1989), *Places of Performance: the Semiotics of Theatre Architecture,* London: Cornell University Press, p81.

[47] Although this also reveals a contradiction regarding the idea of an architectural reflection of the social hierarchy, as the 'Gods' are, in fact, the highest, though with the poorest sight-lines, area of the auditorium.

[48] Habermas, J. (1989), p34.

areas of the city that are found in many parts of continental Europe "still as a rule fulfil the symbolic functions associated with them in the nineteenth century – they serve…as highly visible signs of civic dedication to the arts, especially the arts as defined by the high bourgeois culture of the nineteenth century". [49]

The western, dramatic literary tradition had, since the Renaissance, represented and by doing so affirmed and legitimated the significance and status of the ideas, norms and concerns of their patrons – the aristocracy, bourgeoisie and, then, the middle classes – the elite of each national constituency. If nation building had legitimated the hegemony of a ruling class through the romantic ideology of nationalism, the political and material disenfranchisement of the majority of people had led to the development of growth of the many manifestations of socialism. Increasingly, towards the end of the nineteenth century concessions were made towards the, now institutionalised if not actualised, Enlightenment "promise of universal accessibility"[50] through the gradually growing, if uneven, embrace of suffrage. Though this promise was, in reality, only available through an individual's economic position in the market, nevertheless, economic inequality for the masses was substituted for at least some degree of political influence. Habermas states that "the interferences of the state in the private sphere since the end of the [nineteenth century] showed that the masses, now entitled to political participation, succeeded in translating economic antagonisms into political conflicts". [51] However, Habermas also argues that, rather than the masses appropriating the platform of the liberal public sphere and thereby transforming its promise to accommodate and fulfil their needs, state and society became co-joined, which "entailed a corresponding disorganisation of the public sphere that was once the go-between linking state and society". [52] The waves of this disruption in the bourgeois public sphere were experienced in the work of the movement known as the historical avant-garde. Though differing in their political, aesthetic and ideological imaginings, the avant- garde provided a cultural attack on the bourgeois adoption of the public sphere through art.

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[49] Carlson, M. (1989), p88
[50] Habermas, (1989), 145.
[51] Habermas, J. ibid, p145.
[52] Habermas, J. ibid, p177.

The Avant-Garde

The key practitioners of the theatrical avant-garde[53] (ca. 1900-1935) - Georg Fuchs, Antonin Artaud, Platon Kershentsev, Vsevolod Meyerhold - shared a disenchantment with the typical bourgeois stage with its presentation of an illusory reality through imitation. They sought to redefine the theatrical experience through the breaking down of the physical and social boundaries that had enclosed theatre in particular physical and social settings since the mid Renaissance – both through an internal change in the use of theatrical 'signs' but also externally through experimenting with 'new' theatrical spaces. Avant-gardists shared a desire to 'retheatricalise' the theatrical event not through naturalism and imitation, but through the creation of anti-illusionist theatre that demanded a new relationship between spectator and stage that would somehow activate the spectator into creative participation.

As Kershentsev wrote in 1918:

> The entire development of bourgeois theatre has brought with it the absolute passivity of the spectator …The theatre is no longer a place of creative forms and experiences but a place of recuperation in which one need do nothing at all…This is typically characteristic of the bourgeois order: politics are controlled and ruled by a small group of politicians while the great masses of the people remain passive. [54]

Rather than the traditional, framed box stages with their distanced and distancing auditoria, proposals were developed and, sometimes, realised[55] which allowed for greater unity between stage and spectator. As Fuchs wrote in *The Stage of the Future* (1904); "according to their nature and their origin, player and spectator, stage and auditorium are not in opposition. They are one unity". [56] For, perhaps above all, the avant-garde were united in their rejection of the uncontested bourgeois classification of

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[53] see for eg Berghaus, G. (2005), *Avant-Garde Performance: Live Events and Electronic Technologies,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. Burger, P. (1984), *The Theory of the Avant-Garde,* Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

[54] Kershentev quoted in Fischer-Lichte, E. (1997), *The Shadow and the Gaze of Theatre,* Iowa: University of Iowa Press. p42.

[55] For a description of the Art Theatre in Munich, based on Fuch's ideas, and other theatre building proposals, see Fischer-Lichte, E. ibid, pp45-51

[56] Fuchs, G. quoted in Fischer-Lichte, E. ibid, p46.

and distinction between 'art' and 'reality', a distinction which the monumental National Theatres may be seen as manifesting in stone.

While the theatre of the bourgeois public sphere sought to "situate the audience through discipline, through various models of identifying subjects as spectators"[57], the theatre of the historical avant-garde, rather, called the author into question and challenged the relationship between the producer and the viewer by calling for the participation of the viewer in the construction of the work of art. Just as the bourgeois public sphere emerged as alternative systems of authority were being imagined, so now the avant-garde reflected the social currents that sought to explore different values and social orders to those promised by the Enlightenment. The avant-garde's aspiration to activate the participation of the viewer suggests a desire for the constitution of the observer as an active participant in the process of creating art. The social parallel of this cultural aspiration is mirrored through the mobilisation of the masses to participate in the re-creation of society. This emancipatory form of representation and spectatorship through the construction of active participants could be interpreted as a deepening and strengthening of democracy – as the polity becomes increasingly imbedded in and conversant with the processes and practice of democracy. Less idealistically, the same process could equally be interpreted, retrospectively, as reflecting a deepening of capitalism – whereby the capitalist economy is driven by a never-ending demand for diverse consumers. As such, hierarchical models of society, which rely on the construction of homogenised and fixed notions of identity, give way to imaginings of multiple and fragmented consumer identities.

20th Century National Theatre Projects

Over the course of the twentieth century, the currents generated aesthetically by the avant-garde movement and politically through socialism influenced the direction of a number of national theatre projects through which perhaps more consciously inclusive and/ or participatory objectives were sought for varying reasons and degrees of success. For example, to break beyond the limitations of a centralised, building-based

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[57] Fichter-Lichte, E. ibid, p42.

national theatre, the *théâtre populaire*[58] movement in France conceived of a de-centralised national theatre that sought to emphasise their 'national' remit in terms of fostering a more democratic and geographically accessible engagement with theatre. Sustained by the idea that pre-modern theatre was an inclusive and unifying expression of a collective culture that transcended social divisions, and also the egalitarian Enlightenment belief that culture promoted democratic participation, the central issues posed by the *théâtre populaire* movement was the ideal "of democratising access to theatre". [59] Roman Rolland, whose influence shaped the principles of *théâtre populaire* until the mid 1950s, was inspired by Maurice Pottecher's essay, *Le Théâtre du Peuple* (1899); the first widely acknowledged tract advocating a systematic project of theatrical decentralisation through a network of provincial theatres. However, it was not until after the Second World War, in the 1950s, that the ideals of *théâtre populaire* became most fully actualised[60] and received state support and financial subsidy. However, according to Kruger, the project seemed "finally unable to escape the persistently patronising rhetoric of general edification". [61] For, whilst acknowledging the codification of class stratification in certain aspects of the nineteenth century 'high culture' or 'state' theatre tradition, *théâtre populaire* advocates "never doubted that *theatre art*, the performance of a dramatic work of lasting literary as well as social value, could be inserted intact into the lives of the urban working class…it…makes it…difficult for them to grasp the degree to which the very form of a text that marks it as dramatic in the late nineteenth century …is shaped by the force of those rituals of place and occasion, in particular the specialised theatre building designed to offer a performance of a text with no other distractions for the undivided attention of a literate audience possessed of substantial cultural capital".[62] The *théâtre populaire* then, however radical it may have been in its structures, continued to appropriate the ideals and aims of nineteenth century cultural institutions in which,

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[58] For e.g., see Whitton, D. (2001), 'Whatever Happened to Théâtre Populaire? The Unfinished History of People's Theatre in France', Batley, E., & Bradby, D. (eds), *Morality and Justice. The Challenge of European Theatre,* Amsterdam/ New York: Rodopi.
[59] Kruger, L. (1992), p54.
[60] For example, most famously, in 1920, the state had subsidised Gemier's massive TP touring company which ran for two seasons.
[61] Kruger, L. (1992), p81.
[62] Kruger, L. (1992), p79.

essentially, "the elites invited the citizenry to become educated to a prescribed view of the world and its cultural order".[63]

In Britain, the crystallisation of avant-garde aesthetics and socialist principles coalesced on a national scale through the various local groups that made up the communist Workers' Theatre Movement (1926-35).   This openly propagandist unsubsidised grassroots theatre "was concerned with agitation rather than moral uplift or entertainment"[64] and, though national in scale, these projects were guided by socialist principles which traversed national boundaries – class struggle was a greater motivating force than issues of 'national identity'. The cross-fertilisation of themes and ideas explored by groups of the Workers' Theatre Movement was as strong nationally as internationally. For example, the subjects of the Glasgow Workers' Theatre Movement's *Living Newspapers* and their repertory material borrowed more from their counterparts in the US than, say, London. In the United States, many members of the Workers' Theatre Movement were absorbed into the state-supported Federal Theatre Project (1935-39)[65] - established partly to provide work to unemployed theatre workers during the Depression. [66] Rather than being an exemplary symbol of the nation, the Federal Theatre Project, according to Kruger, "provided the occasion and the means for radically refunctioning theatre …[by] stimulating social and theatrical engagement of a hitherto unrepresented public". [67]

These national theatre projects, which aimed at creating decentralised and more democratic public spheres within the boundaries of a national jurisdiction, were the forerunners of a more general trend towards decentralisation. However, as Craig writes, "as the sweep of modernisation took in more and more of the world, and as the wars of the twentieth century broke down and reconstructed the 'nations' of the world… [the] model of a homogenous nation shaped within a homogenous cultural and linguistic tradition became more and more irrelevant not only to the reality of people's

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[63] Pachter, M. & Landry, C. (2001), *Culture at the Crossroads: Culture and Cultural Institutions at the Beginning of the 21st Century* Stroud: Commedia. p22.

[64] Samuel, R., MacColl, E. & Cosgrove, S. (1985), *Theatres of the Left: 1880-1935 Worker's Theatre Movements in Britain and America*, London: Routledge, p33.

[65] See http://www.gmu.edu/library/specialcollections/federal.html (last accessed 3/08/09) for links to various archival material related to the FTP. See also Witham, B. (2003), *The Federal Theatre Project: A Case Study*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.; Kruger, L. (1992), pp133-185

[66] Over the course of its four year existence, the FTP employed around 30,000 people, producing 1,200 plays in 31 states to an audience of around 25 million people.

[67] Kruger, L. (1992), p134.

experience, but to any possible projection of what nations were ever likely to be". [68] Van Maanen et al[69] note that, since the Second World War, many countries in Western Europe have increasingly placed emphasis on de-centralising their theatre infrastructures. There has also been a coterminous move to devolve decision-making powers regarding theatre subsidies away from central government and to local and regional authorities.[70] Van Maanen et al argue that this trend towards de-centralisation was stimulated by a more general trend in the 1960s towards the democratisation of culture.[71] From this time, many of the practices of the avant-garde movement were once again re-invigorated, if now for different purposes. [72] Unconventional venues and theatre practices were once again appropriated through the work of companies such as Bread and Puppet and the Wooster Group in the United States and Welfare State International and *7:84* in the United Kingdom. As Van Maanen et al suggest, "the growing movement towards European unity…has encouraged the trend towards cultural decentralisation. The strategy to increase co-operation between European countries and reduce the rigidity of national frontiers has softened the traditionally national perspective of those involved in cultural decision-making…Moreover, the funding of local, ethnic, regional and supra-national theatre projects are all part of decentralising the cultural infrastructure".[73]

The Limits of the Nation?

In Europe during World War II, the ideological limits of nationalism appeared to have reached a zenith and, in the war's aftermath, moves towards re-forging a sense of Europe-wide identity were driven by social and ethical, as well as economic and political, imperatives. The establishment of the United Nations from 1942 aimed to create international peacekeeping structures that transcended national borders and offer some authority above the absolute sovereignty of the nation-state. In Europe, first with the founding of the Council of Europe in 1949, collective institutions were

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[68] Craig, C. (ed), (1987), *The History of Scottish Literature, Vol 4 Twentieth Century,* Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press. p7.

[69] Van Maanen, H. & Wilmer, S.E. (eds), (1998), *Theatre Worlds in Motion,* Amsterdam: Rodopi

[70] Van Maanen, H. & Wilmer, S. E. ibid, p18.

[71] Van Maanen, H., & Wilmer, S. E. ibid, p23.

[72] Fichter-Lichte argues that rather than the historical avant-garde's desire to activate the observer, in more recent experimental work "far more, the spectators are given back their right to *spectate*. Post-modern theatre elevates the spectator to absolute masters of the possible semioses without, at the same time, pursuing any other ultimate goal" (Fichter-Lichte, E. (1997), p 57).

established to promote European integration based on the principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of law and, following the Treaty of Rome in 1957, a more material union was brokered with the creation of the single European Economic Community. Multilevel forms of governance, as well as the wider dissemination of mass and cross-cultural 'goods', allowed and encouraged the possibility of communities to be more easily imagined beyond the boundaries of the nation. Even if such imagining remained within the purview of only a privileged few, nevertheless, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, information technology had allowed those communities and individuals to connect beyond national borders at any time at the touch of a button. Akin to the print revolution, the creation and spread of the World Wide Web heralded an information revolution that promised a new democratisation of knowledge.[74] At the same time, economic globalisation - the de-regulation of global markets, more efficient travel and communications technology and networks, and the growth of trans – and international organisations – also challenged the absolute sovereignty of nation states in the economic, political, legal and cultural spheres.

In response, both within and beyond Europe, it has been suggested[75] that there has been evidence of a trend towards the decentralisation of authority in many areas aiming to provide more appropriate conditions whereby political decision-making and implementation can be more closely linked to those most potentially able to respond. National decentralisation can be evidenced in the creation of supra-national networks, both public and private, which formulate policy and respond to issues on the global level. Likewise, de-centralisation has developed at the state and sub-state levels, where local, regional or national governance strategies allow potentially more democratic responses; "this multi-level governance project is part of a broader post-Westphalian 'meta constitutional conversation' that is occurring between non-state and state actors…as they struggle to develop and institutionalise a new political order".[76]

The "erosion of traditional bases of political authority"[77] has led to the formulation – or at least the rhetoric — of changing processes of governing, of governing through

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[73] Van Maanen, H. (1998), p31.
[74] *Power and the Web,* BBC Radio 4, 3/12/07.
[75] See, for e.g., Bache, I. & Flinders, M. (eds), *Multi-level Governance,* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[76] Peters, B. G. & Pierre, J. (2005), 'Multi-level Governance and Democracy: A Faustian Bargain?' in Bache, I. & Flinders, M. (eds), *Multi-level Governance,* Oxford: Oxford University Press. p74.
[77] Peters & Pierre, ibid, p85

governance. According to Pierson[78], 'governance' is a phenomenon of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries and can be found at the sub-state, state and supra-state levels. [79] 'Governance' refers to the perceived move, throughout European political systems, from hierarchical and centralised systems of government towards more devolved, de-centralised networks of dispersed power bases or "governing without government". Governance challenges 'traditional' understandings of state rule "built around the ideas of sovereignty, authority, constitutionality and impersonal power exercised through a public bureaucracy".[80] If 'traditional', vertical, hierarchical models of government worked on the principle that decisions were made at the top of the chain and were implemented by those below, governance is defined by 'policy networks' through which:

> policy is made and implemented not by government authority *independent* of social actors but in the process of on-going exchange of information, resources and opportunities between elements in the governing apparatus and more-or-less organised interests in society. Relationships within the network thus created are not uni-directional and hierarchic but based on negotiation and exchange, in a web of relationships which is consciously maintained across time.[81]

According to Pierre and Peters,[82] a variety of factors have contributed to the gradual rise and development of governing through governance, including the overburdening of public services since the 1970s, the increasing complexity of societies which has challenged effective management through a central authority, the testing of nation-state sovereignty posed by economic globalisation and the deepening of capitalism and the possibility which governance solutions offer in terms of spreading the responsibility for failures in policy. The concept and practice of multi-level governance contains "both vertical and horizontal dimension… 'multi-level' referred to the increased vertical interdependence of actors operating at different territorial levels, while 'governance'

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[78] Pierson, C. (2005), p14, *The Modern State,* London: Routledge

[79] The term 'governance' is used within a number of academic disciplines, for a detailed bibliography of the term and its uses, see: http://www.valt.helsinki.fi/vol/laitos/intersektioportaali/governance/Keywords.htm (accessed 15/2/08).

[80] Pierson,C. (2005), p156.

[81] Pierson, C. ibid, p158.

[82] Peters, B. G. & Pierre, J. (2000), *Politics and the State,* New York: St. Martin's Press. pp52-67.

signalled the growing interdependence between governments and non-governmental actors".[83]

The forces of globalisation and the allied changes in the exercise of state powers discussed above have to some degree problematised the political ethics, cultural desirability or perhaps even viability of identifying or promoting any essentialist notions of a national identity. Indeed, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, it has been argued that identity can now be consumed or negotiated at will. While even supposedly 'stable' identities, such as gender, age and the body, can, with developments in bio-technology, be reconstructed, other categories of identification, such as race, have undergone processes of, at least, intellectual deconstruction.[84] As Bauman writes, "if the modern problem of identity was how to construct an identity and keep it solid and stable, the postmodern problem of identity is primarily how to avoid fixation and keep the options open".[85] Nevertheless, the concept of national identity – whose construction has been well documented and demise often heralded[86] – remains surprisingly resilient and still remains the subject of critical and political discourses as well as the focus of economic, social and cultural mobilisations. If any easy delineation or relationship between the idea of the 'nation' and the 'state' were ever possible, in the twenty-first century, these concepts are undergoing complex renegotiations that demand a different understanding of our relationship to the social world.

In the 'Europe' of the twenty-first century, the political, cultural and territorial borders of the nation-state continue to undergo conflicting processes of both construction and deconstruction. With globalisation and the transnational order having been driven by and responding to market forces, its continued impetus could be seen to be supported by a neoliberal agenda in which the free-market dominates over other concerns. From this perspective, while the nation-state may be ceding its sovereignty as Keating writes, nationalism, as an ideological means of social organisation may be understood to be

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[83] Bache, I. & Flinders, M. (2005), 'Multi-level Governance and British Politics' in Bache, I. & Flinders, M. (eds), *Multi-level Governance,* Oxford: Oxford University Press. p96.
[84] see, for eg, Miles, R. (1993), *Racism After 'Race Relations',* London: Routledge.
[85] Bauman, Z. (1996), 'From Pilgrim to Tourist: - or a Short History of Identity', in Hall, S. and Du Gay, P. (eds) *Questions of Cultural Identity* London: Sage. p18.
[86] See for e.g. Hobsbawn, E.J. (1990), *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.; Featherstone, M. (ed), (1990), *Global culture: Nationalism, Globalisation and Modernity*, London: Sage.; Lash, S. & Urry, J. (1994), *Economies of Signs and Space,* London: Sage.

"confronting the market with political and cultural priorities and about establishing public spaces beyond the market place".[87]

The remainder of this chapter will focus on the devolution of political powers to Scotland, exploring whether this has indeed allowed for the possibility of "confronting the market with political and cultural priorities and…establishing public spaces beyond the market place", particularly in relation to the establishment of Scotland's first National Theatre.

Devolution

The United Kingdom has always accommodated a degree of multi-level governance within its unwritten constitution with control over many civic institutions remaining in Scotland after the Union of the Scottish and English Parliaments in 1707. The more recent constitutional changes to decentralise authority in the UK, brought in since the election of the New Labour government in 1997, are a response to a perceived democratic deficit but also, belatedly, reflect the general trend towards the combination of de-centralisation and multi-level forms of governance throughout Europe. The current devolutionary settlement has allowed the Scottish Government and Parliament competency over certain policy areas, however UK sovereignty still rests with the Westminster government. Although the United Kingdom itself has no written constitution, as signatory to the Treaty of Rome and successive charters, treaties and conventions, most recently the Treaty of Lisbon, Britain is constitutionally bound to the legal and bureaucratic framework of the European Union.

If the cultural and ethnic identities of those within the four nations that comprised the UK have been multiple and changing, it is perhaps unsurprising also that "a fully unified British cultural identity never appeared".[88] As Resnick writes,

> multinational states are a kind of template for the interweaving identities, languages, religions, and national cultures in historical experience. They encompass overlapping and conflicting identities. They may well have a

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[87] Keating, M.(2001), *Plurinational Democracy* Oxford: Oxford University Press. p136.
[88] Gardiner, M. (2004), *The Cultural Roots of British Devolution,* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. p4.

common overriding state structure and a single form of citizenship, but members of majority and minority-type nationalities usually situate themselves with regards to that state in quite distinctive ways.[89]

In Scotland, autonomous political sovereignty had been ceded through the 1707 Acts of Union with England: according to McCrone, "a pre-democratic compromise between the English and Scottish political elites"[90] in which Scotland's loss of political sovereignty was traded in exchange for influence within the newly amalgamated British state as well as access to the English economy and colonies. As Milne writes, following the Union, "the rapid modernisation of the Scottish economy…is famously anomalous, and helps to explain some of the peculiarities of Scottish nationalism as a response to capitalist modernisation". [91] Nation-state building did not, therefore, follow the same imperatives as many other nations in Europe in which, following Nairn's thesis, nationalism was the driver through which states mobilised their resources in order to enter the "world political economy". [92] In Scotland, rather a British identity was promoted by the centralised state with the establishment of new symbols of the British nation – such as the Union Jack (1801), the Royal Anthem (1745) and the suppression of non-English languages and customs. However, while on one hand there was a powerful impulse to forge an impression of a 'British identity', at the same time a sense of a distinctive Scottish civic identity continued to be fostered through the maintenance of separate civil institutions, in particular, its legal, religious and educational systems.[93] It was through the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Law and its courts, via the structure of local government and education, as well as with the existence of a separate media and the issuing of Scottish banknotes, that there continued to exist, according to McCrone, a "cultural prism for translating social change into political meaning and action".[94]

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[89] Resnick, P. (2005), 'History, Memory and National Identities in Multinational States' in *Canadian Political Science Association Conference, London, June, 2005.* p24.

[90] McCrone, D. (2001), *Understanding Scotland: The Sociology of a Nation (second edition),* London: Routledge. p43.

[91] Milne, D. (2002),'Cheerful History: the Political Theatre of John McGrath', *New Theatre Quarterly, Vol. 18, No. 4.* pp 313-324: 319.

[92] Nairn, T. (1977), *The Break-Up of Britain*, London: New Left Books. p335.

[93] see for e.g. Paterson, L. (1994), *The Autonomy of Modern Scotland,* Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh; Harvie, C.(1977), *Scotland and Nationalism: Scottish Society and Politics, 1707 - 1977,* George London: Allen & Unwin.

[94] McCrone, D. (2001), p79

Keating argues that the progression towards national assimilation and unity that occurred in many other European countries during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were, in the UK, "interspersed with assertions of territorial distinctiveness, so that each part of the Union came to have a slightly different relationship with the whole". [95] Assertions of Scotland's territorial distinctiveness were reinforced when a Secretary of State for Scotland was appointed in 1885 and the governance of Scotland's domestic policy was incorporated into the newly formed Scottish Office. Over the proceeding decades, the purview of the Scottish Office gradually expanded, so that by the 1990s the bulk of Scotland's domestic administration was executed through that office and was the reason, according to McCrone, that Scotland continued to exist as a "meaningful political unit"[96] and "undoubtedly helped to reinforce the sense of 'Scotland'".[97] Nevertheless, while Scottish institutions may have enjoyed a degree of autonomy[98], particularly in relation to other small nations in Europe[99], Midwinter et al[100] argue that these institutions were all an element of the central state and are doubtful that this arrangement could be understood as constituting a separate political system in Scotland. Moreover, with political and cultural activity being, for the most part, centralised in London, England was undoubtedly the hegemonic force in this multi-national state.

While 'home rule' movements in Scotland can be traced back at least to the mid-nineteenth century, it was in the final decades of the twentieth century that the roots of the present devolutionary settlement can be most clearly uncovered with the Scottish National Party's (SNP's) Hamilton by-election win in 1967 often cited as the first indicator of a serious nationalist challenge in Scotland. While the Scottish Nationalist Party, after their 1974 success with 30.4 per cent of the vote, did not again gain such a significant proportion of the overall vote till after devolution, nevertheless, since 1959, the electorate in Scotland had begun to significantly diverge from its counterpart in

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[95] Keating, M. (2005), *The Government of Scotland: Public Policy Making After Devolution,* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. p3.

[96] McCrone, D. (2001), p45.

[97] McCrone, D. (2001), p44.

[98] see for e.g. Kellas, J. G. (1989), *The Scottish Political System,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Moore, C. & Booth, S. (1989), *Managing Competition: Meso-Corporatism, Pluralism and the Negotiated Order in Scotland,* Oxford: Clarendon.

[99] See Paterson, L. (1994) *The Autonomy of Modern Scotland,* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

[100] Midwinter, A., Keating, M. & Mitchell, J. (1991), *Politics and Public Policy in Scotland,* London: MacMillam.

England with a gradually increasing Labour majority.[101] In an attempt to find redress for this democratic deficit and to appease the nationalist threat, from the late 1960s until their defeat at the 1979 general election, the Labour government set in motion steps towards some form of devolutionary settlements in both Scotland and Wales. However, following the election of a Conservative government in 1979, all further developments lay within the less influential purview of the now Labour opposition and its ally, in this respect, the Liberal-Democratic party. During the eighteen years of Conservative government, the party's neo-liberal policies appeared to attack those very institutions that had, in place of Empire, allowed for the creation of some continuing sense of 'British' identity within Scotland. At this time, alongside the privatisation of the nationalised industries - including telecommunications, gas, electricity and the airlines - in line with the more general shift from industrial to service based economies in the more developed nations, Scotland lost forty percent of its industrial base between 1979 – 1994.[102] With those institutions, sources of employment, ways of life and values now under threat, the 1997 general election culminated in a complete wipeout for the Scottish Conservatives.

In their manifestos for the 1997 general election the Labour and Liberal-Democratic parties were able to include well-developed and convincing proposals for major constitutional change. The devolution of a Scottish Parliament was a central element in New Labour's constitutional reform programme, which also included elected Assemblies for both Wales and Northern Ireland, and the establishment of un-elected Regional Assemblies in England. Within three months of their election victory, the New Labour government had published a White Paper detailing their plans for a devolved Scottish Parliament and, by September, a referendum was held in which 74.3 per cent of voters voted in support of a Scottish Parliament, with 63.5 per cent agreeing that the new Parliament should have tax varying powers. In December 1997, the government introduced the Scotland Bill to the House of Commons and, in November 1998, after receiving Royal assent, the Scotland Act 1998 was published. On the 6th May 1999, the first general election to the Scottish Parliament was held and the

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[101] McCrone notes that electoral polarisation between England and Scotland was in fact "more pronounced before 1914 than in the modern period" McCrone, D. (2001) p107. The Liberals were, for the most part, the dominant party in Scotland between 1832 and 1910, with the Labour party taking the lead from the 1950s. For a detailed analysis of voting patterns in British general elections between 1832 and 1999, see McCrone, D.ibid, pp 104 – 126.

[102] See chapter 4 in Brown, A., McCrone, D & Paterson, L. (1998), *Politics and Society in Scotland,* London: Macmillan.

Parliament assumed its full powers and was formally opened on the 1ˢᵗ July 1999. In the first two terms of the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Labour Party formed a coalition government with the Liberal Democrat Party. However, perhaps in evidence of the relative success of devolution, or, alternatively, the poor performance of the Lab/Lib coalition, in the general election in May 2007, the Scottish electorate voted, albeit a minority, SNP government with a manifesto pledge of Scottish independence.

Under the terms of the Scotland Act 1999, the Scottish Parliament has competence over all areas apart from those expressly reserved to Westminster. Reserved matters include; defence, foreign affairs, national security, specific provisions designated in order to maintain a single UK market, and equality regarding the economic distribution of the national welfare state. However, under the current settlement, Westminster retains ultimate sovereignty and power to dissolve the devolved institutions. The Scottish Parliament executes its legislative powers through what was, until 2007, named the Scottish Executive. According to Schlesinger et al, "the title 'Executive' was preferred… to indicate that there was only one government, that of the UK. Anything else, it seemed, would be to demote the supremacy of Downing Street and Westminster". [103] However, shortly after winning the 2007 election, the SNP re-branded the Scottish Executive with the title Scottish Government – both as a means of clarifying the government's role, functions and power, but also as a challenge that questioned the assumption of the continuing supremacy of Westminster.

A new politics?

From the outset the Scottish Parliament set out its intentions of creating a new politics – "with modern, relevant, open and transparent government"[104] – distinct from the adversarial style of Westminster. In the words of the first First Minister, Donald Dewar:

> The establishment of the Scottish Parliament …allows us the chance to make a new politics more at home with pluralism, inclusiveness and co-operation than

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[103] Schlesinger, P., Miller, D. & Dinan, W. (2001), *Open Scotland: Journalists, Spin Doctors and Lobbyists,* Edinburgh: Polygon. p275.
[104] Dewar, D. (1999), in foreword to Hassan, G. (ed), (1999), *A Guide to the Scottish Parliament: the Shape of Things to Come,* Centre for Scottish Public Policy, Edinburgh: The Stationery Office. p3.

the old, outdated adversarial structures, a politics more in tune with Scottish needs and opinions – of solutions and policies made in and for Scotland.[105]

There has been a degree of scepticism and accusations of exaggeration towards the polemical assertions of a 'new politics' in Scotland, as well as debate as to what degree, or indeed even whether, devolution has fulfilled this tantalising pledge. [106] Keating argues that, although this new politics was never clearly defined, the emphasis of change was on parliamentary processes and mechanisms to increase representation. These changes included the adoption of a form of proportional representation, which, by increasing the likelihood of coalition governments, would, at least in theory, provide the necessary conditions for a more consensual parliamentary decision-making process. The semicircular arrangement of the debating chamber in the controversial new Scottish Parliament building was also designed to encourage a less partisan and more cooperative political process. In addition a commitment was made to increased consultation with civil society in the formulation of policy. Cross-party committees were also given increased powers, including the authority to instigate legislation as well as the establishment of both forward and backward-looking inquiries.[107] As well as helping to "foster consensus and inter-party cooperation"[108], the committee system was intended to act as a more accessible channel between civil society and government, one more able to embrace outside interests. The petition system, which allows individuals to directly petition Parliament, was also seen as an "important manifestation of the power-sharing principle"[109] which, again, helped to support the lines of communication between parliament and society.

However, while the Holyrood Parliament may diverge in certain aspects from the Westminster model, many of the responsibilities and functions of the Scottish

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[105] Dewar, D. ibid, p3.

[106] See for e.g. Schlesinger, P., Miller, D. & Dinan, W. (2001); Keating, M. (2005), 'Policy Convergence and Divergence in Scotland Under Devolution' in *Regional Studies,* Vol 39:4; pp453-463.;
Keating, M. (2005), *The Government of Scotland: Public Policy Making After Devolution,* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.; Wright, A. (ed) (2000), *Scotland: the Challenge of Devolution*, Aldershot: Ashgate; Bradbury, J. (ed), (2008), *Devolution, Regionalism and Regional Development: The UK Experience,* Abingdon: Routledge p26.

[107] See Arter, D. (2004), 'The Scottish Committees and the Goal of a 'New Politics': a Verdict on the First Four Years of the Devolved Scottish Parliament', *Journal of Contemporary European Studies, Vol. 12, No. 1:* 71 – 91.

[108] Keating, M. (2005), *The Government of Scotland: Public Policy Making After Devolution,* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. p114.

[109] Arter, D. (2004), p76.

Government are merely an extension of what existed through the Scottish Office pre-devolution. As McGarvey notes, "the 1999 settlement merely added on a Parliament to executive, administrative and policy-making powers already devolved to the Scottish Office".[110] Thus, civil servants in Scotland are still employed by, and remain under the legislative remit of, the UK Home Civil Service and, while the dense networks that connected the counterparts of the civil service north and south of the border may have relaxed, nevertheless they remain to some degree embedded within the same system. Parry and Jones suggest that historically the Scottish Office[111] has tended to replicate Westminster's policy initiatives rather than create new ones[112] and while there have been policies since devolution that do offer some examples of divergence (e.g. University tuition fees, care for the elderly), as yet, evidence of "substantial devolved policy differences is limited".[113] Nevertheless, most commentators do agree that the conditions now exist whereby a more informed, responsive and autonomous policymaking process can develop. As Schlesinger et al write, "devolution has reinforced and extended a pre-existing Scottish public sphere that both overlaps with that of the UK and is at the same time becoming increasingly distinct within it".[114]

A New Scotland?

As part of this process of reinforcing and extending a distinct public sphere in Scotland, in 2000, the Scottish Executive launched its first National Cultural Strategy. The Cultural Strategy included a commitment to the development of Scotland's first National Theatre. The proposed model presented, and eventually supported, by the Scottish Executive was of a building-less National Theatre that would act as a commissioning body working alongside the existing theatre sector to produce theatre on a 'national' scale. The establishment of a National Theatre that might somehow represent this 'new Scotland' was evidence of a confidence in the idea of the Scottish nation that, although now politically manifest, was, nevertheless, culturally more problematic. For example,

[110] McGarvey, N. (2008), 'Devolution in Scotland: Change and Continuity' in Bradbury, (2008), p26
[111] Following the devolution of powers in 1999, the majority of the functions of the Scottish Office were transferred to the Scottish Executive with the newly named Scotland Office retaining more minimal responsibilities.
[112] Parry, R. & Jones, A. (2000), 'The Transition from the Scottish Office to the Scottish Executive', *Public Policy and Administration,* 15 (2): 53-66.
[113] McGarvey, N. (2008), 'Devolution in Scotland: Change and Continuity' in Bradbury, (2008), p40.
[114] Schlesinger, P. Miller, D. & Dinan, W., (2001), p5.

how would this new National Theatre both frame within the organisation and represent to its audiences concepts of national identity? Would its status as a national company compel it to create work about issues, themes and ideas that could be understood as being in someway "specifically Scottish"? Likewise, would the organisation's personnel and the artists with whom it worked be required to have discernible links with Scotland? These questions will be explored in more detail in the following chapters of this thesis. Nevertheless, in its form - as a non-building-based, commissioning and producing institution - the new National Theatre of Scotland was perhaps immediately well placed to potentially reflect heterogeneous imaginings of identity. Therefore, although perhaps not a conscious or at least stated factor in its original conception, from the outset, the very structure of the National Theatre of Scotland, appeared to encourage diversity, rather than the consolidation of a more specific sense of a national identity.

Bruner argues that national identity is always produced and/ or reproduced through rhetoric, "constructed to a significant degree by the articulations of state leaders, historians and other advocates, especially when these articulations are disseminated on a mass scale". [115] To date, the successive political administrations appear to have articulated a vision of Scotland that, above all else, aimed to promote a sense of Scotland's cultural diversity and a desire to forge international links. It is too early to assess what impact the SNP's influence will have on cultural policy and expressions of national identity in Scotland, however, early signs, perhaps unsurprisingly, reveal a move towards the support of those aspects of Scottish culture which are most identifiably and particular to Scotland, e.g. the promotion of Gaelic language and traditional music initiatives. However, moves to promote Scottish culture on the international stage have also been evident in, not least, the restructuring of the cabinet office with the arts falling under the remit of the newly created Minster for Europe, External Affairs and Culture, indicating the government's intention to align arts and culture with Scotland's standing abroad and its use as a tool of 'soft diplomacy'.

The National Theatre of Scotland was born within a neoliberal ideology where, in the interests of the global economy, the consumption of multiple forms of identity is actively promoted; theatre can be and often is a 'product' that is marketed, bought and consumed. However, recognition of art's potential value beyond the desire for, and confines of, capital accumulation is acknowledged through government/ public

subsidisation of the arts. Subsidisation of the arts appreciates some promise that the arts may offer by providing and furnishing an expressive public sphere. As Fossum and Schlesinger write,

> the public sphere is intimately linked with democracy. Since it is based on the tenet that everybody can speak without limitation, it can be considered a precondition for realising popular sovereignty…. It is the communicative context in which problems are discovered, thematised and dramatised. Here, they are also formed into opinions and wills on the basis of which formal decision-making agencies are empowered to act.[116]

However, national cultural institutions still carry and are to some degree burdened by their legacy as institutions of the bourgeois public sphere. Möntmann argues that, while eighteenth and nineteenth century cultural institutions were established by the bourgeoisie and reflected and promoted bourgeois values through an elision of art and politics, in the twenty-first century, cultural institutions, having lost their bourgeois peer group, have been "plummeted into a crisis of legitimisation".[117] Thus, Sheikh questions the goals of the art institution of the twenty-first century demanding whether they "comprise a critical and oppositional space, or are they merely on the vanguard of new modes of working and thinking, and there for the taking for corporate models of production and capitalisation?".[118]

Sheikh calls for a re-conceptualisation of the art institution, also reviving the notion of the public sphere, arguing that it is this space that the national cultural institutions must once again inhabit and embody. The NTS can be seen to be influenced by particular historical strands and trajectories not necessarily associated with conventional imaginings of national cultural institutions and National Theatres in particular. In its form, by eschewing a theatre building, the NTS is able to trace a historical thread back to the avant-garde, anti-bourgeois movement. In its governance, the National Theatre of Scotland reflects the intentions of the devolved systems of the new Parliament and

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[115] Lane Bruner, L.(2005), p319.
[116] Fossum, J.E. & Schlesinger, P. (2007), *The European Union and the Public Sphere: a Communicative Space in the Making?,* London & New York: Routledge. p4/5.
[117] Möntmann, N.(2006), *Art and its Institutions: Current Conflicts, Critique and Collaboration.* London: Black Dog. p2.
[118] Sheikh, S. (2006), 'The Trouble with Institutions, or, Art and its Publics', in Montmann, N., ibid, p149.

Government in Scotland aimed towards inclusion, cooperation and increasing democratic representation.

Cultural redistribution, through the subsidisation of the arts offers one of the few public spaces not completely determined by neo-liberal doctrine. While the market is central to the production and consumption of art, with state support the market does not entirely determine production. Subsidised art thus provides one of the few platforms for some form of resistance to the ideology of neo-liberalism. This does not mean to say that all works of art, either in terms of form or content, are, or should be, resistant. But regardless of the 'efficacy' of individual works of art to offer, or desire to offer, successful opposition to the commercialisation of culture through the culture industry, art can subvert and question norms and open up the public sphere of deliberation. As Mulcahy writes "at root, cultural policy is about creating public spheres that are not dependent on profit motives nor validated by commercial values. As political democracy is dependent on the existence of civil society and socio-economic pluralism, cultural policy stands as an essential public commitment in realizing these fundamental preconditions".[119]

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the establishment of National Theatres within the historical context of the emergence of the ideology of nationalism and the process of nation building from the seventeenth century. Also examined was the form and function of these cultural institutions in relation to the bourgeois liberal public sphere. The political, social and cultural challenges to this public sphere were introduced as well as the increasingly contested concept of the nation. However, though contested, the nation has continued to exert a powerful influence and has remained the ideological centre of effective political mobilisations for self-determination. The remainder of the chapter surveyed devolution of political power in Scotland and the new Executive's promise to establish Scotland's first National Theatre. The chapter suggested that the new National Theatre of Scotland may be conceptualised as a public sphere created by a national government to establish "public spaces beyond the market place".[120] The

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[119] Mulcahy, K. V. (2006), 'Cultural Policy: Definitions and Theoretical Approaches', *The Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society,* Vol. 35, No. 4.
[120] Keating, M. (2001), *Plurinational Democracy* Oxford: Oxford University Press. p136.

following chapter will narrow the focus by examining the particular circumstances that led to the formulation of this particular model of a National Theatre in post devolution Scotland. The remaining chapters in the thesis will analyse the actual contours of the NTS in its formative years – assessing the nature and form of the public sphere carved out through the establishment of the NTS.

Chapter Two: Theatre in Scotland

Introduction

The previous chapter explored the broader framework within which this study is located. It surveyed elements of the conceptual terrain within which the idea of National Theatres emerged in Europe before analysing the political landscape in the UK with regards to Scottish devolution. This chapter will begin to narrow the focus by concentrating more specifically on the relationship between the state and theatre in Britain and, in particular, on this relationship's effect on theatre in Scotland. Focusing on the historical threads and trajectories that led to the establishment of this particular model of National Theatre in post devolution Scotland, the chapter begins by exploring some of the causes of the uneasy development of a secure theatrical public sphere in Scotland; for example, the consequence of removal of the royal court in the seventeenth century on the development of theatre in Scotland is touched on, as is the potential detrimental effects caused by the Reformation. Likewise, the increasing centralisation of cultural production in London and the uncertain sense of national identity experienced, particularly by the Scottish middle classes, in the context of their investment in the British Empire are explored.

Some of the key stages and theatre companies that recur as significant influences in accounts of Scottish theatre history over the course of the twentieth century are also highlighted; for example, the Glasgow Rep, the first theatre company in Scotland recognised for having consciously set out to establish and develop a drama within a specifically Scottish national frame of reference. The chapter then goes on to analyse the significance of the Arts Council of Great Britain in helping to develop and secure a more stable theatre industry in Scotland but also its role in entrenching a bias towards cultural production in London. Using primary research, the final section of the chapter outlines the immediate socio-political context preceding the establishment of the National Theatre of Scotland as well as a more detailed interpretation of specific events that both helped and hindered its birth. This offers a backdrop to the remainder of the thesis; contextualising this case study of the establishment and development of the National Theatre of Scotland in its formative years.

Scotland, State and Theatre

The only surviving pre-Reformation dramatic text written in Scotland is Sir David Lyndsay's epic *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*.[121] This satirical morality play indicts the corruption within the Catholic Church as well as the political status quo that continued to uphold its legitimacy. *Ane Satyre* presages the approaching Reformation in Scotland[122] and thus, paradoxically, a new ecclesiastical institution that would attempt to smother the development of theatre in Scotland over the following centuries. First performed in 1540 in the court of James V, the play was thus staged in the theatre's last main bastion against the influence of the Reformed Church in Scotland. With the Union of the English and Scottish Crowns in 1603, the removal of the royal court to London deprived the Scottish theatre of its most vocal and powerful patron, leaving most forms of theatrical representation even more vulnerable to the Reformed Church's increasingly destructive edicts and acts of censorship.[123] Whilst travelling players did continue to provide an apparently uncensored form of 'popular entertainment', with no patronised stage on which to perform, many actors and writers were drawn to make a living in England and between 1603 and 1700 it appears that only three plays were authored in Scotland.[124] As Prior writes, "the cumulative de-centralisation of Edinburgh's seats of power was a process that did untold damage to coherent forms of visual ostentation and artistic support".[125]

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[121] See, Findlay, B. 'Beginnings to 1700', in Findlay, B., (ed), (1998), *A History of Scottish Theatre,* Edinburgh: Polygon, pp 1-79; Martin, J. (2007), "'Thair is Richt Litill Play at My Hungrie Hart': Politics and Play in David Lyndsay's 'Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis'", *Literature Compass 4 (6),* pp1597-1611.

[122] According to MacCulloch, "Scottish reformers did not gain even a limited foothold in James V's government…King James …[defended] the traditional Church in order to exploit it for financial and political benefit for his dynasty" MacCulloch, D. (2003), *Reformation: Europe's House Divided, 1490-1700,* London: Allen Lane, p204.

[123] Findlay notes that by 1555 Reformers in Scotland had evoked enough support to elicit an Act of Parliament curbing May and Yuletide plays (p4). As well as the destruction of texts and artefacts relating to Catholic religious performance rituals, excommunication was threatened to those who participated in such traditions. From 1560 Reformers enacted a series of further prohibiting edicts against various forms of performance, in Findlay, B. (1998), pp 1 – 79.

[124] The three plays of this period are entitled *Marciano (1663), Tarugo's Wiles (1668), The Assembly (1692).* As Findlay writes, "that the three authors were Episcopalians and royalists, and therefore scornful of Kirk diktat, is not without significance; nor is the fact that the two performed plays enjoyed court patronage" Findlay, B. (1998) p55.

[125] Prior, N. (2002), *Museums and Modernity: Art Galleries and the Making of Modern Culture,* Oxford: Berg, p84.

Nevertheless, by the end of the eighteenth century, in spite of opposition from the Church, a theatre infrastructure had developed – both through the establishment of touring theatre companies to the smaller towns and the building of permanent theatre buildings in the cities.[126] However, the introduction and implementation of the Britain-wide Licensing Act in 1737,[127] which was not repealed until 1843,[128] proved yet another institutional impediment to the development and support of theatre in Scotland. The Licensing Act created a division between those few theatres that received a Royal Patent and were thus permitted to enact those dramatic texts that had been passed by the Lord Chamberlain and, having not been granted a patent, Carruber's Close – which is considered to be Scotland's first producing theatre[129] – was forced to close in 1737. Ten years later, in 1747, the first purpose-built theatre building in Scotland, known as the New Concert Hall or the Canongate Theatre, opened, becoming Edinburgh's first Theatre Royal when it received a patent in 1767.

Amongst other acts of censorship the Licensing Act prevented, according to Bell, "'any material with a national', which in Whitehall meant Jacobite, flavour from appearing on the Scottish stage".[130] For example, when Edinburgh's Theatre Royal requested, in 1819, to mount Duval's play about Bonnie Prince Charlie and Flora Macdonald, *The Wanderer: or, the Rights of Hospitality,* the Lord Chamberlain's office would only licence the play on the provision that the play was set in a different time and place. The playbill suggests that the final production took place in the less contentious setting of Sweden. [131] For those theatres without a patent, the limitations on performance were often overcome by the inclusion of non-verbal elements, for example music, dance and mime, thus making such performances exempt from the provisions of the Act that sought only to censor the spoken word. Some theatre managers evaded the Act by

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[126] Scullion, A. 'The Eighteenth Century', in Findlay, B. (ed), (1998), *A History of Scottish Theatre* Edinburgh: Polygon, p128/ 131.

[127] The Licensing Act "had originated for political reasons, but, by the mid-nineteenth century, the purpose of the censorship had become unabashedly moral. Religion and sex were strictly taboo, and playwrights quickly learned the limits of the taboo", Minihan, J. (1977), *The Nationalisation of Culture,* London: Hamish Hamilton, p167.

[128] Though the monopoly created by the granting of patents through the Licensing Act was repealed in 1843, censorship remained in place under the Theatrical regulations Act, 1843, until it was revised in 1968.

[129] See Scullion, A. (1998)*,* p93.

[130] Bell, B. 'The Nineteenth Century' in Findlay, B., (ed), (1998), *A History of Scottish Theatre,* Edinburgh: Polygon, p139.

[131] Bell, B. (1998)*,* p144.

charging audiences for musical performances and then providing 'free' theatre.[132] Therefore, while a limited number of patented theatres produced what was known as the 'legitimate' drama, an 'illegitimate' drama did also develop.

Scotland Imagined

By the end of the eighteenth century, as well as benefiting economically from Britain's imperial expansion, Scotland had gained an international reputation for its central roles in the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution. Scotland became renowned as a country of learning, famed for its universities and education system, for its shipbuilding and engineering. Over the course of the nineteenth century, Scotland's reputation as a land of learning was supplemented, and perhaps even to some extent supplanted, by romantic and nostalgic images of the country that fed an almost "insatiable appetite",[133] both in Scotland and further afield, for all things Scottish, propagated, crucially, by the worldwide publication of *Ossian*.[134] It was through *Ossian* and other literary works such as Alan Ramsay's *The Gentle Shepherd (*1725), John Home's *Douglas (*1756) and the poetry of Robert Burns (1759-1796), that Scotland gained "its mythopoetic identity throughout Europe and America".[135] It was, however, in particular the work and literary influence of Sir Walter Scott (1805-1832) that "produced those images which, for better or worse, continue to provide Scotland with a meaning and identity for the outside world".[136]

In terms of theatre, it was the adaptations of Scott's elegiac, historical novels, or works that were inspired by them, that provided a romantic, literary, dramatic genre that became known as Scotland's national drama. Over the course of the nineteenth century this national drama brought about a "sea-change in the fortunes of Scottish theatre",[137] resulting in a great expansion of theatre going by all sections of Scottish

[132] Moody, J.,(2000), *Illegitimate Theatre in London, 1770-1840,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p11.

[133] Cameron, A. (1987-1988), 'Scottish Drama in the Nineteenth Century', in Gifford, D. (ed), *The History of Scottish Literature Vol 3,* Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, p429.

[134] See Hook, A. (1987), 'Scotland and Romanticism: the International Scene'' in Hook, A.(ed), *The History of Scottish Literature: Vol. 2, 1660-1800,* Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, pp307 – 21 (313).

[135] Hook, A., (1987) p310.

[136] Hook, A.(1987), p310.

[137] Bell, B. 'The Nineteenth Century', in Findlay, B., (ed), (1998), *A History of Scottish Theatre,* Edinburgh: Polygon, p143.

society and in different venues throughout the country, from the gaffs and geggies in the country to the patented theatres in the cities. The various manifestations of the national drama – legitimate and illegitimate – that were produced in Scotland throughout much of the nineteenth century, provided a representation of Scotland that, during that period, provided an appeal to Scots that seemed to traverse social and class divisions. Within the bourgeois venues, such as the Theatres Royal in Edinburgh and Glasgow, as well as those venues that mounted the more popular music hall and variety acts – a theatrical public sphere or, rather, spheres, able to accommodate the often overlapping identities within Britain, had emerged in Scotland.

However, towards the end of the century, the middle-class taste for the national drama appeared to have waned.[138] With the first railway link to England completed in 1848 – reducing travelling time to London from Edinburgh or Glasgow from forty-three to twelve hours - touring productions from London now filled the syndicated theatres owned, mainly, by southerners. Nevertheless, while a professional, independent literary drama may not have developed, audiences in Scotland continued to be entertained in great numbers by the thriving variety and music hall theatres,[139] while, at the same time, a general enthusiasm in theatre making is evident in the number of amateur drama groups[140] that enjoyed membership throughout the country from around the beginning of the twentieth century. However, while professional actors had been able to make a living in Scotland performing the 'national drama',[141] by 1870 the situation had changed and, at least until 1909, there appears to have been little independent theatre production in Scotland.[142]

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, attempts to secure and develop a more stable theatre industry in Scotland independent of London have perhaps most clearly coalesced in discourses around the idea of a national theatre. This movement towards

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[138] Bell, B. (1998), p168.

[139] See Maloney, P. (2003), *Scotland and the Music Hall: 1850-1914,* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

[140] According to membership of the Scottish Community Drama Association, around a thousand amateur drama groups were operating in Scotland by the late 1930s, this number had dropped to around 500 in the late 1950s and 224 by 1990. See, Giesekam, G. (2000), *Luvvies and Rude Mechanicals? Amateur and Community Theatre in Scotland,* SAC report available online at: http://www.scottisharts.org.uk/resources/publications/Drama/pdf/PAL6%20Luvvies%20and%20Rude%20Mechanicals.pdf (last accessed 4/06/08).

[141] Cameron, A. 'Scottish Drama in the Nineteenth Century', in Gifford, D. (ed), (1987-1988), *The History of Scottish Literature Vol 3,* Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, p435.

[142] Cameron, A. (1987 – 1988), p435.

forming a national theatre was, in no small part, inspired by the success of the Abbey Theatre in Ireland (c. 1904),[143] which, through its commitment to nurturing new writing, had overseen the flourishing of local dramatists. Through the work of theatre companies, such as the Glasgow Repertory Theatre[144] (c. 1909), the Scottish National Players[145] (c. 1920) and the Curtain[146] (c. 1933), theatre began to be produced in Scotland from a consciously national perspective. These companies sought, to varying degrees, to promote indigenous Scottish playwriting as well as create an infrastructure for an independent theatre that might allow the opportunity for theatre makers (writers, actors, directors, technicians etc) to cultivate their work in Scotland. So, for example, in 1909 the Glasgow Repertory Theatre, owned by private shareholders, opened with the remit of "encouraging the initiation and development of a purely Scottish Drama by providing a stage and acting company which will be peculiarly adapted for the production of plays national in character, written by Scottish men and women".[147]

The Glasgow Repertory Company produced over 30 new plays, sixteen of which – "although no masterpieces"[148] – were written in Scotland, as well as mounting performances of, amongst others, Shakespeare, Chekhov, Shaw and Gorky. However, the company had little opportunity to fulfil its aim of encouraging a broader audience to appreciate literary drama as the outbreak of war abruptly brought its operations to an end. Less cosmopolitan in its repertoire, the "avowedly nationalist"[149] Scottish National Players, properly established in 1920, aimed to mimic Ireland's Abbey Theatre by producing only work that could be clearly identified as Scottish, also stating in their manifesto their aim to establish the company as Scotland's first National Theatre.

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[143] In 1925, the National Theatre was given an annual subsidy by the new Free State, and the Abbey became the first ever state-subsidised theatre in the English speaking world. The State continues to support the National Theatre in the form of an annual grant from The Arts Council of Ireland/An Chomhairle Ealaion. For more information on The Abbey see, for e.g., Byrne, D. (2005), *The Story of Ireland's National Theatre, the Abbey Theatre Dublin,* Montana: Kessinger Publishing; Welch, R. (1999), *The Abbey Theatre, 1889 – 1999,* Oxford: Oxford University Press; Hogan, R., & Kilroy, J. (1978), *The Modern Irish Drama: a Documentary History: The Abbey Theatre, the Years of Synge, 1905 – 1909,* Dublin: Dolmen Press: Matthews, P. J. (2003), *The Abbey Theatre, Sinn Féin, the Gaelic League and the Co-operative Movement,* Cork: Cork University Press.

[144] See, Hutchison, D. (1977),'The Scottish National Players' in *The Modern Scottish Theatre,* Glasgow: Molendinar press, pp 12-26; Hutchison, D. '1900 – 1950', in Findlay, B. (ed),(1998), *The History of Scottish Theatre,* op. cit., pp 208 – 214.

[145] See Hutchison, D. (1977), ' The Glasgow Repertory Company' in *The Modern Scottish Theatre,* pp 43 – 57; Hutchison, D. in Findlay, B., (ed) (1998), op. cit., pp 208 – 214.

[146] See Hutchison, D. (1977), op. cit., pp 27 – 42.

[147] Quoted in Cameron, A., (1993), 'National Interests', in *Theatre Scotland,* Vol 1, Issue 1V.

[148] Hutchison, D. (1998) in Findlay, B., (ed), (1998), op. cit., p212.

[149] Hutchison, D. (1998)*, p 20.

However, although the Scottish National Players, "defined Scottish theatre to the exclusion of all rivals in the 1920s",[150] they were also the subject of much criticism for adopting an overly narrow perspective[151] as well as for their resistance to representing contemporary, urban and/or working-class experience. The company managed to survive, maintaining its amateur status throughout, until the company eventually "petered out"[152] in 1947. By this time the championing of new plays authored by writers based in Scotland had passed to the small-scale Curtain Theatre. Even though few of the plays from this period have survived, the Glasgow Rep, the Scottish National Players and the Curtain play a significant role in the history of Scottish theatre not least due to their members' commitment and determination to plant the roots of a literary dramatic tradition.

The Scottish National Players were born from within the prolific amateur movement, which, according to Mackenney, comprised two strands – what Mackenney terms the 'bourgeois' and the 'popular'. The 'bourgeois' amateur theatre groups, like the Scottish National Players, tended to mount work that came from the Kailyard[153] School with its historical depictions of a romanticised version of rural life presenting, with "sickly sentimentality",[154] "turgid historical dramas".[155] The 'popular' amateur groups, though not all overtly political were those that "most closely identified with urban, industrial, working communities in lowland Scotland"[156] and, rather than the bourgeois aspiration to form a National Theatre, their activities tended to be directed towards "the cultural emancipation of the working class in Scotland".[157]

Probably, the most acclaimed play and playwright to emerge from this amateur popular tradition was Joe Corrie and, in particular, his political drama, *In Time O' Strife* (1927), which dealt with the effects on a Fife mining family of the 1926 coalfield strikes. Corrie's involvement with the Fife Miner Players led to professional tours of the Scottish commercial music halls where *In Time of O' Strife* played regularly to audiences of up

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[150] Hutchison, D. (1998), p 20.
[151] Hutchison, D. (1998), p 20.
[152] Hutchison, D. (1977), *The Modern Scottish Theatre*, op. cit., p78.
[153] For a critical account of Kailyard writing in Scottish literature see, for e.g., Nash, A. (2007), *Kailyard and Scottish Literature,* Amsterdam, Rodopi; Bell, E. (2004), *Questioning Scotland: Literature, Nationalism, Postmodernism.* Houndsmill: Palgrave Macmillan.
[154] Mackenney, L. (2000), *The Activities of Popular Dramatists and Drama Groups in Scotland, 1900 – 1952,* Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, p217.
[155] Mackenney, L. (2000), p199.
[156] Mackenney, L. (2000), p26.

to one thousand people.[158]   Though one of the very few Scottish plays to be posthumously celebrated, *In Time O' Strife's* impact at the time was inhibited by a revealing exchange regarding the Scottish National Players' (SNP) reluctance to mount the play. During this protracted, and at times, public debate it becomes apparent that at least certain influential members of the SNP were resistant, if not openly hostile, to the socialist politics and message of the play. As SNP committee panellist and playwright John Brandane wrote in a letter to his peer, Neil Gunn, the overriding theme in a play - may be "modern…if you like, or very ancient, so long as the elfin thing is Scots drama"[159] thus suggesting his preference for the subordination of all artistic themes in favour of a Scottish frame of reference.[160]

Attempts to establish a National Theatre in Scotland were not always explicitly blended with a political nationalism that aimed to carve out some form of distinct political communicative space in Scotland. Nevertheless, early efforts towards the initiation of a National Theatre were coterminous with the awakening of a national political awareness in Scotland that had, during most of the nineteenth century, lain apparently dormant. However, the alternative visions of society offered by socialism with its inherently international perspective, on one hand, and the more isolationist politics of the nationalist agenda, on the other, were expressive of a social divide. For, as Bryant argues, "it is among the professionals and public administrators that interest in Scottishness has been greatest – institutional Scotland, after all, has been their preserve. In other words the debate about Scottishness has sometimes divided Scots on class lines with middle-class Scots deliberating whether devolution would enable them to run Scotland better and hard pressed working-class Scots just taking their Scottishness for granted".[161]

In the first decades of the twentieth century, four theatrical public spheres were thus operating in parallel, each relatively distinct and each reflecting and responding to different publics. First, there was the network of bourgeois theatres, promoting a high culture aesthetic and reacting to the tastes of a middle-class 'British' audience. Then there were the amateur companies, such as the Scottish National Players, comprised,

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[157] Mackenney, L. (2000), p26.
[158] Mackenney, L. (2000), p47 – 62.
[159] Quoted in Mackenney, L. (2000), p67.
[160] See Mackenney, L. (2000), pp63 – 69.
[161] Bryant, C. G. A. (2006), *The Nations of Britain,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, p65.

mainly, of middle-class professionals who appeared to reproduce the model of the high-culture bourgeois theatres yet framed within a national context and aimed towards a more specifically Scottish audience. Thirdly were the 'popular' amateur groups, many of them affiliated to the Worker's Theatre and Labour Movements, mentioned in chapter one, which targeted their work towards the urban, industrial working-class. Finally, and certainly the most significant in terms of their popularity and reach, were the commercial music halls, which first came to Scotland in the early nineteenth century and declined more slowly there than anywhere else in Britain.[162] The music hall addressed local, regional, Scottish and British, mainly working-class audiences, while the later variety theatres were more aimed towards the middle-classes.

The Arts Council and Arts Subsidy

It was only after the Second World War that the Labour government reversed the British state's historical resistance to state infringement on market freedoms through the expansion of state powers. Or, to put it another way, the British state began to protect the individual's freedom from market pressures through the development of the welfare state. Reflecting a "popular radicalism largely generated by the experience of war",[163] for the first time, Britain had, under Attlee, a Labour majority government (1945-51); the nationalisation of the major industries, health and social reform motivated the domestic agenda. If a sense of British national identity could no longer be upheld through recourse to ideas of Empire, then the creation and expansion of the new institutions of the welfare state perhaps provided new formulations through which to articulate notions of national identification. As constituent parts of the new welfare state, the nationalised industries, as well as the newly established public body the Arts Council of Great Britain, acted as a focal point for post-war national reconstruction – helping to legitimise, in the face of a disintegrating Empire, political centralisation

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[162] See Folorunso, F., in Stevenson, R. and Wallace, G. (eds), (1996), *Scottish Theatre Since the Seventies* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, p177.
[163] Luckhurst, M.   (2006), *Dramaturgy: A Revolution in Theatre,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p153.

through the establishment and maintenance of national institutions that both assumed and reinforced a sense of "shared social citizenship".[164]

The Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB) grew out of the war-time organisation the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts[165] (CEMA) and, in its early years, continued CEMA's policy of providing entertainment and uplift for civilians, first during, and then after, the war. In its policies toward subsidy, the ACGB adopted a liberal-humanist perspective on art as the conveyor of transcendental 'universal' values with inherent "redemptive, rejuvenative or recuperative qualities"[166] which should, therefore, be safeguarded by the state from political and economic interference for the overall good of the citizens.[167] While state support was aimed to protect the arts from market pressures, the arms-length principle[168] was introduced in order to distance the ACGB from government influence and thus assuage fears of political interference. The Arts Council's first Charter (1946) provided for a sub-committee to "advise and assist the Council in the promotion of the objects of the Council in Scotland".[169] While the Scottish committee were given more authority and received the title the Scottish Arts Council through the revised 1967 Charter, it was not until 1994 that the SAC became completely devolved from the ACGB. Therefore, from its inception at least until 1994, the Arts Council's policies for Scotland and the rest of country, though advised by sub-committees, were essentially influenced by and radiated from its London base.[170]

It was also in this period of post-war reconstruction and attempts at some form of national reconciliation that the one hundred year-old debates to establish a National Theatre in Britain at last became realised. The renegotiation of the value of the role of a cultural institution is, perhaps, exemplified in the contrast between two Parliamentary debates (in 1913 and 1949) that preceded the formation of the National Theatre in

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[164] Beland, D. & Lecours, A. (2005), 'The politics of Territorial Solidarity: Nationalism and Social Policy Reform in Canada, the United Kingdom and Belgium', *Comparative Political Studies,* Vol 38, No6 Aug. Sage: 689.

[165] See, for e.g., Weingärtner, J. (2006), *The Arts as a Weapon of War: Britain and the Shaping of National Morale in the Second World War,* London: I B Tauris.

[166] Kershaw, B. (1999), *The Radical in Performance,* London: Routledge, p42.

[167] Weingärtner, J. (2006), p35.

[168] The arms length principle will be discussed in more detail in chapter four.

[169] *The Charter of Incorporation, February 1967, section 8*

[170] See Harris, J.S.(1970), *Government Patronage of the Arts*, University of Chicago Press: London. Current research at the University of Glasgow's Centre for Cultural Policy Research may shed more light on the relationship between arts policy making in England and Scotland during the period 1967 to 2007. See *The Scottish Arts Council, 1967 – 2007: Arts Governance and National Identity. A historical Analysis of Cultural Policy Making.* Forthcoming.

London. In the first debate in 1913, a National Theatre was seen as representing "Britain's international standing and exemplary influence as a reconciliatory force in the world".[171] Members of Parliament appeared indifferent to the issue of democratising theatre access[172] and also undecided regarding the state's potential financial responsibility towards supporting a National Theatre, rather, the debates centred on endorsing "the all-embracing, but rather vague, notion of a 'dramatic standard' and the 'education of the world through our Shakespeare'".[173]

By the time of the second parliamentary debate in 1949, after two world wars and the beginning of the decline of Britain's empire, Britain's international, as well as national, position was less certain. While, as in the earlier debates, the speakers supported "the monumental representation of selective tradition…. [t]here is not the same consensus as to the appropriateness of such a monumental cultural institution…at a time when the dimensions of the nation appear shrunken by comparison…[R]epresenting the nation to the nation can no longer be the simple matter it seemed in 1913".[174] Reflecting perhaps a growing awareness of the need to keep the separate nations of Britain on board, in order to maintain any semblance of a unified Britain, as well as recognition of the state's responsibility towards creating more democratically representative cultural institutions, during the debate, the possibility of establishing National Theatres in both Scotland and Wales was mooted.

Theatrical entrepreneur and playwright James Bridie managed to secure CEMA funding for one of Scotland's first state subsidised theatres, the Citizens in Glasgow and, by 1945, with Perth and Dundee Repertory theatres both also enjoying state funding, alongside Pitlochry, Edinburgh's Gateway and St Andrew's Byre, some form of institutionally supported theatre infrastructure appeared to be developing. However, even though there was a "generous diet of new Scottish plays and adaptations",[175] in many ways these theatres were, nevertheless, "simply an extension of the English repertory system".[176] However, Unity[177] (c. 1941 - 51) - "the first Scottish popular

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[171] Kruger, L.(1992), *The National Stage: Theatre and Cultural Legitimation in England, France and America*, Chicago: University of Chicago, p125.
[172] Whitworth, G. (1951), *Making of a National Theatre* London: Faber & Faber, p144.
[173] Kruger, L. (1992), p126.
[174] Kruger, L. (1992)*,* p128/9.
[175] Smith, D. '1950 to 1995', in Findlay, B. (ed), (1998), *A History of Scottish theatre,* Edinburgh: Polygon, p255.
[176] Smith, D., (1998)*,* p255.

drama group able to apply for any form of state or government funding"[178] – provided some counterbalance to this Anglo-centrism both in its structure and content. Unity, established during the Second World War in 1941, comprised a cosmopolitan membership that traversed class and national distinctions. The concentration of the company's[179] work during the war was focused on the need for united action against the rise of fascism. Latterly, the company staged productions that reflected the hope and need for social change and reform in the post-war period. Artistically the company experimented with a diverse palette of forms and styles, combining music hall performance techniques with social realist texts and non-hierarchical ensemble working methods, as well as exploring different styles of set design and staging. Artistic experimentation was, though, combined with a commitment to representing contemporary, working-class experience.

The most popular and, perhaps, most revived play produced by Unity was Robert McLeish's *The Gorbals Story* (1946). The play, which performed to a cumulative audience of over one hundred thousand in its extensive tour throughout Britain between 1946 and 1949, explored the chronic housing problems in Glasgow and "was the first play to acknowledge the true cosmopolitan character of the city's social composition".[180] With characters representing the Asian, Irish Catholic and Highland communities, as well as a more balanced representation of working-class experience, that neither idealised nor condemned it, the play touched on racial prejudice and the religious sectarianism between Catholics and Protestants that continues to act as a divisive force in Scotland. Another, less popular but nevertheless critically lauded and occasionally revived Unity production, was Ena Lamont Stewart's *Men Should Weep* (1947) which explored the experience of working-class life from a female perspective. Unity eventually disbanded in 1951, in the same year that the Conservative party came to power, at a time when "the immediate post-war enthusiasm for radical reform gave

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[177] For more information on Unity, see, for e.g., Mackenney, L. (2000), *The Activities of Popular Dramatists and Drama Groups in Scotland, 1900 – 1952,* Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, pp 152-237; Scullion, A. (2002), 'Glasgow Unity Theatre: The Necessary Contradictions of Scottish Political Theatre', *Twentieth Century British History, Vol. 13, No.3:* 215-252; Findlay, B. (ed), (2008), *Scottish People's Theatre: Plays by Glasgow Unity Writers,* Glasgow: ASLS.

[178] Unity received £1300 from the ACGB in 1946, (Mackenney, L. (2000), p168).

[179] Unity began as an amateur group but, after the war, the amateur, part-time, company co-existed alongside a full-time professional company. Throughout its existence, Unity also encompassed the Outside Show Group, later renamed the Theatre Revue Section, which staged performances in a variety of venues from "co-operative and trade union halls to factory canteens, hostels and hospitals" (Mackenney, L. (2000), p164).

[180] Mackenney, L. (2000), p181.

way to a new conservatism".[181] However, Unity, both in the composition of the company and in its output, reflected the gradual process of fragmentation of the previously more easily definable binary oppositions between categories such as middle and working class, high and low culture, popular and bourgeois.

Subsidising the Arts in Scotland

Until 1956 the Arts Council, though centred in London, distributed arts provision through twelve regional offices, established by CEMA, in a policy that aimed to get "the best to most".[182] However, the arrival and increasing popularity of television[183] was proving to be a threat to the survival of the commercial theatre sector throughout Britain as audience numbers rapidly began to dwindle. With the very survival of the theatres throughout the country under threat, the Arts Council's 'best to most' policy was abandoned and, with it, the twelve regional offices. The Arts Council instead concentrated its resources on maintaining and developing the arts in the larger cultural institutions in the cities and, in particular, London. Thus, rather than encouraging the development of a more democratic expression of culture through the arts, the Arts Council, during this period, adopted a policy that continued to support and promote a 'high culture' aesthetic centred on the metropolis that appeared to undervalue the regions. As Harvie writes, the Arts Council, "in its first decade entrenched a bias of superiority, priority and indeed productivity for the metropolis and one of inferiority and inactivity for the regions".[184] However, the establishment of the Edinburgh International Festival in 1947[185] undoubtedly offered a focal point and inspiration for the development of the arts in Scotland and the opening of the College of Dramatic Art[186] in Glasgow in 1951 provided Scotland's first official training ground for actors. The birth of the

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[181] Mackenney, L. (2000), p 222.

[182] Harvie, J. (2003), 'Nationalising the 'Creative Industries'', in *Contemporary Theatre Review, Vol. 13 (1):* 15-32 (17).

[183] "Between 1952 and 1962 the number of television licences in Scotland increased from 41,699 to 1,119,824", (Smith, D. (1998), p260).

[184] Harvie, J. (2003), p18.

[185] There was no theatre company based in Scotland officially represented in the Festival's inaugural programme in 1947. However, against the wishes of the Festivals organisers, Glasgow Unity produced two plays at the Pleasance Theatre which, perhaps, inaugurated the birth of the Edinburgh festival Fringe, See Agnew, D. (2000), *Contexts and Concepts of a Scottish National Theatre,* Unpublished PhD Thesis, Queen Margaret University College: Edinburgh, p163.

[186] The Drama College opened in 1950 within the Royal Academy of Music and became fully incorporated into the Music Academy in 1968, at which point the name was changed to the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh in 1963 and the Close, in Glasgow, also brought a more experimental perspective to Scottish theatre in an environment that was, essentially, "exceptionally ill prepared"[187] for the social transformations of the 1960s.

With the appointment in 1964, under the Labour government, of the first Minister for the Arts, Jennie Lee, there was a renewed vigour to reverse the paternalism and hierarchy of metropolitan-centred arts provision through a policy that sought to re-establish the arts and theatre outside the larger cities. In the first six years of Lee's tenure, the Arts Council's budget trebled and the new money was invested in the building of new theatres throughout Britain which, if not actually eradicating, did at least challenge the ideology of metropolitan superiority. In Scotland, new theatre buildings included Scotland's first purpose-built art centre, the MacRobert (1971), in Stirling University, St Andrew's Byre Theatre (1970), and Eden Court in Inverness (1976). However, funding for theatre in Scotland had to compete with the other art forms and, with the arrival of Scottish Opera and Scottish Ballet in, respectively, 1962 and 1969, Scottish Arts Council subsidy became increasingly channelled into these larger flagship organisations. While theatre had received approximately thirty-three per cent of the Scottish Arts Council's budget in 1967-68, by 1991-92 this had fallen to only seventeen per cent. [188] Smith argues that this loss of financial investment in theatre was directly related to the lack of a National Theatre in Scotland but, nevertheless, he suggests, "that Scottish Theatre as a whole …was, in fact saved from a top-heavy centralising institution".[189]

Indeed, by the 1970s, unlike opera and ballet provision,[190] there did now exist, however insecure, a geographically and artistically diverse theatre infrastructure in Scotland[191] with a relatively wide-ranging, if under or unfunded, network of building-based regional repertories and professional and semi-professional touring theatre companies. The repertoires of all these various companies was, of course, dependent on the personnel

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[187] Smith, D. (1998), p263.
[188] Smith, D. (1998), p288.
[189] Smith, D. (1998), p 288.
[190] In 1999, 87% of the Scottish Arts Council's music grants went towards the three national music companies while 70% of the dance budget went towards Scottish Ballet. 46% of SAC's total voted funds was spent on these 4 national companies.
[191] Although it should be noted that in, for example, 1999 £4.5 million was spent on 14 Scottish producing theatre companies which was less than is spent on Scottish Opera alone – based on submission by Macmillan, J. & Wallace, N. in 'Report on the enquiry into the funding of the national arts companies'

involved so, for example, while the Citizens had counted among the more bourgeois[192] of theatres, with the arrival of artistic director Giles Havergal in 1969, the company's work became more inclined towards a style of flamboyant and cosmopolitan experimentation. Meanwhile, under the directorship of Clive Perry, from 1966, the Lyceum in Edinburgh mounted a repertoire with a "specifically Scottish dimension",[193] as did Edinburgh's Traverse Theatre under Chris Parr from 1976.

As discussed in chapter one, following the discovery of North Sea Oil and the parallel increasing support of the SNP, during the 1970s a sense of national consciousness in Scotland appeared to be strong. This national consciousness was reflected in what has been called a "renaissance" in Scottish theatre; evidenced in the blossoming of playwriting such as Bill Bryden's *Willy Rough* (1972), Roddy McMillan's *The Bevellers* (1973*),* Hector MacMillan' s *The Sash* (1974) and Tom McGrath's *The Hardman* (1977)*.* One of the most influential touring theatre companies of that time was John McGrath's 7:84 (Scotland), and, in particular, its iconic production *The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil* (1974)*.* Thematically, the play paralleled the historical Highland Clearances with the contemporary exploitation of North Sea Oil; mobilising a nationalist sentiment to convey the play's socialist message. *The Cheviot* – a devised production that was, at the time, perceived of as an experimental and groundbreaking production – coalesced popular performance styles, including Pantomime and music hall, the ceilidh format as well as the agit-prop socialist tradition. Significantly, thirty years later, it was the production of *The Cheviot* that was most often invoked by Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs), on all sides of the house as they unanimously voted in favour of the establishment of Scotland's first National Theatre.[194]

Agnew's unpublished Ph.D thesis, *Contexts and Concepts of a Scottish National Theatre*,[195] charts the evolution of debates in Scotland regarding the establishment of its own National Theatre. Since the 1970s, petitions for the establishment of a flagship

available at http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/committees/historic/education/reports-00/edr00-01-01.htm#remit (last accessed 21/4/09).

[192] see Hutchison, D. (1998), p245.

[193] Smith, D. (1998), p270.

[194] Official Report, 25 September 2003, 'Debate on Motion S2m-406 on the Scottish National Theatre' available at http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialReports/meetingsParliament/or-03/sor0925-02.htm - Col2125 (last accessed 21/4/09).

[195] Agnew, D. (2000), p163.

national company that could raise the status and profile of theatre in Scotland became increasingly insistent. These petitions came from both 'above' and 'below' – 'above' from the Scottish Arts Council in the form of 'working papers', feasibility studies and funding packages and from 'below' through the campaigns, proposals and working practices of theatre practitioners. The first of these petitions came in 1970, in the form of an internal working paper from the Scottish Committee of the Arts Council, entitled Theatre in Scotland.[196] Theatre in Scotland recommended that there should be established a major theatre company to parallel Scottish Opera[197] and Scottish Theatre Ballet[198] which might provide the foundations for the eventual launch of a National Theatre. On its recommendations the Lyceum Theatre in Edinburgh, under the Artistic Directorship of Clive Perry, received enhancement funding, until 1973, to establish itself as a potential flagship national company. It appears, however, that this objective was never met. The next proposal for a National Theatre originated from actor/director Ewan Hooper, the outcome of which was the establishment of the touring Scottish Theatre Company which received a subsidy from the Scottish Arts Council from 1981 until the company's liquidation in 1987. The company's demise has been interpreted as the result of cautious funding and an over-ambitious remit from the Scottish Arts Council to tour work to the main house stages, as well as the company's mixed critical success, coupled with mounting debt.

In the same year, the Advisory Council for the Arts in Scotland (AdCAS), mounted a conference entitled A Scottish National Theatre at which the possibility of establishing a national touring company was debated. As a result of the conference, the National Theatre for Scotland Campaign was established. The Campaign collated a list of plays that were felt to be an appropriate repertoire for a National Theatre in Scotland. The criteria for selection to the list were not immediately apparent and what the list perhaps highlighted above all was that Scotland did not have a strong literary dramatic tradition on which a National Theatre could draw. For example, in response to this list Audrey Bain of the University of Edinburgh's School of Scottish Studies commented, "why

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[196] *Theatre in Scotland*, (1970), Scottish Arts Council, 19 Manor Place, Edinburgh
[197] Founded in 1962 by Sir Alexander Gibson http://www.scottishopera.org.uk/cms/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=26&Itemid=48 (last accessed 21/4/09).
[198] Founded by Peter Darrell and Elizabeth West as Western Theatre Ballet in Bristol in 1957, the Company moved to Glasgow in 1969 and was renamed Scottish Theatre Ballet, changing to Scottish Ballet in 1974. http://www.scottishballet.co.uk/thecompany/history.asp?page=12 (last accessed 21/4/09).

subject Scottish theatre to scavenging the carcasses of plays better left dead because of misplaced ideas of canonicity?".[199]

Towards the end of the 1980s, audiences in Scotland were being introduced to more diverse theatrical languages and were, thus, becoming 'literate' in reading texts, in the widest sense of the term, that crossed national and artistic traditions. During the 1980's Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's strategies of economic neo-liberalism had compelled Arts Council policy away from an emphasis on the protection of the arts from market forces towards strategies that encouraged artistic producers and their 'commodities' to compete as an 'industry' in a consumer-led market place. The function of the arts had been increasingly reconstructed as playing an instrumental role in the transition from a manufacturing to a service-led economy in post-industrial Britain and the language of cultural policy making changed from the 'subsidising of' to the 'investment in' the arts. The tangible products of this investment were quantified and measured, often in terms of their ability to regenerate post-industrial urban spaces - with the 'arts' being aligned to other policy developments such as urban regeneration and town planning as well as tourism. For example, as part of their mandate to help consolidate within the European Union a sense of European identity, the Council of Europe designated Glasgow as the European City of Culture in 1990, and the programme for the year included performances from all parts of the globe, including productions by Peter Brook, Robert Lepage and the Wooster Group, as well as works created more locally. Scottish audiences and theatre makers were thus exposed to a broader and more diverse range of performance practice and spaces, such as The Tramway and Arches. This increasingly international perspective found echoes in the work of a new generation of theatre companies and playwrights[200] whose work appeared to be less directly focused on exploring Scotland's national identity and who, rather, sought to engage "in creative interaction with the international stage and

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[199] Quoted in Agnew, D. (2000), p231.

[200] For summaries of these developments see, for example, Scullion, A. (2001), 'Self and Nation: Issues of identity in Modern Scottish Drama by Women', *New Theatre Quarterly,* 17:14: 373-90.; Holdsworth, N. (2003), 'Travelling Across Borders: Re-Imagining the Nation and Nationalism in Contemporary Scottish Theatre', *Contemporary Theatre Review,* vol. 13 (2); Scullion, A. (2007), 'Devolution and Drama: Imagining the Impossible' in Schoene. B. (ed), (2007), *The Edinburgh Companion to Contemporary Scottish Literature,* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp68 – 77; Coveney, M. (2006), 'Playwrights of the North', *Prospect Magazine,* Issue 127, October; Blandford, S. (2007), *Film, Drama and the Break-Up of Britain,* Bristol: Intellect; Pattie, D. "'Mapping the Territory': Modern Scottish Drama" in D'Monté, R. & Saunders, G. (eds) (2008), *Cool Britannia? British Political Drama in the 1990s,* Houndsmill: Palgrave Macmillan, pp143-157.

worldwide human experience. …[reflecting] a wide-ranging and highly diversified set of identities for Scotland".[201]

And yet, even while there was a strong impulse within Scottish theatre to represent experience beyond specifically national concerns, progress towards the establishment of a National Theatre continued. Indeed, the SAC's 1993 Charter for the Arts[202] stated that there was a general consensus that there was,

> a need for an institution whose remit it is to preserve, develop and promote the dramatic repertoire, to encourage Scottish writing for the stage, and to help actors and directors acquire and maintain the language and performance skills necessary for the most effective performance of drama in all forms of Scots and in Gaelic.[203]

However, while acknowledging that there was support for a National Theatre, the report also reminded that:

> SAC, and most artistic directors of Scottish theatres, have traditionally opposed the idea of a Scottish national theatre on the grounds that there is no comparison between, for example, professional opera provision in Scotland, which is almost entirely dependent on the national company, and theatre provision, which is already serviced by more than a dozen major revenue companies; and there is concern, based on experience of national theatres elsewhere, that such an institution could become a costly and artistically moribund monolith.[204]

This reluctance to develop the idea of a building-based national institution was supported by the findings of two feasibility studies into the possibility of establishing a

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[201] Brown, I. (2007), 'Staging the Nation: Multiplicity and Cultural Diversity in Contemporary Scottish Theatre' in Brown et al, (eds), *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature, Vol. 3 Modern Transformations: New Identities,* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press: p293.

[202] *The Charter for the Arts,* Edinburgh, HMSO, 1993. Available from the SAC Archives, Manor Place, Edinburgh.

[203] ibid ,section 3.3.2.

[204] ibid, section 3.3.2.

National Theatre, commissioned by the newly devolved Scottish Arts Council in 1994[205] and then in 1996[206] respectively. The Bonnar Keenlyside report of 1994, noted that there was a lack of support for a building based model but suggested that the SAC should scope the possibility of supporting some kind of National Theatre 'initiative'. Following these recommendations, the SAC commissioned the consultants Pieda to explore this potential and, in particular, to investigate possible funding sources. Although the Pieda report suggested that a National Theatre initiative could be established through the use of lottery funds,[207] at that time, lottery money was only being injected into capital projects. Therefore, without any immediate sources of funding towards a non-building based National Theatre initiative, the SAC halted any further specific developments towards establishing a National Theatre. However, in 1998 the SAC did allocate an extra budget of £2.25 million over three years to help reinvigorate theatre in Scotland through the setting up of an initiative, Scotland on Stage, which sought, in particular, to develop new work.

Scottish Devolution and Cultural Policy

As discussed in Chapter One, in May 1997 the New Labour government was elected to power with a manifesto promise of devolved forms of government for Scotland and Wales. The process of devolution for Scotland and Wales occurred at a time when the idea of the economic and cultural benefits of supporting culture and the creative industries had taken a central role in academic, political and economic discourse throughout Europe. Prime Minister Tony Blair's manifesto for a 'New Britain' centred on the creative industries – "Britain", so Blair declared, "was once the workshop of the world. It led the industrial revolution…I believe we are now in the middle of a second

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[205] Bonnar Keenlyside *Study on the Demand for and Potential Remit of a Scottish National Theatre Resource,* SAC, 19 Manor Place, Edinburgh. The report suggested that, while there was a lack of support for a building-based model, the Scottish Arts Council should scope the possibility of supporting some kind of National Theatre 'initiative', which would "enhance and promote existing theatre provision" both within Scotland and beyond.

[206] Pieda, *Scottish National Theatre Initiative,* November, 1996. SAC, 19 Manor Place, Edinburgh. Mainly concentrated on the financial practicalities of funding a national theatre initiative – the report concluded that, under the then current Lottery rules, funding a national theatre initiative would not be practicable.

[207] The UK National Lottery was established in 1994 with a proportion of its profits set aside towards 'good causes' – including funding arts projects. Through this channel funding for the arts in the UK has been greatly enhanced with approximately £2 billion spent on the arts to date since the lottery's inception. (Source The Arts Council of England, available at http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/aboutus/investment.php (last accessed on 25/09/08)).

revolution, defined in part by new information technology, but also by creativity".[208] For the newly devolved nations of Blair's 'New Britain', the 'creative industries' were, Harvie suggests, "commended …as key vehicles for developing and promoting themselves".[209]

In July 1999, with the opening of the newly devolved Scottish Parliament, the political landscape and cultural priorities in Scotland began to change. By November of that year, the Education, Culture and Sports Committee (ECSC) began an inquiry into the "structure and funding of the national arts companies"[210] with an extended remit to "consider whether any different or additional companies should be treated as national companies, in particular whether it would be appropriate to establish a national theatre company for Scotland".[211] The conclusions of the committee were to be fed into the ongoing cultural strategy consultation process. The immediate and pressing impetus motivating the inquiry was the contentious and highly publicised disclosure that Scottish Opera needed an extra £2.1 million in additional funds to prevent it from imminent bankruptcy.

The Committee was highly critical of the Scottish Arts Council and emphasised their apparent mismanagement and lack of transparency in their overseeing of Scottish Opera's financial situation. It became evident that the SAC's position, particularly with regard to its overseeing of the National Companies, would be subject to review and that the 'arms length' funding of the National Companies might have to be reconsidered. During the course of the inquiry it also became apparent that there was a perception of artistic elitism that appeared to be associated with the national performing companies and, in particular, Scottish Opera. For example, COSLA (the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities) in their submission stated,

> there is a widely held perception that the work of the current national performing companies is elitist and that their audience are drawn from a relatively small

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[208] Quoted in Harvie, J. (2003), 'Nationalising the 'Creative Industries'', in *Contemporary Theatre Review* 13:1:21.
[209] Harvie, J. (2003), p21.
[210] *Education Culture and Sport Committee: Report on Inquiry into the National arts Companies, 2000* available at : http://www.scottish .parliament.uk/business/committees/historical/education/reports-00/edr00-01-01.htm#remit (last accessed 25/09/08).
[211] Ibid.

cross section of Scottish society. A broadening of the type of organisation classified as national might help to address such perceptions.

The SAC's submission had underlined the national performing companies' role in presenting the "broad mainstream of the western European classical …traditions…(*as)* our prime 'tradition bearers'' for this part of our cultural heritage".[212] However, the Committee made it clear that, while the maintenance of artistic 'excellence' was a crucial responsibility of the national performing companies, this should not be their only artistic role – the search for 'innovation' was seen by the Committee to be of equal import as the delivery of 'excellence'. In their summary, the Committee also emphasised the need for the national performing companies to focus more of their resources on "education" and "the development of outreach work that treats communities as participants in the artistic process".[213]

The committee were thus responsive when Hamish Glen, the then Chairman of the Federation of Scottish Theatres, put forward a proposal for a National Theatre for Scotland that was "a bold innovation, creating a new model of what a National Theatre for Scotland can be and do".[214] For the Federation of Scottish Theatres (FST), who represented the Scottish theatre community, the proposal was a pragmatic attempt to secure more funding for the existing theatre sector. The national 'tag' was a way of, in the FST's own words 'branding theatre' and providing a 'hook', through the development of a new 'flagship' company, for the Government to bite.[215] The FST proposal suggested that, rather than a building or company based model, the National Theatre should work as a 'creative producer' - commissioning and co-producing work with the theatre companies that already existed. This model was little concerned with interpreting the notion of national in terms of a Scottish repertoire of work, but was rather focused on building bridges between national and international individuals and communities to create theatre under an umbrella organisation.

As discussed earlier in the chapter, both through a history of limited investment in theatre in Scotland and through the concentration of theatre activity in London, Scottish

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[212] ibid (submission from the SAC).
[213] Ibid.
[214] *Federation of Scottish Theatre: Proposal for a National Theatre for Scotland*, available from the SAC Archives, Manor Place, Edinburgh.
[215] Authors telephone interview with Hamish Glen, 8th May 2006.

theatre practitioners had long been drawn to England for work. The FST proposal stressed that, while a National Theatre might not stop people leaving Scotland, it might help to draw them back. This, the proposal suggested, would in itself help to reinvigorate Scottish theatre and develop its status both at home and abroad. The three central questions that Glen had sought to address when planning the proposal were; "how do we attract more money to the sector? What is the broadest way of doing this? How to do this without detracting from the existing infrastructure?".[216] The FST proposal thus emphasised the idea of building bridges and developing networks between individuals and communities, answering the needs of the theatre sector and the government. The FST proposal was inspired by and based on both the Edinburgh International Festival and Television's Channel 4 model, i.e. as a body that commissions smaller production companies. In much the same way that Channel 4 helped to invigorate and realise the economic and artistic potential of the independent television sector in Britain,[217] so the FST proposal was seen by its members as a means of encouraging the development of the smaller theatre companies in Scotland. By introducing the 'national' title, the increased funding to, and status of, the sector would, it was hoped, raise the profile of theatre in Scotland and thereby also attract increased audiences.

After a year-long consultation process, in August 2000 the Scottish Government published its first National Cultural Strategy entitled Creating our Future: Minding our Past.[218] In this document, the Scottish Government outlined its rather general framework for the "development of Scotland's cultural life over the next four years"[219] in which the Government's "vision of Scotland" envelops the "radical objective to place culture at the heart of all the Government does".[220] Though more of a compendium than a policy document, the Strategy did outline a specific commitment towards the development of a National Theatre of Scotland. The report stated that the Scottish

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[216] Ibid.

[217] On Channel 4's effect on the broadcasting sector in Britain see, for e.g., Pratt, A.C. (1997), 'The Cultural Industries Production System: a case study of employment change in Britain, 1984 – 91', *Environment and Planning,* Vol. A: 29, 11, pp 1953 – 1974.

[218] Scottish Executive, (2000), *Creating our Future…Minding our Past,* The Stationary Office Bookshop, Edinburgh.

[219] ibid, p1.

[220] ibid, p1.

Government intended to establish a feasibility study into a theatre company with a national remit by mid-2001.[221]

The Establishment of the National Theatre of Scotland

In November 2000, the Scottish Executive invited the Scottish Arts Council to convene a Scottish National Theatre Independent Working Group (SNTIWG) to develop and scope the feasibility of the ideas outlined in the FST proposal. Under the Chairmanship of Donald Smith, following a wide consultation process, the final detailed report,[222] published in May 2001, developed those ideas, recommending that the "Scottish National Theatre should be a creative producer which engages with the whole theatre sector as its 'production company'".[223] Through their consultation process and discussions within the working group itself, the feasibility study identified certain essentially consensual views regarding the NTS, which shaped their proposed model, which, perhaps crucially included a desire to "collaborate with and build upon the existing infrastructure".[224] For, as Donald Smith later said, the single most important aspect of this model of a National Theatre was "the principle …that the national theatre of Scotland will not do anything alone that it can do in partnership and collaboration with others".[225] The SNTIWG report suggested that a strategy of investment in the existing theatre infrastructure in Scotland would be a prerequisite for the establishment of a feasible National Theatre. However, the report also inferred that the establishment of a National Theatre would itself help to raise the profile of theatre both nationally and internationally – creating a "brand identity" or "quality guarantee"[226] which would help to encourage investment, provide a more substantial framework for career development and enhance a stronger sense of "collective memory" for Scottish theatre in general.

The SNTIWG report identified Scotland's geographical and cultural diversity, as the most challenging issue for the NTS and cultural policy more broadly. However, the report suggested that the NTS has the potential to "balance (the) tensions between

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[221] ibid, p19.
[222] *Scottish National Theatre: Report of the Independent Working Group*, (*SNT: Report*), May 2001, SAC, 19 Manor Place, Edinburgh.
[223] ibid.
[224] ibid.
[225] Donald Smith *Final Report: SAC Drama Forum, Tuesday 16th December 2003, Holyrood Hotel Edinburgh* SAC Archive
[226] *SNT: Report*, op. cit., p7.

regional and national, and to discern linkages between local, national and global culture".[227] As such, the report made certain recommendations about NTS touring strategy, including the need for the company to develop relationships with local authorities, the Edinburgh International Festival and existing theatre and arts organisations throughout Scotland. The report also identified audiences as being at the heart of the suggested NTS model and recognised that "the most important factor in the success of the Scottish National Theatre will be the quality of its productions: it is this single factor which will enable it to take the lead and stimulate the market for theatre in Scotland".[228] The SNTIWG also recommended that the NTS should not be "governed by a fixed literary canon".[229] Rather, they suggested that dramaturgy should be at the centre of the NTS creative process with no one person being assigned to such a role.

However, the report also stated that the establishment of a SNT could not, "by itself solve the problems of under-investment in Scotland's theatre infrastructure",[230] an infrastructure which had, throughout the 1990s, seen a decline in funding in real terms from both central and local government.[231] This reduction in funding had resulted in a decrease in artistic output and audience attendance figures as well as a focus, by the theatres in Scotland, on artistic survival rather than an emphasis on taking creative risks. The situation in Scotland had been compounded, in the first place, by the recommendations of the Boyden Report[232] in 2000, which had resulted in a £25 million annual increase in the revenue funding of producing theatres in England. Secondly, on the back of this increase, Equity's[233] securing of a 17% rise in the wages of theatre professionals had the effect of raising the overall costs of producing theatre throughout the United Kingdom. According to the SAC Drama Department, the consequences of these financial settlements represented a "clear threat to the well-being of Scottish

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[227] ibid, p10.

[228] ibid, p11.

[229] ibid, p14.

[230] ibid, p5.

[231] See, for e.g., the Scottish Arts Council's *Touring Development Study, (2000),* and the *Review of Theatres, (2001),* both available from the SAC, Manor Place, Edinburgh.

[232] Peter Boyden Associates, (May, 2000), *Roles and Functions of the English Regional Producing Theatres (The Boyden Report),* Arts Council of England - the report's recommendations led to an annual increase of £25 m into revenue funding for producing theatres in England following the Westminster government's 2002 spending revue. See http://www.equity.org.uk/Campaigning/Submissions/907.aspx#_ednref3 (last accessed 21/4/09).

[233] Equity is the trade union that supports professional creative workers in the performance 'industry'.

theatre"[234] as theatre professionals were again forced to find work south of the border. Thus, the SNTIWG report suggested that a strategy of investment in the existing theatre infrastructure in Scotland would be an absolute prerequisite for the establishment of a workable National Theatre that had this sector as its creative base. In July 2001, the SAC pledged its support for the commissioning non-building based model suggested by the SNTIWG report on the firm understanding that the Scottish Government would provide the additional funding needed. In order for the proposed NTS model to work, the Scottish Government would be required to commit funds not only to the attractive flagship organisation but also the perhaps less attractive prospect of increasing its subsidy to the existing theatre infrastructure. With the SAC now fully backing the establishment of a National Theatre in theory, the thrust of the campaign was now focused on securing the necessary funding from the Scottish Government.

From July 2001, the Scottish Government's lack of firm commitment to agree to release the necessary funds to realise the National Theatre project resulted in sustained lobbying from both the SAC and the FST, supported more publicly, by a campaign in *The Scotsman* newspaper.[235] The main thrust of the media campaign focused on the greater financial investment and commitment that many other European countries placed on the Arts. The campaign also suggested that the Labour - Liberal Democrat coalition Government, through a lack of vision and focus in its cultural policy, was allowing the Scottish National Party the possibility of winning the cultural agenda. Eventually, in December 2002, the First Minister Jack McConnell, admitted that while the Scottish Government remained committed to the National Theatre project, plans had been put on hold until the theatre infrastructure, through regional theatres, was more secure. However, faced with the reality of a standstill budget, which effectively resulted in a £900,000 decrease in its overall budget, in January 2003, the Scottish Arts Council declared that they were reducing the funding of the existing National

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[234] *The Scottish Arts Council: Drama Strategy Development* 30/05/01 S/C01,p16. Available from the Scottish Arts Council, Manor Place, Edinburgh.
[235] Press cuttings from this period include:
'Scottish theatre funding left trailing', Mike Wade, *The Scotsman,* 16th December 2002.
'Cash storm destroys theatre of dreams', Mike Wade, *The Scotsman*, 28th November 2002.
'Poor show on cash for arts is selling Scotland short', Joyce McMillan, *The Scotsman*, 3rd December 2002.
'Funding shortfall means tough choices', Mike Wade, *The Scotsman*, 29th January 2003.
'Full houses belie crisis in Scottish Theatres', Kirsty Scott, *The Guardian*, 28th January 2003.

Peforming Companies. [236]   Nevertheless, while there was no funding initiative announced towards establishing the National Theatre, the drama budget, at the expense of the National Performing Companies, did rise by 16%.

As the SAC revealed this funding decision, James Boyle, then Chairman of the SAC, added his voice to those who now called for a public enquiry into funding for the arts. Boyle suggested that the arts were suffering from political neglect and ministerial indifference and cautioned the Scottish nation to question the value it placed on the arts.[237] By the end of March 2003, Culture Minister Mike Watson, having declared Boyle's remarks "wholly unacceptable",[238] announced that the SAC along with Scottish Screen would be replaced by a new body called Creative Scotland.[239] Neverthless, in the run up to the election, Watson also reaffirmed his commitment to the establishment of the NTS during the next parliamentary session. Eventually, in September 2003, with the backing of the new culture minister, Frank McAveety, Finance Minister, Andy Kerr, announced that funds of £7.5 m (£3.5 m for 2004 – 2005 and £4m for 2005-2006) had been released by the Scottish Government as an initial funding package to establish the new National Theatre of Scotland. [240] With the guarantee of money in place, the steering group originally convened over a year earlier, in May 2002, to advise on the timescale and plans to launch the NTS, were at last in a position to be able to legitimately appoint a Chair and Board of the NTS.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the particularly social, political, economic and cultural circumstances that led to the establishment of a unique new model of a National Theatre. As discussed above, since the Reformation, theatre in Scotland had experienced an uneven development and, during the twentieth century, while pantomime, music hall and the amateur movement had all enjoyed much popular success, literary theatre and the development of indigenous playwriting had a more

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[236] i.e. Scottish Opera, Scottish Ballet, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and Scottish Chamber Orchestra..

[237] 'National theatre debate is not about luvvies versus the real world', James Boyle, *The Scotsman,* 10th February 2003.

[238] 'Defiant Watson's national theatre pledge', Mike Wade, *The Scotsman*, 7th February 2003.

[239] 'Theatre pledge "an act to get votes"', Frank O'Donnell, *The Scotsman*, 31st March 2003.

[240] 'Curtain rises on national theatre', Pauline McLean, *BBC news*, 11th September 2003; 'National theatre vision realised', *BBC News*, 11th September 2003.

fitful history. However, ironically, it was through an emphasis on the latter that the drive to create a specifically national theatre was originally focused; an endeavour that was both hindered and helped through the establishment of the Arts Council in the latter half on the twentieth century. The final part of the chapter examined the ways in which devolution presented an opportunity for a National Theatre in Scotland to garner political support and funding. The next chapter details the methodological approach and methods that underpin the substantive chapters in this thesis which follow. As mentioned, this chapter and the previous one have drawn, for the most part, on secondary sources while the remaining chapters are based on primary research. Following the methods chapter, Chapter Four will outline the founding vision of the NTS through an exploration of the development of the company in the context of a changing political and cultural policy environment. Chapters Five and Six will provide case studies of the NTS's work, focusing on their main programme in the first year and the development of their Learn and New Work departments.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

The preceding chapters have situated the establishment of the NTS through the construction of a narrative that has drawn on historical and sociological sources as well as locating this narrative within a theoretical framework. The substantive chapters that follow will examine the NTS in practice, i.e. how these sociological, historical and theoretical threads became activated in the working practices of the NTS during its formative years of operation. This chapter outlines my methodological approach to this substantive research and provides a reflexive assessment of both its strengths and weaknesses. The proposed 'collaborative' nature of the research is also examined and critically analysed. For myself, this project coalesced a variety of both personal and academic interests. I had knowledge of theatre in Scotland from a practical, if not academic, perspective. Both my parents were actors, moving to Glasgow in 1965 when my father became a Lecturer in Theatre at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. After a theatre training in Paris, I also worked as a professional actress based in Scotland for 15 years. Through this I was familiar with the infrastructure of the Scottish 'theatre industry' as well as having first hand experience of the small-mid scale touring theatre circuit in Scotland. Since 2005, I was also employed as a freelance Specialist Advisor to the Scottish Arts Council's (SAC) Drama department, allowing me the opportunity to broaden my knowledge of contemporary theatre practice in Scotland as well as gaining some insight into the structures and practice of the 'arms length' principle of state support of the arts. In 1999 I began an MA in Sociology and Anthropology, followed by an LLM in Human Rights Law. Thus, my academic interests increasingly focused on issues relating to the construction and deconstruction of the boundaries of the 'nation' – from an anthropological, legal and then cultural perspective.

Consequently, the research for this thesis was multi-disciplinary and combined and drew on theoretical and methodological approaches that crossed a number of disciplines including theatre studies, sociology and cultural policy. Therefore, a variety of both primary and secondary source material was used, including visual, digital and recorded media, as well as written and printed sources. These, often publicly available,

sources were complemented by the use of in-depth qualitative interviews and case studies based on fieldwork. My frame of reference for this thesis, although multi-disciplinary, has, nevertheless, been predominantly sociological. Therefore, my attention on the NTS as a focus of study has been less concerned with their representations of the concept of the 'national' through performances and textual analysis and more on the context of their production. As such, the research has employed a combination of constructivist and critical research methodologies using qualitative methods within a case study framework.

Context

Professor Adrienne Scullion[241] designed the original proposal for this PhD studentship in collaboration with the National Theatre of Scotland, with Vicky Featherstone, Chief Executive and Artistic Director of the NTS, acting as the 'non-academic' supervisor. The proposal was accepted for funding by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and an additional annual stipend was also granted by the NTS. The studentship was advertised in the relevant press in March 2005 and, following a successful application process, I began the studentship in October 2005, one month before the official launch of the NTS's inaugural programme and four months before its opening production. This project was one of the AHRC's first 'collaborative' doctoral awards (CDAs), which, according to the AHRC, as well as aiming to provide unique training environment for students, are:

> intended to encourage and develop collaboration between Higher Education Institution (HEI) departments and non-academic bodies.....*(and)* encourage and establish links that can have benefits for both collaborating partners, providing access to resources and materials, knowledge and expertise that may not otherwise have been available.[242]

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[241] At that time Professor Scullion was the academic director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research (CCPR) at the University of Glasgow before becoming the Head of Theatre Studies.
[242] *A.H.R.C Collaborative Doctoral Awards 2007: Guidance Notes for Applicants* available at: http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/ahrb/website/images/4_98578.pdf

Since the CDA programme was first instigated, the AHRC have developed more stringent guidelines for all partners involved[243] which might help ease some of the challenges perhaps inherent in this method of training. For example, the most recent AHRC Guidance Notes for Applicants states

> It is important that all involved in the collaboration reach a common understanding of what the project is trying to achieve and are clear about the expectations and responsibilities of each partner.[244]

The Guidance notes also outline the "value and necessity of establishing a written agreement to provide a clear understanding of the operation and management of the project".[245] Before the start of the studentship, issues such as Intellectual Property Rights, Ethics and Confidentiality should, it is suggested, also be clarified and included in a written Partnership Agreement. The Guidance notes suggest that this Partnership Agreement should then be discussed with the nominated student before it is put in place. The Guidance notes also advise:

> A student should not be expected to manage the collaboration as well as undertaking their research as this leads to conflict and endangers the continuation of the project.[246]

When I began the studentship the NTS was in the sensitive process of establishing internal protocols and working methods, defining staff roles and responsibilities, as well as negotiating relationships with external administrative and artistic bodies. These essential processes were being established and developed concurrently with the establishment of the company as a new national flagship institution. Therefore, while Featherstone remained supportive of the project as well as generous with her time and thoughts throughout the research, I was aware that the research was not a priority for the NTS. In part due to this and also because of lack of office space in their temporary accommodation, I did not – as suggested by the CDA programme – work within the NTS itself. However, this situation offered its own opportunities. For example, rather

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[243] see the *AHRC's Guidance Notes for Applicants September 2008* available at http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/FundingOpportunities/Documents/CDA%20Guidance%20Notes.pdf (last accessed on 17/11/08).
[244] Ibid, p7.
[245] Ibid, p7.

than being firmly embedded within the institution and having to negotiate the associated demands, circumstances allowed me to more easily adopt the position of an external observer. No implicit or explicit demands or expectations regarding the nature, direction or indeed any aspect of the research were placed upon me.

In the early stages of the research, at the same time as the NTS was establishing itself as an institution, internal changes within the CCPR saw the centre's staffing transformed and, eighteen months into the studentship, the new incoming Director of the CCPR, Professor Philip Schlesinger, adopted supervision of the project. By this stage, my initiation of ethical procedures was also now in place and these protocols offered more defined and welcome boundaries to the research. While these circumstances do not, I believe, define this thesis, they do offer some sense of the background that informed the methodological choices I made for the research. If different circumstances had prevailed, I may have chosen a different methodological route. As Silverman acutely observes, "most research is generated by a series of chance circumstances relating to the particular investigator and to the economic, social and political context in which (s)he works".[247] This thesis is the result of the particular constellation of circumstances and events that existed during the course of this research and which influenced its direction and my methodological approach to the study.

 The uncertainty that characterised the immediate context within which this research was undertaken was also reflected more generally in the wider political, economic and cultural environment. For example, the cultural policy landscape in Scotland, during this period was in a particularly liminal period of transition. In April 2004, MSP Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport, Frank McAveety had established the Cultural Commission with a remit to review the infrastructure of cultural provision in Scotland and provide practical recommendations for a "framework for its support in the future".[248] Chaired by former Head of BBC Radio Scotland and former Chair of the Scottish Arts Council (SAC), James Boyle, the Cultural Commission published its report *Our Next Major Enterprise,* in June 2005. The Scottish Executive's (S.E.) lighter response to the

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[246] Ibid, p6

[247] Silverman, D. (1985), *Qualitative Methodology and Sociology,* Aldershot: Gower Publishing, p4.

[248] http://www.culturalcommission.org.uk/cultural/cc_display6861.html (accessed 6/6/08).

weighty tome was published in January 2006[249] and resulted in the first tentative moves towards the amalgamation of the SAC and Scottish Screen into a new cultural body called Creative Scotland. This significant transformation in the funding of the arts in Scotland was also accompanied by a pledge to change the funding structures of the National Performing Companies. Though, in January 2006, it was not clear when this change would take effect, it appeared likely that at some point during the course of this research the NTS would become directly funded through the Scottish Executive. I therefore needed to create a research plan that could accommodate and respond to this constantly changing and uncertain environment within the NTS and within the cultural policy landscape in Scotland.

Reviewing the Literature

The thesis's original title, *Putting the 'nation' into the National: an Exploration of how the National Theatre of Scotland Interprets and Fulfils its National Remit,* helped to establish the initial parameters of the research and its associated methodology. As well as serving to delineate the boundaries at the core of my substantive research, this starting point also stimulated other lines of critical enquiry which formed the basis of my literature review in the first two chapters. At the start of the project, I began the ongoing process of collating a bibliography of relevant literature. I sought first to create a socio-historical narrative that charted the birth and development of National Theatres before analysing the specificity of Scotland's status as a nation and how a theatrical public sphere might function within it. Thus, the first two chapters combined both secondary and primary source materials in order to provide an overview of the particular context and circumstances that led to the development of this model of a National Theatre in twenty first century Scotland. The early months of the project were spent assessing this literature or, perhaps more accurately, defining which of the potentially relevant literature I would focus on in order to identify the threads or themes that might run through the thesis.

As well as the secondary scholarly sources, to create a narrative of more contemporary events I analysed primary sources such as newspaper press cuttings, Scottish Government debates and reports and SAC minutes, reports and research. My starting

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[249] *Scotland's Culture*: *Scottish Executive Response on the Cultural Review, Jan 2006,* St Andrews

point for gathering this information was the Centre for Cultural Policy Research's[250] website, which at that time, housed a virtual online archive containing website links to newspaper articles between 2001-2004 relating to the establishment of the NTS. Analysing these provided me with a timetable of events regarding the main issues that arose, views and opinions of key players and an insight into the concerns that most entertained the press in the four years preceding the establishment of the NTS. The CCPR website also contained website links to a number of relevant SAC working papers and press releases and Scottish Executive and Parliamentary reports, debates and motions. These were invaluable resources in their own right and also, inevitably, provided a starting point for a trail of discovery to other relevant sources of information.

In order to keep up-to-date on the press coverage of the NTS, I set up a Google Alert – an information retrieval service available through the Google online search engine - which delivers to your email account daily online links to worldwide press coverage that meets your keyword search criteria, for example, 'National Theatre of Scotland'. To keep in touch with events more generally within the Scottish Executive/Government, I also signed up for their Daily Digests, [251] which provided a daily news summary of recent Scottish Executive/ Scottish Government activity. I also accessed the NTS's own growing press archive as well as making regular searches through the Lexis Nexis and Newsbank online databases. These databases - which allow for keyword searches of English-speaking press cuttings either regionally or worldwide - were particularly useful for retrieving press cuttings relating to specific NTS productions. Through these methods I have been able to collate both an online and paper archive of press cuttings relating to the NTS and cultural policy developments in Scotland.

There are undoubted strengths in being able to generate and collate a computer-based archive using Internet resources. However the quantity and variable quality of information available also requires Internet based research to be strictly focused and rigorously assessed and also requires a well-designed method for computer-based or paper archiving or storage. One problem I found with computer-based archiving of the Google Alert links to the original newspaper cuttings was that, when retrospectively accessing these links they had, on occasion, been severed. In such cases I had to

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House, Edinburgh.
[250] http://www.gla.ac.uk/ccpr/ (last accessed 2/2/07).
[251]   http://register.scotland.gov.uk/index.asp?aid=1511&p=7&a=t&u=642db66a-311a-44ed-aadc-68adf8dfe3ae (last accessed 1/12/08).

retrieve these articles by doing a database (Lexis Nexis or Newsbank) search for the specific article. Therefore, the online storage of newspaper links through Google Alerts was a quick and effective means of accessing press coverage though not always a completely effective long-term solution to archiving. However, for my purposes, it was an adequate and effective method that enabled me to easily access a broad wide range of English language newspapers worldwide.

As mentioned above, the original parameters of this study focused on an exploration of the NTS's interpretation and fulfilment of its national remit. As such, the NTS's first Business Plan, which detailed the company's stated intentions for the period 2005/06 to 2007/08, provided a significant source of information. The Business Plan defined, amongst other things, the company's main aims and objectives, vision and values as well as the structure of the organisation, financial budgets and key stakeholders. The subsequent Business Plan for the period 2008 to 2011 also provided a useful source of information regarding the NTS's proposed future development. These two documents provided the foundation of the NTS's own interpretation of their remit and their intentions with regard to its fulfilment. The SAC and, later, the Scottish Government's funding agreements were also invaluable resources of material relating to the State's expectations of what this new national cultural institution's remit might be. Both the NTS Business Plans and the funding agreements are discussed in detail in Chapter Four and Seven of this thesis.

In order to access documents relating to the establishment of the NTS, I also made a request to gain access to the archives of the Scottish Arts Council through legislation relating to the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 by which public authorities are legally bound to make information publicly available on request.[252] This was a relatively straightforward procedure in which I contacted the SAC's Compliance Officer by email requesting specific information. This email was processed as a Freedom of Information (F.o.I.) request and, after a period of approximately six weeks, I was able to gain access to the SAC archives at their headquarters in Manor Place, Edinburgh. Until the NTS came under direct Government funding, in April 2007, the SAC was charged with carrying out artistic evaluations of NTS productions, these I was also able to access through making F.o.I. requests. However, some information held by public

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[252] Since that time (September 2006) I understand that SAC archives are now publicly available at the National Library of Scotland.

bodies is exempt from disclosure under Section 29 (1) (a) of the Freedom of Information Act (Scotland).[253] For example, information relating to the proposed change to direct government funding of the NPCs by the SE was exempted from disclosure under the Act as it related to the "formulation or development of government policy", at least until those changes became effective. Therefore, while the F.o.I Act does provide public rights of access to information held by public bodies, the many exemptions that the Act lists[254] allows legal justifications for the withholding of certain classifications of information.

Ethics and Confidentiality

In many ways the formal ethical procedures that are proscribed by Glasgow University's ethical policy – which has "the dignity, rights and welfare of research participants"[255] as its core criteria - help to establish clear boundaries for research as well as protecting the rights of those participating. The growing body of legislation and guidelines that have a direct impact on non-clinical research involving human subjects, including the Data Protection Act, The Freedom of Information Act and the Human Rights Act, also provide protection for those participating in research. Glasgow University's Ethics Policy requires that the ethics committee of the relevant University faculty approve all proposed research activity involving human subjects. In line with the recommendations of Glasgow University's Ethics Policy, each prospective interviewee of my research was asked to sign a consent form before the interview took place. The consent forms briefly outlined the nature of the research and asked for the interviewees' consent for their words to be used in the final thesis. Consent forms also provided the opportunity for interviewees' anonymity to be guaranteed if requested. On Featherstone's suggestion, an additional clause was inserted into consent forms for NTS staff, which might allow staff to speak freely without feeling in breach of NTS confidence. This extra clause read, "any confidential information pertaining to the National Theatre of Scotland, its employees and operations will not be disclosed by me to third parties and will only be used within the PhD thesis with the consent of Vicky Featherstone". As I occasionally had access to material not in the public domain, for

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[253] http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2002/asp_20020013_en_1 (last accessed 6/6/08).
[254] See 'Part Two: Exempt Information' in *The Freedom of Information Act (Scotland)*.
[255] See *University of Glasgow: The Faculty of Arts Ethical Policy* http://www.arts.gla.ac.uk/Faculty/html/ethicspolicy.htm (last accessed 1/12/08).

example through internally distributed material such as newsletters, I drafted a confidentiality agreement which was approved and signed by the NTS that insured that I would not divulge any such information to third parties and would only use it in the final thesis with the consent of those involved.

Interviews

However, as the NTS's public stature grew, much information about the NTS was increasingly available in the public domain particularly as senior NTS staff regularly responded to requests to speak at conferences and comment or be interviewed in the various media. Accessing images and information relating to the NTS's presentation of their public image were easily available, for example, through their growing website or various other publicity materials. Press reviews of NTS productions and more general commentary on the organisation, as discussed above, were also easy to access and presented a useful source of opinion on the company's work. Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Government artistic evaluations also offered responses to the reception of NTS productions. Nevertheless, interviews with key players, both within and outwith the organisation formed a significant source of information throughout the research.[256]

As Schlesinger et al note, "if you inhabit a particularly elite political or cultural world in Scotland, you continuously encounter those within it with a frequency and intensity quite different from the interactions that take place in larger countries with major metropolitan centres". [257] This statement finds resonance with the relatively small theatre sector in Scotland and, as such, it should be borne in mind that all the interviewees with whom I spoke would be aware that their words could impact on their professional relationship with, for example, the NTS. Therefore, it could be argued that, within such an environment, interviewees were less willing to be critical than they might have been in a less professionally and personally interconnected working environment. Schlesinger et al also argue that, in Scotland, "these [political and cultural] worlds are hard to penetrate and have a tendency towards closure and self-protection".[258]

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[256] Appendix A lists the names and job titles of interviewees and the date/s and method by which the interview was conducted.

[257] Schlesinger, P., Miller, D. & Dinan, W. (2001), *Open Scotland: Journalists, Spin Doctors and Lobbyists,* Edinburgh: Polygon, p21.

[258] Schlesinger, P., Miller, D. & Dinan, W., ibid, p21

However, for the most part, during the course of this research, identifying and gaining access to key players was not problematic.

The only time I encountered some difficulty – although this was related to the place of the interview rather than the interview itself - was when trying to secure an interview with representatives from the Scottish Government's National Performing Companies Unit (NPCU). Although I made it clear that I would prefer the interview to take place between the NPCU representatives and myself in the Unit's offices in Victoria Quay in Edinburgh, the interview was arranged by NPCU officials, against my request, to be held in the NTS offices with Featherstone present. During the preceding six months, the NPCU had been in negotiations with the National Performing Companies regarding the terms of the transition to direct government funding. As discussed above, this process was exempt from the legislative obligations under the Freedom of Information Act and it is possible that the NPCU representatives were wishing to protect the dissemination of potentially sensitive information. However, this is supposition and I am still unaware of the real reason for their unwillingness for me to interview them in their offices in Edinburgh.

From March 2007, NTS Administration and Operations Manager, Ben Walmsley was assigned to be my key contact within the NTS and regularly responded to my requests for a variety of internal documentation including, for example, audience figures, evaluations, staff structures, planning processes, and annual reports and accounts. Walmsley and I had eight informal, unrecorded interviews over the course of an eighteenth-month period, during which we discussed current issues in the company which allowed me to keep up-to-date on developments within the then ever-changing environment of the NTS at that time. When Walmsley left the NTS in June 2008, Kathy Khorami, PA to the NTS Senior Management, then became my key contact person. Featherstone was also a central and significant source of information and during the course of the research we had thirteen meetings. These were designed as semi-structured interviews all of which lasted for approximately one hour and all of which provided greater insights into certain aspects of the workings of the company. Beyond these, a total of twenty other formal interviews were carried out during the course of the research with a variety of interviewees with differing relationships to the NTS, for example representatives from the SAC, FST, SE, NTS employees and freelance artists working with the NTS. For each individual interview I designed a specific set of

questions that formed the basis of the interview. Most interviews were recorded using a digital recorder and transcribed by hand. The majority of interviews lasted for approximately one hour.

These qualitative methods, i.e. in-depth interviews and participant observation, seemed the most appropriate method for eliciting the kind of information that I required, as opposed to employing quantitative methods, such as questionnaires and surveys. Qualitative methods allowed some insight into the kind of meanings that interviewees constructed from their experience. As Schwandt writes:

> constructivists emphasise the pluralistic and plastic character of reality – pluralistic in the sense that reality is expressible in a variety of symbol and language systems; plastic in the sense that reality is stretched and shaped to fit purposeful acts of intentional human agents…in this sense, constructivism means that human beings do not find or discover knowledge so much as construct or make it. We invent concepts, models and schemes to make sense of experience, and further, we continually test and modify these constructions in the light of new experience.[259]

However, as discussed below, a sample survey was employed to elicit statistical and quantitative information about the audience's responses to NTS productions.

Case Studies and Canons

In chapter two, I was conscious of replicating, through the creation of narrative based on secondary sources that identified certain plays and theatre companies as significant, an already established canon of Scottish theatre. In the chapters that follow, I am also mindful of my complicity in the construction of a new canon for the NTS by focusing on specific NTS productions and initiatives to the exclusion of others. Over the past three years, the NTS has been party to the creation of a prolific body of work and reflection on this has inevitably resulted in making selective choices. I have

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[259] Schwandt, T. A. (1994), 'Constructivist, Interpretivist Approaches to Human Inquiry' in Denzin, N. K. & Yvonna, S. L. (eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research,* Thousand Oaks, C.C.: Sage Publications, pp118-137.

tried to base these choices on those texts that I considered to be particularly significant, in some way, to the development of the NTS. For example, in Chapter Five, I focus mainly on the NTS's inaugural production/s *Home* and its most popularly and critically acclaimed production to date, *Black Watch* (2007)*. Chapter Six, concentrates more on particular ways of working through the use of case studies. As Yin notes, "the major rationale for using …[the case study] method is when your investigation must cover both a particular *phenomenon* and the *context* within which the phenomenon is occurring".[260] These case studies intend to be representative of the particular approaches to producing work generated by the context within which the NTS operates. For example, I decided that two projects *Transform* and *The Elgin Macbeth,* both of which engaged members of the public in theatre making practices, would be used as case studies to highlight the work of NTS Learn. As part of the research for these, I interviewed key players, assessed NTS Learn's publicity and self-evaluation material and examined press responses to the events. I also attended Transform performances and undertook three days of fieldwork in the lead-up to the NTS's production of *The Elgin Macbeth* at Elgin Cathedral. As part of this fieldwork, I observed and took notes of the rehearsals on site in the venue as well as recording semi-structured interviews with the lead artists.

Audiences

As part of my exploration of methodology I developed a trial quantitative audience questionnaire adapted and refined in dialogue with the NTS staff. My aim was to dispatch the questionnaire to accompany the NTS Ensemble tour in the autumn of 2006. As the NTS Ensemble is the most geographically far-reaching of the NTS projects within Scotland, I hoped that the survey would give me some idea of how the NTS were perceived and what expectations of it there might be beyond Scotland's central belt, where the majority of theatre practice is concentrated. I aimed to examine whether the NTS's national status elicited a specific kind of response from a potential audience, i.e. whether audiences were particularly drawn to attend NTS performances because of its status as a national company. The questionnaire also attempted to determine whether the designation 'national' was more likely to encourage a non-theatre going audience to attend theatre. The production manager of NTS Ensemble

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[260] Yin, R. (2002), *Applications of Case Study Research, 2nd Edition,* Thousand Oaks, C.C: Sage. p31.

agreed to manage the dissemination and collection of the questionnaires during the Ensemble tour, which visited fifteen venues over a period of two months with a rolling programme of three different productions. Out of five hundred questionnaires, thirty-eight had been completed (i.e. a response rate of thirteen percent) and out of fifteen venues, five were represented in the questionnaire. In the questionnaire, ninety-seven percent of respondents who replied said that they were aware, before attending, that this was an NTS production and for seventy-three percent of respondents this played some role in their attendance. All respondents rated the production highly[261] and, where additional comments were made, they were mainly positive. While a larger scale study of audiences' responses to NTS productions as well as perceptions of the company would, I believe, be a key area of further future research, following this trial survey, I concluded that it was financially and practically beyond the scope of this study. As such, in this study, audiences' responses to productions are garnered from press reviews, SAC and Scottish Government artistic evaluations and my own reactions.

Conclusion

This chapter has mapped out the methods through which this thesis was researched. It has also explored some of the challenges specific to my experience of the CDA programme. The chapter thus presents the background that informs the substantive chapters of the thesis. While the privilege of greater hindsight may have offered greater opportunities for more critical reflection on established processes, this document I hope provides some insight into the early evolution of a major cultural institution at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The following chapter charts the changing political and cultural policy environment in Scotland during the period of this research and the ways in which this appeared to impact on the NTS. The chapter also begins to map out the internal structure of the NTS and the way in which the company signalled and presented its public image, focussing, in particular, on the NTS's Business Plans and interviews with Featherstone. Thus, the following chapter attempts to begin to define the nature of the public sphere that the NTS began to carve out in its formative years.

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[261] 22/38 = excellent, 10/38 = very good and 2/38 = good, 0/38 = competent, 0/38 = poor.

Chapter Four: From Theory to Practice; Behind the Scenes

Introduction

In November 2005, Vicky Featherstone, the artistic director of the National Theatre of Scotland, announced the inaugural season of this new national cultural institution. Established in the wake of the devolution of the Scottish parliament, with, at that time, an undefined remit in terms of how it interpreted and fulfilled its 'national' status, the arrival of the National Theatre of Scotland allowed the opportunity, in the company's words, to "transform the meaning of 'national theatre' on a global scale".[262] Not based in a building and with a desire to "constantly question the definition of theatre",[263] the National Theatre of Scotland, from the outset, defined its artistic and social agenda in forthright terms that sought to challenge fixed notions of the theatre and, perhaps, even the 'nation'. This chapter will begin to map out the contours of this new model of a National Theatre, exploring the complex dialectic between various economic, political, social and artistic choices, forces and factors that have influenced, and continue to influence, the formative years of the NTS.

Beginning with a brief summary of the context in which the NTS was born, the chapter traces the evolving structure of the NTS from the point of the recruitment of the Chair of the Board in December 2003.[264] The chapter then goes on to explore the founding vision of the NTS as expressed through the company's first, detailed, Business Plan; focussing on the company's stated artistic aims and objectives, rather than the artistic output of the company, which will be explored in later chapters. Little remained constant in the cultural policy landscape, or indeed the wider political context in Scotland, between the decision to announce the funds to establish the NTS, made in September 2003, and the end point of this research in August 2008. This chapter will touch on some of those changes, in particular, the shift from arms-length funding of the

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[262] *National Theatre of Scotland: Business Plan*, 2005/06 – 2007/08, p3.
[263] *National Theatre of Scotland: Business Plan*, 2005/06 – 2007/08, p10.
[264] Appendix B provides a timeline for the establishment of the NTS.

NTS to direct government funding, and the potential impact that this change may have on the NTS.

Cultural, political and economic context

The NTS was established at a time when the British economy was enjoying its longest period of recorded expansion[265] and, as discussed in chapter two, the creative industries, which included the performing arts, were identified by the Government as being a key driver for the economy's future health.[266] Prime Minister Tony Blair had, since early on in his premiership, privileged the creative industries and, as Harvie suggests, recommended them as "key vehicles" for the development and promotion of the newly devolved nations.[267] The economic and political environment in Scotland was then, perhaps, more then ever before, predisposed to the formation of a flagship cultural organisation. However, what 'national' function that flagship institution might have was less clear.

As discussed in chapter one, the devolution of the Scottish parliament reflected the widespread de-centralisation in patterns of governance but was also a response to the democratic deficit that had become apparent in Scotland during eighteen years of Conservative rule at Westminster. By allowing for a potentially more democratically representative government to be elected in Scotland devolution was developed as a solution that might undermine SNP demands for Scottish independence and the associated dissolution of the United Kingdom. However, according to McCrone, the majority vote in Scotland for a devolved parliament could not uncomplicatedly be interpreted as a direct expression of Scottish cultural or political nationalism. Rather, McCrone suggests, "a Scottish Parliament was seen as a means to an end, and that end was better government and an expected improvement in social and public

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[265] See, for e.g., Coyle, C., (20th January 2000), 'Economic Boom is Longest in UK History' in *The Independent,* London. Or the annual reports of the Bank of England between 2000 – 2007 at http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/annualreport/index.htm (last accessed 22/4/09).

[266] For more information and detailed figures regarding these claims see, for example, the NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts) report *Creating Growth: How the UK can Develop World Class Creative Businesses (*April 2006) NESTA Research Report available at http://www.nesta.org.uk/uk-creative-industries-face-threat-from-emerging-nations/ (last accessed 30/07/08).

[267] Harvie, J. (2003) p21 'Nationalising the 'Creative Industries'', in *Contemporary Theatre Review,* 13:1.

welfare".[268] Therefore, the NTS was originally created by a Scottish government administration that remained essentially committed to the maintenance of the Union of the British state.

Since devolution, the new Parliament had demonstrated a keen interest in culture in general and in the National Performing Companies (NPCs) in particular. Though this interest may have been linked to the proportionally large financial investment that the government had in these flagship institutions, Hamilton and Scullion argue that the Scottish Parliament was "very clear that these 'national' companies provide a service of a particular and distinctive kind and that, in doing so, they carry meaning and significance in a highly specific way".[269] However, although formed and funded by the new Scottish Parliament, the government in power at that time appeared to remain essentially ambivalent as to what the company's national remit might be or how this new national cultural flagship of Scotland might earn its status.

A degree of political ambivalence towards the arts — on the one hand recognising its significance and on the other not wishing to influence its creation — has been an intrinsic feature of British cultural policy at least since the establishment of the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB) after the Second World War. Developed on the model of the BBC, which aimed to ensure freedom of the press through distance from government, the ACGB was the first arms-length arts council specifically designed to counter the possibility of political interference in the arts. The application of the arms length principle, which is applied to a broad array of constitutional and public affairs in Britain, allows for the creation of a non-departmental public body (NDPB)[270] or 'quango' that works as an arbiter between government and its interests.[271] Through the continued maintenance of the Arts Council, despite its many detractors,[272] the arms-length funding of the arts has been effectively normalised in Britain, although other models of state support of the arts do exist both within Britain and beyond.

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[268] McCrone, D. (2001), *Understanding Scotland: the sociology of a nation (second edition),* London: Routledge. p123.

[269] Hamilton, C. & Scullion, A. (2003), 'Flagship or Flagging? The Post-Devolution Role of Scotland's 'National' Companies' in *Scottish Affairs,* no 42, Winter 2003: 99.

[270] A NDPB is defined by the UK government as "a body which has a role in the processes of national government, but is not a governmental department or part of one, and which accordingly works at arms length from the government" Public Bodies 1997, Cabinet Office, Office of Public Service.

[271] For a critical examination of the history and development of NDPBs see, Hirst, P. (1995), 'Quangos and Democratic Government' in *Political Affairs,* Vol 48, No. 2: 341-359.

Models of Arts Funding

Although, in practice, states tend to simultaneously employ more than one model, Chartrand has usefully defined four categories in order to identify the various ways in which states have characteristically supported the arts.[273] These models, or ideal types, Chartrand names as the Facilitator, the Architect, the Engineer and the Patron. In Chartrand's schema, the Facilitator model, exemplified by the United States, aims to support artistic production through the facilitation of policies, such as tax incentives, to encourage financial donations from corporate sponsors and individual donors. The more interventionist Architect model, as typified by the Netherlands, tends to fund the arts through a dedicated Ministry of Culture and the arts may be aligned towards the delivery of the government's wider social justice objectives. The Engineer model, as its name suggests, sees the arts allied towards meeting the ideological aspirations of the state and art becomes, essentially, a tool of propaganda. The former Soviet Union, Cuba, Mao's China and North and South Korea are all states that can be understood to have variously engineered the arts towards meeting the state's political ends. Finally, as discussed earlier, the Patron model as exemplified by Britain as well as Canada, New Zealand and Australia, removes decision making about artistic matters away from government through the establishment of government funded arms-length arts councils. The arts council determines, through a process of peer review, how subsidies should be divided and, as such, "politicians can claim neither credit for artistic successes nor responsibility for failure".[274]

Arguably, by aligning the arts solely to political objectives — whether those political objectives are framed in terms of social justice or national culture — both the Architect and Engineer models are perhaps least well positioned to support expressive innovation or excellence. The Facilitator model may also tend towards conservatism as individual or corporate needs and desires represent a narrow range of interests. The Patron model, on the other hand, while it may be more able to support broader artistic, rather than commercial or political, objectives, raises challenging issues for

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[272] See, for example, Pick, J. (2002), *Vile Jelly: the Birth, Life, and Lingering Death of the Arts Council of Great Britain,* London: Brynmill Press.
[273] Chartrand, H. H. (1989), 'The Arm's Length Principle and the Arts: an International Perspective – Past, Present and Future' in Cummings, M.C. & Schuster, J. M. D. (eds), *Who's to Pay for the Arts? The International Search for Models of Arts Support,* New York City: American Council for the Arts. p2
[274] Chartrand, supra, p1.

government regarding the need for transparency and the accountability of public spending. In Britain, the Patron model also relies on what Hirst calls an unwritten 'social constitution' between the state and its electors, which requires the government to voluntarily limit its interventions in NDPB activities. For the Patron model to work effectively, the government must also recognise the "need for bipartisan appointments to governing bodies and the need to let institutions make policy, refraining from imposing explicit agendas or extending government control".[275] In response to concerns in the UK regarding the long-term health of this unwritten social constitution, in 1995 the Government charged the Nolan Committee to carry out an inquiry into standards in public life.[276] The Committee found that there were "weaknesses in the procedures for maintaining and enforcing [such] standards"[277] and recommended the establishment of a regulatory body with a remit to, in particular, oversee the process by which appointments to public bodies were made. Thus, in 1995 the Commissioner for Public Appointments was created, with a separate Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPAS)[278] established in Scotland in 2003. The Commissioner in Scotland oversees and regulates the appointment process to boards of public bodies with the aim of ensuring that such appointments are made following the seven principles identified in the Code of Practice.[279] These principles include the belief that all public appointments should be made solely on the basis of merit and that the process of making appointments should be both 'transparent' and subject to independent scrutiny. However, as will be discussed later in this chapter, many publicly funded bodies, including the NTS, do not fall under the remit, and therefore scrutiny, of OCPAS.[280]

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[275] Hirst, P. supra at 9, p351.

[276] For a summary of the Nolan Committee's findings and recommendations see *Summary of the Nolan Committee's First Report on Standards in Public Life,* HMSO, (1996) available online at http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/parlment/nolan/nolan.htm (last accessed 29/11/08).

[277] *Summary of the Nolan Committee's First Report on Standards in Public Life*, Ibid, p1.

[278]Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments in Scotland, website at http://www.publicappointments.org/ (last accessed 29/11/08).

[279] For an online copy of the Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies in Scotland, go to http://www.publicappointments.org/downloads/NewCode.pdf (last accessed 29/11/08).

[280] For a UK Parliamentary research briefing on the issue see SN/PC/3368, 25/01/05, MacLeavy, J. available at http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/briefings/snpc-03368.pdf (last accessed 28/11/08).

The NTS Chair and Board

It is beyond the scope of this research to examine all the motives that led to the eventual overhaul of the infrastructure of the funding for the arts in Scotland. Nevertheless, before the NTS launched its first programme, as already touched upon in chapter two, the seeds had already been sown for a revision of both the SAC and the funding structures of the National Performing Companies (NPCs),[281] with the latter earmarked to come under direct government funding. As from April 2007, the principle of 'arms length' government funding for the arts was replaced and the NTS, along with the other NPCs, became directly funded through the Scottish Executive. However, whatever plans the Executive entertained, in complicity with the existing National Performing Companies regarding arrangements for their future funding, from the SAC's release of the funds earmarked for the NTS in August 2004 until April 2007, the SAC were charged with supervising the early development of the NTS.

Therefore, recruitment of the Independent Working Group, the Steering Group, the NTS Recruitment Panel,[282] Chair and Board were all overseen and managed by the SAC. Although the Executive were kept informed of developments throughout the process, and had an advisory role on the nominations committee through the presence of a representative of the Scottish Executive,[283] the Executive did not have any final veto over recruitment decisions.[284] The initial funding agreement and the terms and remit by which the NTS was to receive its subsidy were drawn up by the SAC while artistic evaluations of the company's work were also assessed, as with all other SAC funded organisations, by the SAC's team of independent Specialist Advisors. The SAC oversaw the evolution of the NTS constitution and it was SAC lawyers who drew up the NTS Memorandum and Articles. In terms of the Memorandum and Articles, the SE did, however, take an active interest in ensuring that the NTS was originally constituted in a 'provisional' manner, i.e. allowing for the possibility for later changes to the constitution of the company to be made. As such, the NTS was originally constituted as a wholly

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[281] i.e. Scottish Opera, Scottish Ballet, Royal Scottish National Orchestras, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the NTS

[282] Appendix C contains the names and job titles of those who comprised the Independent Working Group, the Steering Group and the Recruitment Panel.

[283] Bob Irvine, then Head of Sports, Arts and Culture in the Education Department of the Scottish Executive.

[284] Author's telephone interview with David Taylor, Head of Drama, SAC, Manor Place, Edinburgh. 19th April 2007.

owned subsidiary of the Scottish Arts Council, with the nominated sole member of the company being the SAC lawyer's Burness Ltd, the company was a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee.

Recruitment to the Chair and Board of the NTS was overseen by the SAC and managed by an independent steering group, convened from early in 2002, to advise on Board appointments, planning and the timescale for the launch of the NTS. In the first week of October 2003, advertisements for the Chair and Board were placed in *The Sunday Times*, *The Scotsman*, *The Herald* and *The Guardian* newspapers and the headhunting firm Saxton Bampfylde Hever were also employed in assisting with the recruitment process. Eventually, in December 2003, the NTS recruitment panel invited Richard Findlay to Chair the Board of the NTS. Findlay — whose formal education had been at one of Scotland's few Steiner schools where creative learning and the arts are embedded in the curriculum —combined a background in theatre with a proven expertise in leadership and business. Amongst other achievements, Findlay had trained as an actor and chaired the Board of Edinburgh's Lyceum Theatre for six years. During his ten-year leadership as Chief Executive and Executive Director of Scottish Radio Holdings Plc, he had overseen the company's expansion, as it transformed into a powerful and competitive media conglomerate.

Findlay was vocal in his support of the innovative form of the NTS and, in an early interview, articulated his vision for the company to be "at the cutting edge ….We have to be innovative, we have to think beyond the confines of what theatre is".[285] Findlay also interpreted the NTS 'national' affix in broad terms, "I don't see this as a Scottish-centric organisation — we *happen* to be based here — and we have a responsibility within and to Scotland — but we also have to bring the best from elsewhere to Scotland. That's what I would regard as our remit — and that enhances the totality of what we do and enriches Scottish theatre". [286] The recruitment of Findlay to the NTS Chair thus further appeared to indicate the progressive intentions of this unique new model of a national theatre.

One of Findlay's first tasks as Chair was to recruit Directors to the NTS Board. Board members were required to have made a demonstrable contribution at a senior level

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[285] Jones, S. (7/12/03), 'The Leading Man', *Scotland on Sunday*.

[286] From author's recorded and transcribed and interview with Richard Findlay, 12th June 2006.

within their own field, demonstrate confidence in communicating, express an interest and commitment to theatre and be willing to commit at least two unremunerated days per month to the company's early development. [287] From an initial fifty-two applications, seventeen were short listed for interviews in January 2004 from which seven people were invited to form the NTS Board of Directors. The first meeting of the Board,[288] who each served as individuals, rather than as representatives of organisations, was held on the first April 2004. Lisa Kapur, a freelance arts consultant, was also retained by the SAC to assist the Board with practical tasks, such as implementing the NTS's basic systems and protocols and securing temporary office accommodation. Between April and July 2004 the Board's responsibilities included focussing on formulating the person specification for the company's first Artistic Director.

Artistic Director and Senior Management

The person specification identified an Artistic Director who, amongst other things, was "a visionary, with…. the ability to bring together diverse talents to create something very special".[289] Out of an initial thirty applications, a short-list of six directors was interviewed before, on the twenty-ninth of July 2004, Richard Findlay announced that Vicky Featherstone had been selected as the inaugural Artistic Director and Chief Executive of the NTS, taking up her post on the first of November 2004. Featherstone had worked in television script development before establishing herself as a theatre director, working as an Assistant Director under Jude Kelly at West Yorkshire Playhouse (1992-1994) before becoming Resident Director at the Bolton Octagon (1994-1996) and then Literary Associate at the Bush Theatre (1996-1997). She briefly returned to script development at Granada Television before becoming, in 1997, Artistic Director of Paines Plough, an English touring theatre company, dedicated to developing and producing the work of contemporary playwrights. At the beginning of her seven year tenure as Artistic Director of Paines Plough, Featherstone appointed renowned playwrights Mark Ravenhill and Sarah Kane as, respectively, literary manager and writer-in-residence and also recruited Edinburgh's Traverse Theatre's Literary Director John Tiffany as Associate Director. During her time at Paines Plough, Featherstone had also forged working relationships and produced the work of a

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[287] From author's recorded and transcribed interview Lisa Kapur, 30th October 2007.
[288] Appendix D contains the names and biographies of the NTS's first Board of Directors.
[289] NTS Director 'person specification' from SAC, 12 Manor Place, Edinburgh, NTS archive files.

number of Scottish playwrights including David Greig, Gregory Burke, Douglas Maxwell, Stephen Greenhorn and Linda McLean.

Featherstone's was an unpredictable appointment not least because, as Findlay said, "of all the names mentioned hers wasn't".[290] However, the theatre community, Findlay suggested, "were almost relieved that it wasn't one of the names that were being bandied about …because she hadn't come from within Scottish theatre she didn't have the kind of baggage that some people might have had".[291] Representing the Scottish Arts Council, Deputy Director Jim Tough, welcomed Featherstone's appointment stating, "Vicky Featherstone's international reputation as a producer and director sets the tone for an outward-looking National Theatre. Her energy and proven confidence in Scottish theatre artists promises an invigorating and diverse National Theatre of Scotland".[292] Overall, Featherstone's appointment was received, in the press, with general surprise and, in some cases, relief. While Thom Dibdin of the *Evening News* claimed, "Scotland's theatre world was stunned",[293] Mark Brown of *The Sunday Herald* saw Featherstone's appointment as "a remarkable and audacious coup…[which] has confounded expectations and, at a stroke, reassured many of those who have been highly sceptical".[294] *The Scotsman's* art critic, Joyce McMillan welcomed Featherstone's "bold and challenging"[295] appointment and happily confessed that her worst dread — that "the first director would look back to the past of Scotland and its theatre culture, rather than forward to the future"[296] — was now laid to rest.

As discussed in chapter two, the NTS was originally conceptualised in the Report of the Independent Working Group as, a "creative producer, which engages with the whole theatre sector as its 'production company', working with and through the existing Scottish theatre community to achieve its objectives".[297] As such, the NTS was primarily envisioned as a commissioning body, which would enlist the existing producing theatres and companies in Scotland to create work under the NTS banner.

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[290] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Richard Findlay, 12th June 2006.
[291] Ibid.
[292] *First Director of the National Theatre of Scotland appointed*, SAC website http://www.scottisharts.org.uk/ 29/07/2004.
[293] Dibdin, T. 'Dramatic Role as a Champion for Theatre', *Evening News,* 21 February 2005.
[294] Brown, N. 'Following a Female Lead', *The Sunday Herald*, 1 August 2004.
[295] McMillan, J. 'Brave New World of Theatre Finds New Voice'*, The Scotsman*, 30 July 2004.
[296] Ibid.
[297] *Scottish National Theatre: Report of the Independent Working Group*, (*SNT: Report)* May 2001, SAC, 19 Manor Place, Edinburgh, p5 (4.2).

However, with Featherstone's appointment it became apparent that the NTS would be more than purely a co-ordinating body and would also undoubtedly produce its own body of work. This was further highlighted with the announcement in January 2005 of the appointment of Featherstone's former Associate Director at Paines Plough, John Tiffany. A graduate of Glasgow University and former Literary Director of Edinburgh's Traverse Theatre, Tiffany, as a multi award winning theatre director, was similarly expected to take an active directorial role as the NTS's Associate Director of New Work. At the same time, it was also announced that Neil Murray was to become the NTS's Executive Director, a position that would see some continuation of his former role, since 1999, as an executive producer, rather than artistic director, of Glasgow's Tron Theatre. The recruitment of the core artistic senior management team was completed with the announcement in March 2005 that Simon Sharkey, RSAMD trained actor-turned-director, was to leave his position as Artistic Director of Cumbernauld Theatre to become the Associate Director of NTS Learn.

In order to successfully deliver the NTS's programme over the following three years, it was initially projected that the company would need a core staff of seventeen.[298] This somewhat restrained projection of staff numbers reflected the desire to keep the NTS 'bureaucracy light', to prevent the company becoming overly institutionalised and institutionalising. However, by March 2007, the company had already grown to a core staff of approximately twenty-six, not including those on short-term, freelance contracts, and, following an increase in funding after the 2007 Scottish Budget Spending Review, by September 2008, the company had, once again, expanded to include a core staff of thirty seven. In comparison to other building based companies, [299] staffing numbers at the NTS still remain relatively low and the majority of the NTS's subsidy and income can thus be channelled into production costs. Nevertheless, this increase in staff numbers reflects perhaps an inevitable drift towards greater institutionalisation in many areas. For example, while there was a degree of crossover and fluidity between staff roles and responsibilities at the beginning of the company's life, these became more

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[298] *SNT: Report,* (2001), p53.
[299] For example, Edinburgh's Royal Lyceum Theatre, operating on an approximate annual budget, including subsidy and earned income, of £2.5 million, employs around fifty full-time and fifty part time staff (SAC Grants Listing 2006/2007 Core Funded Organisations). The National Theatre in London employs approximately 690 staff. More than half of the company's income is self generated and the remainder comprises a revenue grant from the Arts Council of England of around £17 million, National Theatre Annual Report and Financial Statements, 2005/ 2006, available at www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/?lid=20581 (last accessed 27/08/08).

clearly defined and managed through the creation and development of delineated departments: New Work, Learn, Production, Technical, External Affairs and Finance and Administration.

Business Plan – vision, aims and objectives

The Business Plan,[300] covering the first three years of the NTS's operations, included a description of the company's vision and values, its aims and objectives, an overview of the intended programme of work for that period and an account of the organisational structure and working processes of the company. The Business Plan began with a brief introduction that confidently articulated the company's ambitions:

> With the arrival of the NTS we now have the opportunity to transform the meaning of 'national theatre' on a global scale by creating a truly innovative structure, free of bricks and mortar institutionalism, which will be alert, flexible and radical. We can lead the world by creating a groundbreaking organisation producing outstanding theatre.[301]

The Business Plan acknowledged the company's responsibilities towards its key stakeholders – the SE, the SAC and Local Authorities - as well as its partners – the theatre community. The Plan was sensitive towards the latter, recognising that the NTS relied on the cooperation and support of the theatre community but also that the company's existence posed challenges to that community. The NTS's stated founding vision was to "place a diverse and excellent theatre at the heart of cultural life in Scotland and be recognised for making a long-lasting and wide-reaching contribution to Scottish culture".[302] In order to meet this vision, the Business Plan also outlined the company's main aims, which were:

> **Artistic**: To develop, produce and present excellent and world-class theatre in partnership with the Scottish theatre community; work which constantly questions the definition of theatre – in location and content; work which is

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[300] *National Theatre of Scotland, Business Plan,* 2005/06 – 2007/08.
[301] *National Theatre of Scotland, Business Plan,* 2005/06 – 2007/08, p3.
[302] *National Theatre of Scotland, Business Plan,* 2005/06 – 2007/08, p9.

innovative, international in outlook and relevant to the diversity of life in Scotland today.

A Developing Audience: Enthuse, entertain, inform and engage a constantly developing and sustainable audience who represent the cultural diversity of Scotland with the best possible experience of theatre in all its forms.

Across Scotland: Embed NTS activity into communities across Scotland in both the creation of work and the sustained touring of work

A Learning Organisation: Foster and support a culture of creative learning throughout Scotland which is embedded in all areas of our work and programme and place diversity and inclusiveness at the heart of our learning.

Evolution and Sustainability: Develop robust and confident business practices which enable us to underpin our enterprise with good governance as well as showing sound financial management leading to increased financial support from both the public and private sector.

International: Create a body of work which will have a presence on the international stage and connect with the most exciting players fostering a culture of dynamic and vital mutuality in **all** areas of our work.

Cultural Leadership: Continually develop relationships with our key stakeholders and partners, becoming a major factor in the successful cultural life of the nation and be instrumental in leading theatre in Scotland confidently through the 21st century.[303]

The programme of work, the productions and projects instigated by the NTS, detailed in this first Business Plan - which will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters - are each identified as specifically linking to each, and a combination of, these stated aims. In order to achieve these and the founding vision, the organisation chose to focus on a strategy of creating new work and a wide-ranging education and outreach programme through the New Work and Learn departments. Since the NTS's

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[303] *National Theatre of Scotland, Business Plan,* 2005/06 – 2007/08, p10.

first year of operation, Learn and New Work were instrumental in delivering a prolific body of performances and initiatives in collaboration with the theatre sector, both in Scotland and beyond.

As discussed in chapter two, theatre in Scotland had not been hidebound by a singular tradition or style, or by the legacy of a distinct national canon of literary work. Because of this lack of literary theatre tradition or critically accepted 'canon', Featherstone felt that, "new work and our approach to new work had to be the way that you could create a twenty-first century National Theatre...so for me it is really important that new work is central …in terms of us being able to create new ways of theatre making or invigorating existing pieces by new approaches".[304]

The company chose to focus on the concept of 'new work' rather than 'new writing' – the more conventional approach of large-scale theatre companies with literary departments – as 'new work', rather than privileging only text based work, was potentially able to encompass a broader range of theatre practice. The term 'new work' was, Featherstone argued, "deliberately open...because one of the things that is really important in the organisation is that we don't get stuck in kind of pigeonholes of ways of working and that we try to remain as flexible and understand when we need to change and when we need to morph into something different and something new...quite quickly".[305]   While new work, so it was stated, was the "life blood" of the company, learning was said to be at the company's "heart".[306] Reflecting this, in the first year, over twelve per cent of the NTS's budget was channelled into the Learn programme, which aimed to "open up great theatre experiences to as many people as possible across Scotland",[307] through enabling various communities to create theatre as well as encouraging dialogue between local, national and international theatre practitioners.

As Featherstone stated publicly, on a number of occasions, under her leadership, the NTS "is not, nor should ever be, a jingoistic, reductive stab at defining a nation's identity through theatre. It should not, in fact, be an attempt to define anything. Instead it is the chance to throw open the doors of possibility, to encourage boldness and for

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[304] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Vicky Featherstone, 13th March 2007.
[305] Ibid.
[306]   Quoted   from   the   introduction   to   Learn   on   the   NTS   website,   available   at
http://www.nationaltheatrescotland.com/content/default.asp?page=s4 (last accessed 29/11/08).
[307] Ibid.

audiences to benefit from where that can take us".[308] Reflecting this, the first Business Plan appeared to be relatively circumspect in relation to any references to specifically national criteria or suggestions that the NTS might in any way seek to define notions of identity – national or otherwise. Indeed, a refrain repeated throughout the Business Plan, and reflected in the wording of the main aims outlined above, was the company's desire to represent, in all areas of the company's work, "the diversity of life in Scotland today". Neither did the first Business Plan seek to identify any peculiarly 'Scottish' theatre[309] or state the company's intentions to mount such work. Likewise, while collaborating with artists and theatre companies based in Scotland was an integral element of the company's modus operandi, the NTS also stated their intention to work with artists and companies outwith Scotland.[310]

As the NTS progressed through its various stages of development - from the model first proposed by the FST in 1999 through to the consolidation and implementation of those ideas by the Chair, Board and the Executive Directors of the NTS - the National Theatre that had begun to emerge was, in many ways, unlike the prototypical National Theatres, discussed in chapter one. The NTS was not housed in a monolithic building in Scotland's capital city but was instead accommodated in a temporary office in the

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[308] See, for e.g. Featherstone, V., 'We Have No Theatrical Tradition – Just Lots of Good Playwrights' in *The Guardian,* Nov 1st 2005*;* Featherstone speaking at a Conference hosted by the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Centre for Cultural Policy Research, Glasgow, entitled *Cultural Policy and National Identity in Post Devolution Scotland* 5/2/07; also quoted in the *Black Watch* programme notes.

[309] The nearest that the Business Plan came to attempting to define Scottish theatre was in the introduction on page 3 with the statement "Scottish theatre has always been vibrant, demotic and pioneering", *National Theatre of Scotland, Business Plan*, 2005/06-2007/08. p3.

[310] *National Theatre of Scotland, Business Plan*, 2005/06-2007/08, see for e.g. p7 – 8 and p13-14..

neighbouring post-industrial city of Glasgow.[311] As soon became evident, neither was this new flagship institution intending to focus on an existing Scottish or European 'classical' repertoire. Rather, the promotion of new work and learning would be developed through co-productions and collaborations with a diverse pool of theatre companies and artists from both within and without Scotland.

From February 2006, when the company opened with its inaugural event, *Home,* the NTS began to establish itself as a significant cultural force; its impact tangibly evident in a plethora of overwhelmingly positive media analyses, as well as through the international demand for its productions and the enhanced levels of Government funding received from 2008. The later chapters in this thesis will explore some of the defining moments of the NTS, as it was originally conceived, during these formative years. Beforehand, the following section reviews the changes in the funding structures of the NTS that occurred during the course of this research. Although it is too early to assess what effects these changes may have in the longer term on the NTS, an awareness of these changes perhaps throws a little light on some of the challenges that the NTS may face in the future.

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[311] Ironically, for the building less NTS, the issue of the company's accommodation has been perhaps one of the areas of greatest public political controversy. In September 2003, the then Culture Minister, Frank McAveety, had announced that his preferred location for the administrative offices of the new NTS would be in a new cultural complex to be built in Easterhouse. Easterhouse is an economically deprived suburb of Greater Glasgow with an infamous reputation for crime and violence and, at the time, McAveety's announcement that the NTS should be based there was criticised in the press for being influenced by political rather than artistic concerns. When the Bridge Arts Complex eventually opened in the summer of 2006, the NTS Young Company did base themselves in the Complex, however it became apparent that the building was not large enough to house the whole of the NTS staff, alongside the other organisations based there – a suggestion supported by an SAC commissioned report in November of that year *(Appraisal of Options for the future accommodation of the National Theatre of Scotland,* SAC, Manor Place, Edinburgh). However, on the 2nd February 2007 the *Evening Times (Glasgow)* reported that McAveety was continuing to insist that the Bridge was adequate for the NTS's needs and that they should "be ashamed of themselves" if they were considering pulling out (Currie, B. 'National Theatre told it is staying in the East End'). However, after the findings of the Appraisal published in the *Herald* newspaper (http://www.theherald.co.uk/features/editorial/display.var.1270712.0.0.php last accessed 12/12/08), the SE eventually backed down and the NTS were able to proceed with searching for more suitable accommodation based on the recommendations of the report. However, after the Young Company was disbanded, the Learn department were based at the Bridge, 1000 Westerhouse Road, Glasgow. Until autumn 2008, the rest of the NTS staff were based in a temporary office at Atlantic Chambers, 45 Hope Street, Glasgow, before then transferring to new, again temporary, premises at Civic House, Civic Street, Glasgow.

Arms Length to Direct Government Funding

As discussed earlier in the chapter, until April 2007 the NTS was funded through the SAC. At that time, the NTS was essentially given the freedom, both by the SAC and the SE, to interpret and fulfil their national remit as they chose. Speaking in March 2007, Featherstone said:

> none of our programming, any of our choices, have been encouraged by anybody at all...that might change...I don't know what would have happened, but I could have spent £4 million doing the Lion King if I'd wanted...But maybe everything we said we were going to do was what they [i.e. SAC and the SE] wanted us to do anyway...Nobody's had any input at all, which is fantastic! [312]

However, with effect from April 2007, the NTS along with the other National Performing Companies[313] became directly funded by government rather than at arms length through the SAC. In the six months preceding the establishment of direct funding the NTS, alongside the other NPCs, were involved in an intense period of discussion with the SE to negotiate the terms of this new funding agreement and the criteria for obtaining and maintaining national status.[314] The funding agreement and criteria were developed through an informal process of research and consultation; with the NPCs themselves, the SAC and, internally, through the then Cultural Policy Division at the Scottish Executive. Once this process had been completed the funding agreement and criteria were then formally agreed by the, then, Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport, Patricia Ferguson. For the NTS specifically, the formal mechanisms of governance had to be altered in order to accommodate its changed status from being a wholly owned subsidiary of the SAC to being an independent company. Beyond this, except for art form and funding-specific differences between the NPCs, the funding agreements and criteria were alike for all the NPCs. Unlike the three yearly SAC arrangement, the new funding agreement was to be renewed annually and, in theory, any performance company based in Scotland could apply for national status as long as they met the required criteria.

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[312] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Vicky Featherstone, 13th March 2007.

[313] I.e. Scottish Opera, Scottish Ballet, Royal Scottish National Orchestras, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the NTS.

[314] Appendix E contains a copy of the Scottish Executive's funding agreement to the NTS and also the Criteria for Attaining and Maintaining Status as a National Performing Company.

In summary, these criteria were:

1. Demonstrable implementation of the proposed programme of activity, including productions on an international, national and local scale, to "appropriate high standards".

2. "Achieve the highest professional artistic standards".

3. Operate within the agreed budget.

4. Demonstrate that the NTS have endeavoured to increase their sources of non-public funding.

5. Work with the other NPCs.

6. "Deliver broad access to theatre".

7. "provide leadership for the theatre sector in Scotland".

8. "Represent Scotland internationally". [315]

These criteria did not diverge in any significant way from the NTS's already stated aims, outlined above and, therefore, did not fundamentally alter the NTS's future institutional direction. Naturally, however, the process of the changeover itself had led to increased levels of related bureaucracy. Increased levels of bureaucracy would, to some degree, be likely to be maintained, due to the more regular reporting mechanisms put in place. As Featherstone said, "you don't have to communicate so many decisions to an arts council; they give you the money, they give you a funding agreement and they're gone. Whereas if any step veers off in any way [the government] like to communicate with us about that. It's more bureaucracy obviously really". [316] However, according to Featherstone, the changeover had also created opportunities. She said, "I feel empowered by our relationship with the Scottish

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[315] *Annex A: Criteria for Attaining And Maintaining Status A National Performing Company*, The Scottish Government, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Directorate, Culture and Gaelic Division, Victoria Quay. Dated 29th March 2007, p3/4.

[316] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Vicky Featherstone, 29th January, 2008.

Government to communicate directly to them about things that they should change or think about", and cited, as an example, her telephone call with the First Minister Alex Salmond regarding the Scottish Funding Council's subsidisation of drama training in Scotland.

In May 2007, one month after direct funding became implemented, the Scottish National Party formed a minority government in Scotland, with Alex Salmond MSP elected as First Minister. As well as renaming the Scottish Executive the Scottish Government, the management structures and systems of the civil service were changed to allow them to become more closely aligned with the new administration's five key policy objectives, focused on creating a greener, healthier, safer, smarter and more prosperous Scotland. [317] No Cabinet Secretary had culture within their portfolio, however the newly created Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture, sat within the Office of the First Minister and, therefore, arguably had equal influence to that of a Cabinet Secretary. While the previous administration had shown little interest in the NTS's achievements,[318] it was perhaps more probable that the culturally orientated SNP government would take a more active interest in the arts, and culture more generally. Nevertheless, the new government also publicly asserted its continued commitment to maintaining and upholding the principle of artistic independence. For example, during a Parliamentary debate regarding the establishment of the proposed new cultural body Creative Scotland, Linda Fabiani, the Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture, stated her government's commitment to "the principle of artistic independence" and argued that, in the case of Creative Scotland, such a principle was "sufficiently important to enshrine… in legislation".[319]

In keeping with this sentiment, in April 2008, when the annual funding agreement for the NPC's was renewed under the auspices of the SNP administration, only very minor changes were made. However, a new appendix was added to the agreement. This appendix set out the Government's overarching purpose of aiming "to focus government and public services on creating a more successful country… through

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[317] *Changes to Executive Structures* internal Scottish Government document.

[318] See for e.g. Nicoll, R. 'Why are Scotland's arts no longer a contact sport?', *The Guardian,* 28th Jan 2007.

[319] Fabiani, L. Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture, 7th November 2007, *Scottish Parliament Official Report*, available at http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialreports/meetingsparliament/or-07/sor1107-01.htm (last accessed 6/7/08).

increasing sustainable economic growth".[320] Forty-five National Indicators and Targets would measure progress towards this aim and a key indicator identified for the Culture Portfolio, of which the NPC's formed a part, was the 'identity indicator' to: "improve people's perceptions, attitudes and awareness of Scotland's reputation". It was stated in the appendix;

> We ask that you be aware of this context in your relationship with the Government and that you consider how your programme of activity might correspond with Ministers' aims for Scotland. You should also consider how you might be able to support National programmes in this regard, for example the Homecoming project, St Andrew's Day celebrations and the Commonwealth Games, and other programmes as they arise.[321]

This explicit expression of the Government's expectations of the NPCs' role in supporting the Government's nationalist agenda seemed to be at odds with the Minister's previous statement regarding the Government's commitment to the principle of artistic independence. Rather, included as it was with the funding agreement, the Government made it clear that the company's funding was dependent on the NPCs, at the very least, considering how their programme of work might correspond in the context of the Government's aims. Approximately two months after signing the new agreement, Featherstone appeared ambivalent in her response to these changes:

> My response is that I slightly take it with a pinch of salt. ….But actually, in a democratically elected country of course the things that democratically elected governments are suggesting are important, they should be the things that we believe in. …I've already said that I'm not going to programme around national dates. I got the wording changed…so that we could not be held to not doing it, if it's appropriate we'll do it and if it isn't we won't and that's how it will be…. Everything the Government's doing is about promoting nationalism in the country, that's what they do to make it more economically viable. So, I can't be naïve about the fact that we're now asked to do that and we wouldn't have been asked to do that through an Arts Council because they're at arms length…I can try to be maverick about it and try not to take responsibility for it…but it would

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[320] *National Theatre of Scotland: Revenue Grant in Respect of 2008/09,* 21st May 2008, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Directorate, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, Annexe E.

be really naïve of me to say "I can't believe they asked us to think about the Homecoming[322]."[323]

Under the custodianship of the current NTS senior management team it is perhaps unlikely that the company's artistic programming will be directly influenced by Government requests. Nevertheless, the more implicit pressure that such explicit expectations place on the company may be hard to measure and equally hard to resist. The company's reluctance to fulfil Government's requests may result in financial penalties or, ultimately, loss of national status. The future independence of the NTS is further undermined by the inclusion in the supplementary appendix to the funding agreement of a detailed list of the Government's intentions to progress "specific strategic objectives" regarding the NTS's development, including:

- to review Business Plans and where applicable progress in developing these.

- To review senior management succession plans.

- To review Board rotation policies and succession plans.[324]

As mentioned above, at present, the NTS is not categorised as a NDPB and Ministers are not required to approve Board appointments. As such, the NTS does not currently fall under the remit of the OCPAS[325] and, therefore, the process of future NTS Board appointments will not be overseen or regulated by a body independent of Government. With the principle of artistic independence not protected, or indeed recognised, within this annual funding agreement, it is hard to see how that principle might be maintained. The removal of the arbitration offered by the arms-length SAC therefore leaves the

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[321] ibid

[322] The Homecoming Scotland 2009 refers to a yearlong programme of activity planned by the Government to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Robert Burn's birth. Information available at; http://www.homecomingscotland.com/default.html (last accessed 1/12/08).

[323] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Vicky Featherstone, 26th June 2008.

[324] *Annexe E: Strategic Context and Contributions, Criteria for Attaining And Maintaining Status as a National Performing Company*, The Scottish Government, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Directorate, Culture and Gaelic Division, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ. Dated 21 May 2008

[325] Public bodies currently under the remit of OCPAS are listed in Schedule 2 of the *Public Appointments and Public Bodies etc. (Scotland) Act 2003*. Change*s* to this schedule may be made only by amending legislation. According to OCPAS, there are currently no plans for legislation to include the NTS in Schedule 2.

NTS in a potentially more vulnerable position in terms of its relationship with the Government.

As Lowell and Ondaatje argue, what they call "arm-in-arm" funding of the arts, are likely to be, at the very least, perceived to be "dependent on political friendships" which may lead to the compromise of "artistic focus in trying to please elected officials". [326] By way of example, shortly after the NTS received direct government funding, in June 2007,[327] it was reported that the First Minister, Alex Salmond, had requested performances of NTS's production of *Black Watch* to be included in the celebrations to open the new session of the Scottish Parliament. Referring to the production's depiction of the SNP's vocal opposition to the invasion of Iraq, *The Herald's* Arts correspondent, Keith Bruce, wrote of his concern that direct funding had so quickly led to what appeared to be an example of the new Government pulling "rank on an arts company to make a political point".[328] Featherstone responded in *The Herald* newspaper by declaring that the company were honoured to perform the production to an audience who might not otherwise have had the opportunity to see it and welcomed the occasion as a "landmark gesture [which] places the arts and culture firmly on the agenda for 21st century Scotland".[329] While Featherstone's rejoinder to Bruce's criticism may be valid, the perception remains that direct government funding leaves the arts at risk of being used as a political tool. At the time of Salmond's request, the NTS's future budget was being assessed as part of the Scottish Government's wider three-year spending review. In the event, the NTS received relatively generous enhancement funding. However these circumstances raise the question: had the NTS refused Salmond's request, for whatever reason, would the company have been penalised in the short or longer term?

Written, at least partly, after receiving enhancement funding in the Scottish Government's spending review, the new Business Plan for the period 2008 to 2010 re-asserted the company's commitment to its original vision, as detailed earlier in the chapter, as well as a modified version of its original aims and objectives. As discussed above, the first Business Plan inferred, through the use of statements such as the "the

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[326] Lowell, J. F. & Ondaatje, E.H. (2006), *The Arts and State Governments: At Arms Length or Arm in Arm?,* Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, p49.
[327] Swanson, I., 15th June 2007, 'Alex picks hit war play to open new Parliament', in *The Scotsman.*
[328] Bruce, K. 23rd June 2007, 'This Week', *The Herald.*
[329] Featherstone, V. 26th June 2007, 'Black Watch staging is landmark gesture', *The Herald.*

diversity of life in Scotland today", that the cultural make-up of Scotland was inherently diverse and that the NTS would therefore naturally reflect this in all that they did. This inference was echoed in the deployment of neutral language that evaded recourse to definitions or categorisations relating to specific identities. However, the first section of the new Business Plan *Part One: Vision and Forward Moves* makes problematic the assumption of what might be meant by Scotland's diversity, referring instead to "the complex make up of modern Scotland". Indeed, three references to Scotland's cultural diversity in the original Business Plan's list of aims were removed in the more recent document. However, the new Business Plan did identify "diversity", alongside "international" and "training", as one of the three "key elements that we have not been able to achieve or had not achieved to a high enough level of success".[330] Therefore, the Plan proposed that the NTS would adopt a more active approach to identifying and representing diversity in all areas of the organisation. Unlike the previous Plan, the current Plan has thus introduced the thorny subject of identity more directly into its discourse.

The new Business Plan also declared that the company had, amongst other achievements, "contributed to and enhanced a *distinctive Scottish cultural confidence*"[331] [my italics]. This allusion to a notion of a singular, harmonized national culture and sentiment is repeated in the later query, "What has the National Theatre of Scotland done for the *Scottish psyche* and national pride?" [my italics]. While this question was followed by doubt about how this might be proved, the term *Scottish psyche* appeared to be less critically employed, thus implying that "Scottish culture" and "the Scottish psyche" are distinctive and non-contestable categories. The new Business Plan stated that the document set out a "blueprint" which "will allow the National Theatre of Scotland to thrive for generations so that today's Scots – and their children and grandchildren – can be moved, thrilled and, above all, proud of their National Theatre".[332] This coupling of the NTS's legacy with a sense of national pride and as the birthright of the Scots — a term associated with a distinctive ethnic category even if the insertion of "today's Scots" does serve to embrace a wider definition of the term — appears to reveal a shift from the more ambiguous terminology applied in the previous Business Plan. Thus, here, the NTS appeared to publicly promote itself in a

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[330] Ibid, p5.
[331] *The National Theatre of Scotland: Business Plan*, 2008 – 2011. p4.
[332] Ibid, p6.

way that converged with the current political administration's cultural discourse, in which Scottish national identity is privileged and promoted. As such, the NTS appeared to more firmly assert its own identity as a national company in more traditional, nationalist terms. As mentioned, the change to direct funding only took effect from April 2007 and, as such, it is still too early to assess whether the rhetorical strategy adopted in the latest Business Plan will impact on the company's future artistic direction.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the contours of the public sphere that the NTS began to carve out during its formative years; from the recruitment of Richard Findlay, the Board and the senior management of the NTS, to the first and second Business Plans. Also examined were some of the contextual factors that have and will continue to influence the NTS, in particular, the change from arms-length to direct government funding. The chapter touched on the ways in which this change appears to have impacted the NTS's portrayal of its public identity through a shift in the language of the second Business Plan. The next chapter begins to analyse the NTS's programme of work from the company's official launch in November 2005 to the end point of this research, focusing on the first year's programme and, in particular, on the company's pivotal production, *Black Watch.* Chapter six analyses some of the projects and initiatives instigated by the Learn department, while the final chapter, Chapter Seven, concludes with a comparative review of the proceeding year's programmes and a summary analysis of potential future developments.

Chapter Five: The National on Stage

Introduction

The previous chapter explored the infrastructure of the NTS and its changing relationship with government. The chapter was concerned with the ways in which a public sphere articulated within the dual frames of nation and theatre continues to be negotiated both within the NTS as an institution and with regard to changing external pressures and expectations. The influence of external and internal pressures and expectations specifically on the Learn and New Work departments will be explored in chapters six and seven. This chapter touches on the body of high profile work mounted under the NTS banner in the first year of operation. The programme contained a mixture of co-productions and commissions, with Scottish touring companies and building-based theatres, as well as with English and international theatre groups. These productions have been produced in a variety of venues, from large-scale theatres to village halls, as well as more unusual venues for site-specific work. During this relatively short period of time, the NTS has produced a prolific body of work and toured throughout Scotland and the UK as well as internationally.

While it might be unrepresentative to identify and examine and by doing so privilege specific productions, nevertheless this chapter does isolate two productions that have been of particular significance for the NTS in these formative years. The chapter begins with an overview of the first year's programme of work before a more detailed exploration of *Home,* the company's inaugural event and one which could be seen, both aesthetically and conceptually, as a statement of the company's intent. *Black Watch* - the company's most critically and popularly successful production to date - is then analysed in light of its influence in raising the company's public profile and artistic reputation both in Scotland and further afield. Both *Home* and *Black Watch* are also significant productions in terms of this thesis, in that they both explicitly represent and confront, in very different ways, issues of nationhood. In conclusion, the chapter suggests that this particular model of a national theatre is particularly well placed, if not intrinsically designed, to create a public sphere particularly able to embrace and stage multiple imaginings of identity.

First Year's Programme

On the second of November 2005, the NTS unveiled their inaugural programme to a packed audience at Glasgow's Tramway theatre. In addition to the initiatives instigated through the NTS Learn and New Work departments to be discussed in chapters six and seven, the inaugural programme contained an eclectic mixture of work that aimed to reach and fulfil the potential expectations of a both geographically and demographically broad audience. As well as attracting a wide audience base, the choices of programme helped to fend off any potential criticism that the company was being either excessively elitist or popular, narrowly parochial or aggressively cosmopolitan, or, alternatively, ignoring their geographical national remit by focusing only on the metropolitan centres. Critics responded positively to the launch of "an inaugural programme which is hard to fault"[333] with *Sunday Herald* critic Neil Cooper writing:

> slick, glossy and thoroughly modern not only describes yesterday's technology-friendly launch of the National Theatre of Scotland's inaugural season, but its contents too. By embracing a younger generation of talent from the most imaginative companies in this country and beyond, the NTS has made a bold statement that signals a company moving into the twenty-first century …[and] put paid to the heritage industry's notion of a national theatre as an exercise in flagwaving parochialism.[334]

The Scotsman's theatre critic, Joyce McMillan, noted that while there may have been some disquiet at the lack of classic Scottish drama and the "slight tendency for the company to build up its own production base where it should be working with other companies", nevertheless, "we can definitely say we're waiting in hope and high expectation that 2006 may be the most exciting year yet in the continuing story of Scottish theatre".[335] Retrospectively, Mark Brown, writing in *The Telegraph,* praised the NTS for its geographical accessibility, stating, "it will never be said of the National Theatre of Scotland that it failed to fulfil its obligation to take live drama to every part of

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[333] Didcock, B. (13/8/06), 'Scotland the Brave', *The Sunday Herald*.
[334] Cooper, N. (2/11/2005), 'Why the season's good enough to keep even dunderhead politicians happy', *Herald* and *The Sunday Herald.*
[335] McMillan, J. (2/11/2005), 'High hopes for a landmark year', *The Scotsman*.

the country". [336] For example, the NTS's opening production/s *Home,* discussed in more detail below, opened simultaneously in ten different locations throughout Scotland while the establishment of the NTS Ensemble ensured that NTS productions could be enjoyed all over Scotland in a rolling programme that would annually tour to smaller venues and village halls over a number of months.

In terms of demographic reach, following *Home,* the NTS's first main house production - a musical adaptation of the children's picture book *Wolves in the Walls* by Neil Gaiman, in a co-production with English theatre company Improbable - was aimed at a family audience, with coach-loads of school-children being amongst the first to witness the staging of their National Theatre at Glasgow's Tramway*.* Another stage adaptation, this time of John McGrath's popular tragicomic 1980s television series, *Tutti Frutti -* about the misfortunes of an ageing touring rock-band - was targeted at a wide, and not necessarily regular theatre-going audience and toured to the larger commercial theatre venues. Also set in Glasgow, during the 1915 rent strikes, and featuring a strong musical element was a revised version of Chris Hannan's 1995 "classic", *Elisabeth Gordon Quinn*. Another conventionally staged, literary, historical drama that perhaps also fulfilled more traditional expectations of what a National Theatre might stage was a new version of Friedrich Schiller's *Mary Stuart*, adapted by David Harrower in a co-production between the NTS, Edinburgh's Lyceum and Glasgow's Citizens' Theatres*.*

However, while these productions were the result of astute and judicious planning – ticking the right boxes for audiences, critics and funders alike – the first year's programme also featured a number of high-profile productions that indicated a less measured and more risk-taking approach to programming. For, while Featherstone has argued that all of the productions in the first year's programme could be included under the rubric of new work, with even productions of older texts, such as Schiller's *Mary Stuart,* being adapted for contemporary audiences, some of the productions fell more obviously within this category, i.e. *Home, Roam, Black Watch, Falling* and *Realism.* Rather than interpreting existing text, all these productions were created entirely, or in part, through a devised rehearsal process which relied on the performers and other artists (e.g. musicians, lighting, set and costume designers) collaborating to create the performance. With the exception of *Realism*, all of these productions were also site-specific, taking theatre out of its conventional theatre setting. For example, *Roam,* an

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[336] Brown, Mark (9/10/07) 'Molly Sweeney: an Absorbing Psychological Thriller' *The Telegraph.*

ambitious co-production with Grid Iron, was staged in Edinburgh airport and took the audience through the check-in desks and waiting lounges of this evocative venue in a production which dramatised the idea of border crossing and at the same time sought to distort the boundaries between the real and fictive. The confusion of the edges of performance and reality was further explored in *Falling,* a co-production with Poorboy, which led the audience on a dramatised voyage through the streets, pubs, offices and under the ground of Glasgow's city centre in a very contemporary, dark and loose version of *Faust.* While *Realism,* one of the company's most high profile events that opened at the Edinburgh International Festival, was staged in a theatre, the production, directed and written by Anthony Neilson, was the result of a collaborative creative process between the artists during the rehearsal process. Rather than being dictated by a text-based rehearsal process, during which, led usually by the director, the text is interpreted, blocked and staged, these productions involved a more open-ended – and risk-taking – process.

Postdramatic Theatre

Lehmann coins the term 'postdramatic theatre' to summarise a number of stylistic tendencies evident in European theatre towards the end of the twentieth century.[337] These stylistic traits tend towards the re-activation of the relationship between the spectator and the producer discussed in chapter one, as well as foregrounding the presence of the performance itself, rather than solely the dramatic text. According to Lehmann, the performance text "becomes more presence than representation, more shared than communicated experience, more process than product, more manifestation than signification, more energetic impulse than information".[338] In postdramatic theatre various, often simultaneous, performance components - for example, the lighting, set, multi-media technology and music - as well as the actual bodies and presence of the performers, are not subordinated to the text but assume an equally central role. Traditional distinctions and hierarchies between art forms - for example, between visual and performance art, dance and music theatre – may be destabilised in postdramatic theatre and other performance components, such as text, music, movement and the use of multi-media technology may also be merged thus creating a hybridisation of aesthetic styles and forms. This requires a different form of

[337] Lehmann, H. , Jürs-Munby, K., (trans.), (2006), *Postdramtic Theatre,* London: Routledge.

spectatorship, what Lehmann describes as "evenly hovering attention"[339] as spectators surf the stage, allowing their attention to linger, perhaps only momentarily, on aspects of the performance before shifting to what might draw their attention next. As such, postdramatic theatre indicates a shift in the politics of representation in which, while it has "not given up on relating to the world", crucially, postdramatic theatre "no longer represents the world as a surveyable whole".[340] Therefore, "theatre becomes a moment of *shared energies* instead of transmitted signs".[341]

Postdramatic theatre is a useful shorthand term for describing theatre that does not present the classic Aristotelian narrative, but in some way deconstructs, subverts or undermines linear narrative readings. Text may be an element, but not necessarily a privileged element of the performance, and the use of a variety of media, as well as a sense of immediacy between spectator and performance - whether through the site or the mode of address - all in some way serve to deconstruct meta-narratives in postdramatic theatre. The work of companies such as Forced Entertainment, the Wooster Group and Frantic Assembly, or directors such as Robert Lepage and Anthony Neilson each creates, in a variety of ways, a postdramatic performance aesthetic. While forms of postdramatic theatre have become part of the mainstream and institutionalised in many parts of continental Europe, its appropriation to the mainstream of British theatre has been slower. Nevertheless, it is this aesthetic that is evident in the more experimental work that the NTS has staged, and a postdramatic performance aesthetic was evident in the ten productions that together formed the NTS inaugural event, *Home*, discussed below.

Home

According to Featherstone, the NTS's opening production/s *Home,* was probably the most significant, as well as ambitious, project in its first year of operation in terms of the company's interpretation and fulfilment of its 'national' remit.[342] Performances of *Home* took place simultaneously in ten locations throughout Scotland, led by ten different directors who had been commissioned by the NTS to produce a new piece of work

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[338] Lehmann, H. ibid, p85.
[339] Lehmann, H. ibid, p87.
[340] Lehmann, H. ibid, p12.
[341] Lehmann, H. ibid, p150.
[342] Author's interview with Vicky Featherstone 25th October 2005.

inspired by the title's theme. In an interview about *Home,* Featherstone said "not a single one of these pieces will sum up the National Theatre. Nor would I want it to. But taken together, within the year-long programme, it will say what I feel the NTS should show and share and celebrate".[343] Perhaps upsetting any preconceived notions of what a National Theatre's inaugural production might be, certainly in its form, *Home* eschewed orthodox theatrical conventions and established the NTS as a company that sought to challenge conventional definitions and expectations of what a National Theatre, or indeed, what theatre might be. The NTS's opening production did not take place ceremoniously in a single theatre or, indeed, any theatre buildings, nor was it based on any existing texts; there was no centralised audience and no possibility for critics to make any definitive statements on either the content or overall quality of the event.

The majority of the ten directors commissioned to "offer their own unique vision and interpretation" on the theme of home were artistic directors of mid-scale theatre companies[344] from what could be considered the more experimental fringes of the theatre industry, rather than those working in the commercial or mainstream subsidised theatres in Scotland (for example, the Citizens, Lyceum or Dundee Rep). The remaining directors, though all connected to larger, established institutions,[345] have shown, to varying degrees, a commitment to developing new or experimental work.[346] Many of the directors' previous works had also crossed or combined art forms, for example, painting, design, opera, writing, film, dance, and this hybridisation of aesthetic forms was evident in the final performances. Other than the stipulation that performances had to be centred on the theme of home, directors were given complete artistic freedom on their projects as well as responsibility for their budgets.[347] The directors were asked to work "together with artists and local communities drawing inspiration and relevance from their surroundings".[348] Each director of their artistic team

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[343] Vicky Featherstone interviewed by Mary Brennan in 'There's no Place Like Home' *On Tour* British Council Publication, 2005.

[344] E.g. Alison Peebles of *V.amp*, Matthew Lenton of *Vanishing Point,* Graham Eatough of *Suspect Culture,* Gill Robertson of *Catherine Wheels,* Scott Graham of *Frantic Assembly,* Stewart Laing of *Untitled Projects* and Wils Wilson of w*ilson + wilson.*

[345] E.g. John Tiffany (NTS Associate Director of New Work), Kenny Miller (former director/ designer and Associate Director of the Citizens Theatre 1993-2005) and Anthony Neilson (freelance writer/ director, with, amongst others, Edinburgh International Festival, The Lyceum, The Royal Court).

[346] See, for e.g., interview with Anthony Neilson, Logan, Brian (14/08/06) 'Everyday Madness', *The Guardian.* http://arts.guardian.co.uk/edinburgh2006/story/0,,1844101,00.html (last accessed 22/4/09).

[347] Each *Home* production was allocated a budget of £60,000.

[348] NTS press release February 2006.

had to discover and define their own space in terms of both physical location and style of performance. Although the venue remit was wide – "projects may take place in local theatres or village halls – equally they may take place in the local shopping centre, on a train or up a mountain" – all of the locations chosen were, essentially non-traditional theatre spaces. [349] The final locations chosen were: a ferry (Shetland), a glass factory (Caithness), a derelict block of flats (Aberdeen), a nineteenth century public museum and gallery, the McManus Gallery[350] (Dundee), a drill hall, the Loreburn Hall (Dumfries), a multi storey high-rise block of flats (Glasgow), a forest (East Lothian), a disused shop (Stornoway), a converted industrial warehouse (Evanton, near Inverness) and a nineteenth century public building, the Queen's Hall (Edinburgh). Each of these geographic locations and physical spaces reflected aspects of the landscape of Scotland without any one of them claiming to represent it.

The final ten productions revealed diversity in style and content and, though all the productions were inspired by the same word, beyond this there were few striking recurring themes. In Edinburgh, well-known Scottish actors delivered a text written by a group of local school children in their mock account of First Minister's parliamentary question time. This surreal and, in many ways, anti-theatrical, anti-establishment piece, directed by Anthony Neilson, was a critical take on politicians and political processes and was a bold and radical launch of the National Theatre in the country's capital. A suspicion of political processes also suffused John Tiffany's multimedia spy thriller, *Home Glasgow,* in which more crowd-pulling Scottish actors, three abseilers and local residents explored the theme of state surveillance and intrusion in an oblique perspective on the idea of home. A broken home and abandonment formed the core of the version of Hansel and Gretel for *Home East Lothian*, directed by Gill Robertson, in which the audience were taken on a promenade performance in this experiential and contemporary take on the classic tale. Alison Peeble's *Home Aberdeen* also took the audience on a promenade, this time through a derelict block of flats in which different relationships towards the idea of home and belonging were explored in a series of evocative vignettes.

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[349] Although both the Queen's Hall, Edinburgh, and the Loreburn Hall, Dumfries, have been used previously as performance venues and the Evanton Arts in Motion Centre has been converted from a warehouse into a performance space.
[350] Designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1867 in commemoration of Queen Victoria's husband Albert, it was originally named the Albert Institute until it was refurbished in 1980 and renamed the McManus gallery.

Memories and recollections of home were, in different ways, the subjects touched on in *Home Dumfries,* by Graham Eatough*, Home Caithness,* by Matthew Lenton, and *Home Dundee*, by Kenny Miller, while the emotional and psychological boundaries of creating a new home were the themes explored in a movement-based piece with a cast of young dancer/performers in Scott Graham's *Home Inverness*. The material fragments and echoes of past and present were explored in Wils Wilson's *Home Shetland.* The production's venue, the Shetland ferry - and main link between the island and the mainland - highlighted the sense of transience, "of impermanence and parting",[351] that perhaps forms part of islanders' experience of home. In a static recreation of a miniaturised version of home in *Home Stornoway,* Stewart Laing commissioned six model makers to each design and decorate the rooms of a doll's house. Fragments of wallpaper torn from one of the island's derelict houses adorned the walls of one room, while the more contemporary tastes of local teenagers inspired the décor of another in an event that, for Gough, evoked "the phantasmagoria of past, present and future lives".[352] The various manifestations of *Home* therefore revealed diverse imaginings of what theatre and its audience, as well as what home and the nature of belonging, might be. As the first production of the homeless NTS emphasized, home is, and can be, anywhere and anything. As Mark Fisher wrote in his review of the event, "the brilliance of the Home project…is that it left all the questions [about what is a nation and a national theatre] tantalisingly open-ended. It recognised that Scotland is a nation…too diverse to be summed up in any centralised world view".[353]

Overall there appeared be some critical consensus that taken as a whole the event was a success even while there was an uneven critical response to individual productions. For example, *Times* critic Robert Dawson Scott shared Fisher's negative criticisms of *Home Glasgow* in a production that "did not quite live up to the presentation", but regardless, Scott admired the "sheer nerve" [354] of the production's ambition. Even though Dominic Cavendish of *The Telegraph* reminded that "all eyes weren't exactly on the National Theatre of Scotland this weekend. If perishingly cold weather didn't keep people indoors, the Scotland v England rugby clash certainly did", nevertheless, he believed that "the launch night …could hardly have sent out a

[351] Burnet, A. (2006), 'A Ferry Tale Starts for Roving Scottish Company', *The Observer,* February 26th.

[352] Gough, K. (2007) in an unpublished article, *Home Stornoway: A Home of One's Own,* kindly sent by the author.

[353] Fisher, M. (2006) 'National antics', *The Guardian,* 27th February.

[354] Dawson Scott, R. (2006) 'Street Theatre With Sheer Suspense' in *The Times,* February 27th, London.

stronger signal that 'National' will mean 'national'".[355] Joyce McMillan of *The Scotsman* was disappointed that so many of the events relied on technology rather than live theatre and was also critical of the uneven overall artistic quality, however, she concluded that "the new company has achieved a dazzling geographical reach, and a real sense of connection with local communities that has both enabled those communities to re-examine their own story, and given them a new voice on the national stage. It's a start, in other words; and taken as a whole, a brave and imaginative one, designed to smash and rearrange many hostile preconceptions about theatre."[356]

This smashing and rearranging of preconceptions of theatre was partly a result of the use of certain postdramatic devices. For, while there were few stylistic and thematic similarities, there were certain structural correspondences between the productions. In different ways and to varying degrees, all of the *Home* productions did call upon the audience to act in some way as active spectators, or authors of, the piece. For the majority of the productions this spectatorship was in terms of a physical, rather than passive, involvement as an audience. For example, in Shetland, Aberdeen, Stornoway, Caithness and East Lothian audiences were taken on a narrative and physical journey through the theatrical spaces created. This experiential journey thus situated the audience within the event, rather than as a separate onlooker and the audience's active, though controlled, participation was central to its efficacy. In Inverness and Glasgow audiences, though perhaps more spectators in the traditional sense were, nevertheless, not placed in a position of physical passivity – audiences were free to move around and decide for themselves from which position to choose to observe the event. For example, in Glasgow, where the performance took place on the frontage of a high-rise block of flats, the natural amphitheatre in front of the flats created the borders of the performance space, while in Inverness, the walls of the warehouse automatically enclosed and created the border for the audience.

The three productions that did situate the audience as passive observers – Edinburgh, Dundee and Dumfries – all used texts or the words of local people and thus involved an 'active' audience in terms of authorship. For example, in Edinburgh local children wrote the mock 'First Minister's Question Time' and in both Dundee and Dumfries video projections displayed documentary style reminiscence's of elderly people with

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[355] Cavendish, D. (27/2/2006) 'Home is Where the Art is', *The Telegraph*.

technology being used to conjure up the past with professional actors providing the 'real time' theatre. The public spaces created through these performances were thus presented as the result of a process of active public engagement and creative collaboration.

The lack of thematic and stylistic unity between the productions coupled with the overriding unity of the concept, vividly reflected Benedict Anderson's notion of the nation as an "imagined community": "imagined because members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them or even hear of them yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion".[357] Just as the idea of the nation is experienced in different ways and holds different meanings for those within its borders, so, too, each of the separate audiences of *Home* experienced different interpretations and representations of the idea of home. However, in the same way that the nation creates an imagined community of citizens, the concept of *Home* also created its own imagined community as the various audiences of *Home* were virtually united, if only for a few hours, by this NTS's inaugural event. *Home* reinforced the reality that the NTS exists as an irreducible network of social interactions that cannot be reducible to a singular or fixed sense of its identity.

Black Watch

The concept of *Home* touched lightly on the idea of the nation as a diverse imagined community. The NTS's most influential production to date, *Black Watch,* explored the more contentious notion of a perceived homogeneous community – the iconic Black Watch, one of the oldest Highland army regiments. *Black Watch,* a play commissioned by the NTS, written by the Scottish playwright Gregory Burke and directed by John Tiffany, opened at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in August 2006. It immediately became the hit of the festival, receiving a host of five star reviews and a clutch of theatre awards.[358] The production was also adapted for radio[359] and a televised version of the production - alongside a documentary about the show's making, combined with

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[356] McMillan, J. (27/2/2006) 'For one week-end, all the world's a stage – or all the country, at least', *The Scotsman.*
[357] Anderson, B. (1983/ 2006) *Imagined Communities* Verso: London.
[358] A *Herald* Angel, a *Scotsman* Fringe First, a Best Theatre Writing Award from *The List*, a *Stage* Award for Best Ensemble, The Critics' Circle Award for Best Director and the South Bank Show Theatre Award.

footage of soldiers and their families' responses to the production - was sold as a DVD after its airing on BBC Scotland in 2007. [360] Responding to audience demand, the production was re-mounted the following year, playing in Scotland before embarking on an international tour that included performances in the United States, Australia and New Zealand. More contentiously, [361] in the summer of 2007, the NTS fulfilled a request for a production of *Black Watch* to be mounted as part of the celebrations to open the new session of the Scottish Parliament. In 2008, the tour continued with more dates in Scotland as well as England, including a month long run at the Barbican Centre in London, and dates in Wales, Canada and the United States. The tour ended with a return run to New York where the original six week re-run at the St Ann's Warehouse was extended, due to demand, to ten weeks.

Press Responses

Press responses to the production were almost universally positive, with one reviewer comparing its achievement with that of the phenomenal success of the Harry Potter books stating, "the National Theatre of Scotland's smash hit has been to Scottish Theatre what J.K. Rowling has been to children's literature".[362] In another eulogistic review of the production, Joyce McMillan wrote that this "great, timely, eloquent and superbly-staged study" was the moment when "Scottish theatre changed forever", with the NTS making "its first, great, enduring mark not only on Scottish theatre, but also on the life of Scotland itself, and on thousands from beyond our shores".[363] It was the sell-out "heart and soul"[364] of the Sydney festival, received a "very un-LA standing ovation"[365] in Los Angeles and, according to Brantley, chief critic of the *New York Times*, was "a blazing redeemer in the grayness of the current New York theatre season".[366] Meanwhile, in Scotland, "the Scottish press reported its successful 2007 US

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[359] BBC Radio 3 June 10th 2007.

[360] *A Soldier's Story* Artworks BBC 2 Scotland Sunday 26th August, 2007.

[361] See for e.g. journalist Keith Bruce's article in *The Glasgow Herald* in which he suggests that the production was used by the incoming SNP administration for political purposes. In the play, SNP leader, Alex Salmond's opposition to the Iraq war is voiced, though, also perhaps balanced against Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon's counter accusation that Salmond's anti-war stance is motivated by political point scoring against Westminster (Bruce, K. (23/6/07) 'This Week', *The Herald*).

[362] Mullaney, A. (28/8/07)'Staging a Coup in Broadcasting Theatre' in *The Scotsman,* Scotland.

[363] McMillan, J. (20/12/06), 'The Scotsman: Review of 2006: Theatre: National creates a stir as it rolls out the big guns', *The Scotsman,* Scotland.

[364] Lawson, V. (13/1/08) 'Performers – and A-list – Flying High ' *The Sydney Morning Herald,* Australia.

[365] Miller, P. (20/9/07), 'Winning Over an Army of Fans', *The Herald ,*Scotland.

[366] Brantley, B. (24/10/07), 'To Tell These War Stories, Words Aren't Enough', *New York Times,* US.

tour in terms usually reserved for national sporting champions",[367] with the *Herald* devoting a portion of its front page to the tour[368] as well as printing daily reports from the US by the *Herald's* arts correspondent Phil Miller. Even those reviewers who did critique the politics of the production,[369] inevitably balanced this by accompanying the review with a high star rating. *Black Watch* then, immeasurably raised the NTS's profile, both within and beyond Scotland, and gave the NTS credibility as a significant artistic force and presence on the international stage.

Background

Black Watch told the story of a group of soldiers of the Black Watch regiment who were carrying out military service in Iraq following the country's invasion in March 2003 by the United States army and its allies, notably the UK. Following a UN Security Council Resolution[370] that had offered Iraq a "final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations",[371] United States President George Bush and the then United Kingdom Prime Minister, Tony Blair, had justified the invasion on the grounds that 'weapons of mass destruction' were still being secretly stockpiled in Iraq.[372] However, the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission[373] concluded, in a report on Iraq's missile capability, published on 6th March 2003, only that "a number of areas of uncertainty regarding Iraq ballistic missile programmes still exist".[374] Nevertheless, in

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[367] Archibald, D. (2008), p8, ''We're just big bullies…' Gregory Burke's Black Watch', *The Drouth (26),* p8-13.

[368] Miller, P. (21/9/07), 'Black Watch set to conquer Australia', *The Glasgow Herald*, Scotland.

[369] See for e.g. McNulty, C. (22/9/07),'A Comment on Iraq via Scottish 'Watch', *Los Angeles Times*, U.S.; McMillan, J. (7/8/06), 'Fringe Reviews: Black Watch', *The Scotsman*, Scotland; Brown, M. (6/4/08), 'Back on the Home Front', *Sunday Herald,* Scotland.

[370] United Nations Security Resolution 1441 (2002), 8th November 2002, available at http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N02/682/26/PDF/N0268226.pdf?OpenElement (last accessed 18/09/08).

[371] Ibid, p3(1).

[372] The international supervision of Iraq's missile capability dated back to April 1991. At that time, following Iraq's military invasion of Kuwait and the proceeding Gulf War, the United Nations Security Council had passed a Resolution (687 (1991)), that included the requirement that Iraq disarm itself under "international supervision" of all "chemical and biological weapons" and "ballistic missiles" C.8.(a).(b). After a break of four years, in November 2002, the UN Security Council passed another Resolution, 1441 (2002), that offered Iraq a "final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations" (p3, (1)).

[373] United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, Working Document, 6th March 2003, available at http://www.un.org/Depts/unmovic/documents/6mar.pdf, P18.(last accessed 18/09/08).

[374] Ibid, p173.

the midst of unprecedented global public protest,[375] faced with opposition from both France and Germany [376]and with no UN sanction of support, US, UK and other allied forces[377] occupied Iraq on the twentieth of March 2003. Among those British troops committed to the Iraqi occupation – an occupation that was increasingly perceived, in Britain, to have been motivated by the desire for control of Iraq's oil revenue –[378] were members of the Scottish Black Watch regiment. Though originally based in Basra, Southern Iraq, in November 2004, the Black Watch regiment had been moved to what was known as the "Triangle of Death",[379] near Fallujah. Within days of this redeployment, three Black Watch soldiers and their Iraqi translator were killed in an attack by a suicide bomber.[380] At the same time, rumours began to circulate in the British press that the Black Watch regiment was to become a battalion within another regiment, thereby losing its autonomous identity.

In Production

Featherstone, who had recently taken up her appointment with the NTS, recognised the significance of the potential loss of this iconic Scottish regiment and assigned writer Gregory Burke to observe the unfolding story. This was eventually developed into the commissioned play or, at least, loosely connected scenes, based on interviews that Burke had elicited from ex-Black Watch soldiers who had been serving in Iraq during this time. The words and experience of the soldiers were contextualised through the use of BBC news footage of the invasion as well as political commentary from key actors including the then UK Defence Secretary, Geoff Hoon, and SNP MP, Alex Salmond, a vocal opponent of the UK Government's involvement in Iraq. With Steven Hoggett, of the physical theatre company Frantic Assembly, creating dynamic choreography for the ten male actors and Davey Anderson adapting the Black Watch

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[375] The anti-war rallies on February 15th 2003 against the proposed invasion of Iraq where, according to the Guinness Book of Records, the largest global rally on records with citizens from approximately 600 countries taking part, available at http://web.archive.org/web/20040904214302/http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/content_pages/record.asp?recordid=54365 (last accessed on 17/08/08).

[376] 'E.U. allies unite against Iraq war', *BBC News,* (22/01/03). http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2683409.stm (last accessed on 17/09/08).

[377] 'US names 'coalition of the willing'', *BBC News,* (18/03/03). http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2683409.stm (last accessed on 17/09/08).

[378] See, for example, Greensdale, R.,'Their Master's Voice', *BBC News,* (17/02/03), available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2003/feb/17/mondaymediasection.iraq (last accessed on 17/09/08).

[379] Mackay, N. (7/11/204), 'Black Watch in most dangerous area of Iraq as insurgents flee from Fallujah', *The Sunday Herald,* Scotland.

regiment's traditional songs, John Tiffany began to piece together the various elements of the production.

Tiffany, in his preface to the published text of *Black Watch*, wrote about a role for the NTS to "honour and rouse"[381] the traditions of theatre in Scotland. Whilst he acknowledged the work of dramatists in Scotland, he cautioned, "plays are not the whole story" and recalled a legacy of theatre created by artists who were "fuelled by variety, visual art, music and a deep love of storytelling". Nevertheless, as specific inspirations for *Black Watch*, Tiffany did cite, amongst others, John McGrath and 7:84's play *The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black, Oil,* and the work of the "visceral and riotous" Communicado Theatre Company, including Liz Lochhead's *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off.*[382] These influences can be glimpsed in the montage of theatrical techniques that make up *Black Watch* in, for example, the way that the play combines authorial voices, moves between temporal and physical locations and juxtaposes a variety of theatrical styles including music and song that reflect the performance of *The Cheviot*.[383] Like *The Cheviot*, which attempted to recreate a ceilidh atmosphere in its tour of, mainly, rural village halls, in *Black Watch* Tiffany "deliberately wanted to perform the piece in a space in which we could create our own version of the Tattoo".[384]

Black Watch was originally created as a site-specific work to be performed at the University of Edinburgh's Drill Hall. The deliberate use of the Drill Hall, with its military associations, as well as the traverse-style auditorium created within it, aimed to mimic, and by so doing subtly satirise, the annual Edinburgh Military Tattoo. [385]As, perhaps, most members of the audience would have been aware, the Tattoo, an annual flagship tourist attraction and public relations exercise for the military, was simultaneously taking place at the nearby Edinburgh Castle. The opening of *Black Watch* attempted to recreate the atmosphere of the Tattoo, replete with roving spotlights, projected images of the Saltire flag, marching drums and an amplified, disembodied voice, presenting the

[380] Norton-Taylor, R. (5/11/04), 'Suicide Bomber Kills Black Watch Soldier', *The Guardian,* England.
[381] Tiffany, J. (2007), in Burke, G. *Black Watch,* London: Faber & Faber. pxi.
[382] Lochhead, L. (1989), *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off,* London: Penguin.
[383] See 'The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil' (1974), *BBC Play for Today.*
[384] Tiffany, J. (2007), in Burke, G. *Black Watch,* London: Faber & Faber, pxii.
[385] The *Tattoo* is an annual flagship tourist attraction established originally, in the 1940s, as a public relations exercise to promote the dwindling Scottish regiments. For more information see, for e.g. Allan, S. & Carswell, A. (2004) p148, *The Thin Red Line: War, Empire and Visions of Scotland.* Edinburgh: National Museums of Scotland.

arrival of the Black Watch in rousing tones. This pastiche was immediately subverted by the slightly comic, uncertain and embarrassed entrance of Cammy, lit by a spotlight, from behind a curtain. Acknowledging the presence of, and engaging with the audience, Cammy began:

Cammy: A'right. Welcome to this story of the Black Watch.

Beat.

At first, I didnay want tay day this.

Beat.

I didnay want tay have tay explain myself tay people ay.

Beat.

See, I think people's minds are usually made up about you if you were in the army.

Beat.

They are though ay?

Beat.

They poor fucking boys. They cannay day anything else. They cannay get a job. They get exploited by the army.

Beat.

Well I want you to fucking know. I wanted to be in the army. I could have done other stuff. I'm not a fucking knuckle-dragger.

Pause.

And people's minds are made up about the war that's on the now ay?

Beat.

They are. It's no right. It's illegal. We're just big bullies.

Beat.

Well, we'll need to get fucking used tay it. Bullying's the fucking job. That's what you have a fucking army for.

Criticism

Cammy's acknowledgement of public hostility towards the army for its part in a widely unpopular war, as well as recognition of a more general negative preconception of soldiers, is established in this scene. The remainder of this artfully constructed production continued to explore this territory through a montage of scenes that, taken together, made few concessions for, a politically correct, liberally minded audience. For, although *Black Watch* was a politically topical piece of theatre, critical as it was of British military involvement in Iraq and the government's diplomatically untimely reorganisation of the army, the production was not an unambiguously anti-war piece of theatre. Rather, Tiffany aimed to challenge liberally minded audiences on their "preconceptions of the army and what soldiers were like ".[386] As such, the play offered an unashamedly one-sided, male, western perspective on Iraq and, for some critics, by doing so implicitly reinforced and glorified Britain's imperial history. In his four-star review of the production Mark Brown wrote: "the production… lacks political courage. The overwhelming tenor of the piece…is one of criticism of the politicians who ordered the Iraq War, but something dangerously close to glorification where the imperial history of the Black Watch regiment is concerned". [387]

Archibald develops these criticisms further arguing that the production colludes with official sanitised accounts of the regiment's history by allowing "a more acceptable, easily consumable version of the Golden Thread".[388] For example, as Archibald notes

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[386] John Tiffany interviewed on *A Soldier's Story* Artworks, BBC2 Scotland, 26th August 2007
[387] Brown, M. (2008), 'Back on the Home Front', *Sunday Herald,* 6th April.
[388] Archibald, D. (2008), p9.

the Black Watch's repeated tours of duty to Ireland or their involvement in the atrocities towards the Mau Mau in Kenya, [389] are erased from the production, while its manipulative use of sound and movement produces an almost irresistible "celebration of Empire (or at least an act of wilful forgetting)".[390] Therefore, Archibald continues, while *Black Watch* may highlight anxiety about Britain's involvement in Iraq it does not confront "the previous three centuries of imperial subjugation".[391]

Archibald quotes the Black Watch Officer's pronouncement that "it takes three hundred years to build an army that's admired and respected around the world. But it only takes three years pissing around in the desert in the biggest western foreign policy disaster ever to fuck it up completely".[392] Archibald observes that this suggests that the Black Watch and Britain's involvement in Iraq is an aberration in an otherwise impeccable military history. Archibald also questions the production's complicity in perpetuating the British Empire's "fetishisation of the Highland soldier".[393] Finally, Archibald draws attention to the complete eradication of the Iraqi perspective from the play arguing that that it is "burdened with a limited politics of narrative identification". [394] However, even Archibald concedes that "*Black Watch* is a stunning piece of theatre", even if, "politically it is limiting, ambiguous and contradictory, in some ways radical whilst, simultaneously, deeply reactionary".[395]

Cull writes that such criticism of the production "somehow missed the critique of military heritage implicit in the play".[396] However, the play perhaps relies on or assumes an audience already complicitous with the liberal attitudes and perspectives that Tiffany aimed to upset.[397] *Black Watch* had been created as a site-specific work and had not been designed as a touring show. Although the NTS were originally adamant that re-stagings of the production were only to take place in drill halls or other similar venues,

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[389] In an interview, Gregory Burke said that this had been mentioned in the original script but it had been deleted, along with other material, due to time constraints (see Brown, M. (6/4/2008), 'Back on the Home Front', *Sunday Herald,* Scotland).

[390] Archibald, D. (2008), p12.

[391] Archibald, D. (2008), p10.

[392] Burke, G. (2007), p71.

[393] Archibald, D. (2008), p10.

[394] Archibald, D. (2008), p11.

[395] Archibald, D. (2008), p12.

[396] Cull, N. J. (2008), 'The National Theatre of Scotland's Black Watch : Theatre as Cultural Diplomacy', British Council Publication, available at http://www.britishcouncil.org/files/documents/usa-arts-theater-black-watch-cultural-pub.pdf (accessed 16/05/08).

[397] Perhaps in the same way, the popular film *Borat* (2007) assumed an audience complicitous with its implicit critique of anti-Semitism, sexism, etc.

as the play's success snowballed, this standard was compromised and the production played in variety of venues, including theatres, that were specially adapted to fit the needs of the production. Because of the real-time parallels between the performances of the *Tattoo* and *Black Watch*, the sense that *Black Watch* was subtly parodying the *Tattoo* and its associated glorification of war and the military was ever-present during the run at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. However, this aspect of the production was lost in subsequent tours.

Imagining the Nation

Taken out of its original physical and social context, subsequent stagings of *Black Watch* have thus perhaps more profoundly highlighted the production's strange alignment, noted by Archibald, between the radical and reactionary, the ambiguous and contradictory. For example, throughout the production the use of nationalist imagery allowed one critic of the play's performance in Manchester, to comment, "if all this squaddie banter had been written by a Londoner and delivered in estuarine English we might have been watching a play about the lethal undertow of the BNP".[398] For while there may have been a sense of irony behind the invocation of the quintessential traditional symbols associated with ideas of Scottish nation-hood presented in *Black Watch* (tartan, bagpipes, Gaelic laments, the Saltire flag), no explicit critical comment was made. For example, the brief and censored history of the regiment - the "Golden Thread" - that Archibald refers to is enacted in the production, literally, as an ironic fashion show in which Cammy is clothed in the various uniforms and regimental regalia that mark certain points in the regiment's history. As Cammy narrates the regiment's history, the other soldiers dress and manhandle him as though he were fodder for the cannon that they assemble in this charade of changing uniforms and alliances. For some critics, this scene was interpreted as glorifying the official history of the Black Watch regiment as, as Archibald notes above, only a palatable account of the Black Watch's history of warfare is presented in the written text in this scene. However, the staging of the scene as a fashion show suggests that spectators are invited to view this story as presentation rather than representation, as superficial spectacle rather than truthful depiction. On top of that, Cammy's physical manipulation throughout the scene draws the audience to reflect on the soldiers' own disempowerment and manipulation

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[398] Griggith, P. (12/5/08), 'Black Watch', *Manchester Confidential,* England.

by the institutions of war. Throughout this vignette, Cammy's narrative is repeatedly punctuated with references to Culloden;

Cammy: Fuck all that Cullodenshite. The Highlands were fucked …

A hundred battles where more Scotsman died than ever before. A hundred Cullodens.

Beat.

So fuck Culloden. Again".[399]

The invocation of Culloden in *Black Watch* is far from clear. The battle of Culloden saw the defeat of the Highland Jacobite army by Hanoverian government forces in 1746. The complex causes and associations that fuelled the Jacobite rebellions became gradually transformed over time[400] so that Culloden came to represent a significant "site of memory"[401] in terms of imaginings of Scottish nationhood. Culloden was one of those sites that served to "guarantee the authenticity of Scotland's history as a nation, [provide] evidence of a tradition of national resistance to other nations, and serve as physical monuments to the nation's collective past or memory".[402] Culloden has then become an icon of Scotland and, like the *Tattoo* is "part of the 'sight and sounds of Scotland', an integral part of the package of 'tartan nostalgia' routinely used to promote Scotland".[403] So, while on the one hand *Black Watch* does present a very brief and sanitised version of official history, the scene is interspersed with references to Culloden – namely "fuck all that Cullodenshite" – which undermine and serve to contradict the idea of historical narrative as any kind of 'truth'.

To further complicate readings of this scene, the Black Watch regiment's identity as a distinctively Scottish institution is also called into question by this reference to Culloden.   Originally formed in 1725 as a chain of semi-autonomous Independent

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[399] Burke, G. (2007), p30, 33, *The National Theatre of Scotland's Black Watch,* London*:* Faber & Faber.
[400] Gold, J. R. & Gold, M. M. (2007), p6, '"The Graves of the Gallant Highlanders": Memory, Interpretation and Narratives of Culloden', *History and Memory,* (19)1*,* pp 5 –38.
[401] "A *lieu de mémoire* is any significant entity, whether material or non material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community" Nora, P., Kritzman, L. D. (ed), Goldhammer, S. (trans) (1996), p.xvii, *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past,* New York: Columbia University Press.
[402] Butt, R. quoted in Gold, J.R. & Gold, M.M. (2007), *History and Memory*, p14.
[403] Gold, J. R. & Gold, M. M. (2007), p6.

Companies, the Black Watch was officially raised in 1739 by the Hanoverian government from, according to its own history, 'loyal' clans in the highlands – to police their fellow highlanders. However, in 1746, at the time of the battle of Culloden, the Black Watch had been sent abroad – if they had remained in Scotland it is possible, if not likely, that they would have fought on the Hanoverian, rather than Jacobite, side. Following the defeat of the Jacobite army at Culloden and the introduction of the Disarming Act[404] of 1746, which outlawed the wearing of tartan and the carrying of arms, the Black Watch, along with the other Highland regiments of the British army, were exempted from the act. The construction of the separate identity of the Highland regiments was inextricably bound up in their identity as British institutions. The regiment had come into being as an agent of the British Crown and government and had thus acted as a military symbol of the historical alliance between England and Scotland. Therefore, the Black Watch regiment itself has an ambiguous role in terms of British and Scottish identity and is emblematic of the complex relationship between and within the countries of Britain.

In a point reiterated by Burke in his introduction to the published play script, in the last few closing lines of the play, the soldiers explain that they joined the army to fight;

Cammy: Not for our government.

Macca: No for Britain.

Nasby: No even for Scotland.

Cammy: I fought for my regiment.

Rossco: I fought for my company.

Granty: I fought for my platoon.

Nasby: I fought for my section.

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[404] In 1782 the Disarming Act was repealed following the efforts of the Highland Society of London and the growing fashion for tartan beyond the highlands see Allan, S. & Carswell, A. (2004) *The Thin Red Line: War, Empire and Visions of Scotland*. Edinburgh: National Museums of Scotland, p29.

Stewarty: I fought for my mates.[405]

Black Watch is ostensibly about the soldiers themselves and was, for the most part, acclaimed for the way in which it captured the humanity, as well as the banality, of their experience of military service in Iraq and after. The appealing sense of intimacy that the characters enjoy – their physical ease together and familiar banter – helps to create an engaging piece of theatre, which celebrates with great physicality and energy the soldier's sense of camaraderie and loyalty. Throughout the play, the central characters – the squaddies – continually re-assert the borders of their white, male, heterosexual identity, which is frequently constructed through their use of sexist, racist and homophobic language and attitudes. For example, in the scene where we are first introduced to Cammy's fellow squaddies in a Fife pub, they are gathered around a pool table, voicing their reluctance to tell their story to the slightly awkward male writer rather than the "tasty researcher lassie" they had expected:

Granty: From what he fucking told us we were all getting our cocks sucked by this posh lassie.

Rossco: She was gagging for a line up from some battle-hardened Black Watch toby.

Stewarty: She was gonnay buy us drinks all day and suck our cocks.

Nasby: I'd pit my best gear on.

Cammy: And then this cunt fucking appears.[406]

These few lines immediately help to establish the group's exclusive identity with the soldiers referring to themselves as "us" and "we" in opposition to the outsider – whether the outsider is constructed through reference to their gender, class, ethnicity or status. At the same time, more than a hint of homoeroticism pervades the production, particularly in the movement sequences of the play. In one scene this underlying tension is made explicit when the Sergeant says to the men after a particularly passionate physical choreographed play-fighting session, "I had tay stop it before one

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[405] Burke, G. (2007), p72
[406] Burke, (2007), p5.

ay them came".[407] And, in the finale sequence – where the soldiers march in a building crescendo of both physical tenderness and "testosterone filled machismo" [408] – the elements of the production are aligned in such a way as to create the theatrical equivalent of a sexual climax. But, while there may be an element of titillation in this visceral display - a manipulation of the audience through theatrical technique - it also serves to make explicit the fluidity at the borders of the group's identity. It both confirms and contradicts stereotypes; with the soldier's speech reinforcing the stereotype of the racist, sexist, homophobic squaddie and the movement sequences breaking down these rigid categories.

Critics repeatedly highlighted one scene in the production for its emotional power and impact - a stylised movement scene in which the soldiers receive letters from home. Each actor stands alone, unfolds a letter and, as they read, repeats a series of personalised gestures surrounded by the haunting tones of the musical score. The brutality of the context and the profanity of the text are replaced, in this scene, by a pervading sense of poetic loss and a sense of mourning – a feeling that permeates the whole production. However, what is actually at loss is not easy to locate; it seems unlikely that a non-military audience would be overly concerned, let alone mourn, the loss or, rather less poetically, the amalgamation of, the Black Watch regiment. And the play is certainly not a lament over the tragedies in Iraq. Perhaps this sense of loss is simply tragic recognition of the inevitability of death in war and, certainly, the penultimate scene fulfils this expectation. But, perhaps it is also, more generally, about loss and mourning for certainties and a sense of belonging and identity – sentiments that the army and, in particular, the older regiments like the Black Watch appear to be particularly skilful at generating in their military personnel. A sense of certainty, of belonging and identity are also gifts that the imagined community of the nation promises. The loss or amalgamation of this regiment then perhaps acts as a metaphor for the nation, or nations, it represents.

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[407] Burke, (2007), p56.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered how the founding vision of the NTS began to be realised on stage through an exploration of some of the defining moments in the first year's programme. Following on from the previous chapter which concentrated on the contextual factors that influenced and defined the nature of the public sphere emerging in the NTS's formative years, this chapter has narrowed the focus to explore specific productions, in particular, the NTS's inaugural event *Home* as well as *Black Watch,* the company's most successful production to date. The chapter explored the ways in which these productions have touched on ideas of nationhood and identity without presenting easy definitions. In an increasingly globalised world the significance and boundaries of the nation are often ambiguous and contested, yet the recent constitutional changes in Britain have allowed the possibility for the creation of a more distinct public sphere to be defined in Scotland. Scotland is, therefore, a nation attempting to define, or continually redefine, and assert a sense of its own cultural identity at the same time as the very idea of a singular cultural identity has become increasingly complex and equally problematic. Over a relatively short period of time the NTS has played a role in helping to mark out and define a new national public sphere – a public sphere that is both distinct within, but also overlapping with UK, European and global public spheres. As a non-building based commissioning and producing company the NTS is particularly well placed to accommodate and reflect heterogeneous imagings of identity and respond to contemporary expressions of belonging. Indeed, the NTS's first year's programme was striking not least due to the high proportion of productions that adopted what Lehmann has termed a postdramatic performance aesthetic, which, so he suggests, no longer even attempts to represent the world "as a surveyable whole". [409] The NTS's orientation towards mounting site-specific productions which adopt a postdramatic performance aesthetic can also been seen as a strategy to encourage non-theatre going audiences into this national public sphere. This theme will be revisited in Chapter Seven, when the following years' productions will be analysed

[408] Hayman, D. interviewed in Artworks *A Soldier's Story* Artworks BBC 2 Scotland Sunday 26th August, 2007.
[409] Lehmann, H.,(2006), p12.

in relation to this significant inaugural programme. The next chapter, however, examines the Learn department, which also, in different ways, encourages greater access   to   the   NTS.

Chapter Six: Learn

Introduction

The previous chapter touched on the NTS's inaugural programme, focussing, in particular, on *Home* and *Black Watch* and the ways in which these productions imagined the nation. This chapter explores NTS Learn – a central element within the NTS's work but one which is, perhaps, less publicly visible than their main stage productions. The chapter begins by focusing on the Learn department itself; on its constitution, aims and objectives. The chapter then goes on to analyse the historical development of the concept of 'applied theatre' and the way in which this has become embedded within the mainstream of cultural and educational policy initiatives. NTS's response to this policy environment is explored through a case study of one of their projects – Transform. The chapter then considers some of the risks and challenges that have faced NTS and its Learn initiatives, through a retrospective reflection on the Young Company and *The Elgin Macbeth*. These projects each offer a different perspective on the way in which Learn approaches its broad and complex remit and objectives and its ambition to "inspire and empower" as wide an audience as possible.

NTS Learn

According to the Business Plan, the NTS's learning strategy,

> is to inform, support and deliver the vision, aims and objectives of the National Theatre of Scotland and in particular to: *Foster and support a culture of creative learning throughout Scotland which is embedded in all areas of our work and programme.*[410]

In the first year, a large proportion of the NTS's budget, [411] went towards their Learn programme, which planned to "open up great theatre experiences to as many people as possible across Scotland" through enabling various communities to create theatre as well as encouraging dialogue between local, national and international theatre

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[410] *National Theatre of Scotland, Business Plan, 2005/06 – 2007/08*, p69.

practitioners. Rather than focusing solely on the final 'artistic product', the NTS Learn objectives are more concerned with expanding theatre's reach, allowing the greatest number of people to access theatre – not necessarily only as audience but also as active participants in the theatre-making process. According to the NTS website;

> NTS Learn is about opening up great theatre experiences to as many people as possible across Scotland… Learning is at the heart of everything we do. We believe that you can't be creative without learning and that you can't learn without being creative…. We aim to inspire and empower so that anyone who wants to can help make exciting and vibrant theatre to be shared with audiences across the country. [412]

In order to attempt to meet these aims, NTS Learn have instigated a large number of performances and projects throughout Scotland. Over the course of the first two years of operation, NTS Learn had involved around fifty thousand participants and audience members, delivered over two thousand workshops, worked alongside eighty schools and covered twenty-five of the thirty-two Scottish local authority areas.

Alongside tailor-made workshops that accompanied specific NTS productions (for example *Aalst*, *Black Watch* and *Futurology*), the output of NTS Learn was, originally, divided into six separate 'projects' (Diaspora, Exchange, Connecting Communities, Transform, The Project and The Young Company) – each with specific objectives and target audiences or participants and each geared at enabling people, within a variety of contexts, to engage in theatre making. For example, the Transform projects were initially quite specifically focused on enabling theatre making in schools, while Connecting Communities was directed towards a broader remit of enabling theatre making in 'communities'. Meanwhile, Diaspora provided the opportunity for theatre practitioners and students in Scotland to collaborate with directors from differing theatrical traditions and perspectives in a cross-cultural exchange of ideas and working practices. Finally, Exchange created a platform for the exploration of theatre making by young people, while the Young Company saw the establishment of a full-time theatre ensemble for emerging professional theatre makers. Thus, NTS Learn's programme of

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[411] Approximately £500,000 out of a £4m budget.
[412] http://www.nationaltheatreofscotland.com/content/default.asp?page=s4 (last accessed 18/09/08).

work has reflected the NTS's broader ambition in terms of creating geographically far-reaching projects with wide artistic scope.

Simon Sharkey, formerly Artistic Director of Cumbernauld Theatre, has been the Associate Director of Learn since its inception and has been supported by an evolving administrative and artistic team currently comprised of Gillian Gourlay (Learning and Outreach Manager), Karen Allan (Project Manager) and Karen Graham (NTS Learn administrator).[413] Gourlay works alongside Sharkey in the artistic planning of Learn Projects – from creating the educational resources that accompany Learn projects to liasing with the freelance practitioners involved in outreach activity. The administration of Learn Projects falls more under the responsibility of Allan. Like Featherstone, Sharkey combines the roles of executive producer and artistic director - acting as artistic director on projects such as *The Elgin Macbeth* whilst at the same time producing other Learn projects. Reflecting the NTS working model, Learn also sub-contracts, commissions and co-produces, on a freelance basis, outreach workers and theatre companies to run specific projects. In some projects the work has been carried out by several individual professional artists from a variety of disciplines (for example, video artists, sound designers, choreographers, visual artists, etc) and, at other times, theatre companies have been sub-contracted to oversee specific projects (for example, *The Crucible* was billed as a co-production between TAG Theatre Company and NTS Learn, directed by TAG's artistic director, Guy Hollands; Borderline Theatre Company co-produced Transform, Aryshire and Visible Fictions co-produced Transform, East Kilbride, etc). Thus, NTS Learn enables increased participation in theatre making through a continuation of the NTS's aim of engaging with, and utilising the resources of, the existing theatre sector in Scotland.

Applied Theatre

What perhaps binds the aims and objectives of the Learn projects is a focus on various theatre practices that fall under the general rubric of 'applied drama' . According to Nicholson, the terms 'applied drama' and 'applied theatre' have, since the 1990s, been used by theatre practitioners, academics and policy makers to refer to "forms of

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[413] As of autumn 2008, as mentioned in chapter 4, extra funding enabled the NTS to take on more staff, the Learn department was augmented with a Producer, a Press Officer with a specific focus on Learn events was also employed.

dramatic activity that primarily exist outside conventional mainstream theatre institutions, and which are specifically intended to benefit individuals, communities and societies". [414] Nicholson argues that the concepts behind the practice of 'applied drama' are rooted in three interconnected and overlapping twentieth century theatre traditions or movements: 1. Political, Radical or Alternative Theatre,[415] 2. Drama or Theatre in Education,[416] and 3. Community or Grassroots Theatre.[417]   Political, alternative or radical theatre is, in particular, aligned to the civil rights movement and shares similar aspirations towards political change through social and cultural mobilisation. From this perspective, theatre is seen both as a tool for staging political reimaginings of social reality and also as a means of transforming it through active participation. Drama/Theatre in Education has been influenced by the development of European models of progressive education that have succeeded, since the 1960s, in embedding more child-centred approaches into educational practice, which encourage learning through the active participation of participants in improvisation and role-play techniques. The Theatre in Education movement has also been strongly influenced by the writings of the Brazilian Marxist pedagogue, Paulo Freire and, in particular by Augusto Boal's appropriation of Freire's concepts into theatre practice articulated, most famously, in Boal's exposition, *Theatre of the Oppressed.*[418] In his early work, Boal developed a variety of working methods (e.g. *Forum/ Legislative/ Invisible Theatre*) which aimed, in various ways, to empower 'oppressed' peoples through the active subversion of oppressing situations and relationships through techniques of improvisation and dramatic play. Lastly, 'community' or 'grassroots' theatre is "characterised by the participation of community members in creating a piece of theatre which has special resonance for that community".[419] As opposed to 'amateur' theatre, professional artists usually lead 'community' theatre projects, and performances are often the result of a devising, rather than pre-scripted, process and productions may also include professional performers.

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[414] Nicholson, H. (2005), *Applied Drama,* Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, p2.

[415] See, for e.g., Patterson, M. (2003), *Strategies of Political Theatre,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Fischer-Lichte, E. (2005), *Theatre, Sacrifice, Ritual: Exploring Forms of Political Theatre,* London: Routledge.

[416] See for e.g. Jackson, T. (1996) *Learning Through Theatre: New Perspectives on Theatre in Education,* London: Routledge.

[417] See for e.g. Van Erven, E. (2001), *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives,* London: Routledge; Thompson, J. (2005), *Digging Up Stories: Applied theatre, performance and war,* Manchester: Manchester University Press.

[418] Boal, A. (1979), *Theatre of the Oppressed,* London: Pluto.

[419] Nicholson, H. (2005), p10.

Nicholson argues that:

> the shift in terminology to 'applied' drama/ theatre is significant…because it does not announce its political allegiances, community commitments or educational intent as clearly as many forms of politically committed theatre-making which were developed in the last century. Applied drama has emerged in a period of cultural change in which the long tradition of the arts being seen to have inherently transformative and universally redemptive qualities has been troubled by new insights into the cultural production and representation of knowledge.[420]

Thus, while Nicholson attempts to define these three separate traditions and link them to current notions of 'applied theatre', she also recognises the fluidity and ambiguity in the meaning and practice of these terms as they relate to contemporary theatre practice, a practice that is less clearly motivated by radical political idealism. In the contemporary economic, social and political environment, community, political, or educational theatre practices can no longer be comfortably viewed as "an antidote to the alienating effects of industrial capitalism".[421] As such, Nicholson argues, "the impulses which motivated such work have become subject to radical review".[422] Nevertheless, while the ethical and political motivations that inspired the development of applied theatre practices in the second half of the twentieth century may have become increasingly complex, in the new millennium, applied theatre has entered the mainstream of cultural policy, both in theory and in practice. Thus, paradoxically, the anti-materialist, anti-establishment ideology of political resistance and social transformations that informed applied theatre practices have become appropriated for the purpose of economic development.

For example, the 'function' of the arts was increasingly reconstructed as playing an instrumental role in the transition from a manufacturing to a service-led economy in 'post-industrial' Britain and, by the 1980s, the language of cultural policy making changed from the 'subsidising of' to the 'investment in' the arts. The tangible products of this investment were quantified and measured, often in terms of their ability to regenerate post-industrial urban spaces – with the 'arts' being aligned to other policy

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[420] Nicholson, H. (2005), p11.
[421] Nicholson, H. (2005), p11.

developments such as urban regeneration, town planning as well as tourism. The economic and social benefits of investing in the arts and 'creative industries' was, and continues to be, supported and justified by a growing body of research, including, for example, Bianchini and Parkinson's [423] now classic collection of case studies that directly linked cultural policies to urban regeneration.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the election of the New Labour government to Westminster brought with it a further championing of culture and creativity's power to address challenges and changes in the economic and social spheres. As discussed by Schlesinger, the discourses around the concept of creativity developed within various UK government ministries since 1997 have been transformed into a rarely criticised doctrine that "connects ideas about creativity in the global economy as a *necessary* attribute both of competitive businesses and of an educated workforce".[424]   This doctrine became further embedded when, in 1998 the Secretaries of State for Education and Employment and for Culture Media and Sports established the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE), chaired by Ken Robinson. In May 1999, NACCCE published an influential report entitled *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*, which had the specific aim of informing the development of the schools curriculum in England, but also included recommendations for a wider national strategy for creative and cultural education. The report stated,

> education throughout the world faces unprecedented challenges: economic, technological, social, and personal. Policy-makers everywhere emphasise the urgent need to develop 'human resources', and in particular to promote creativity, adaptability and better powers of communication…New approaches are needed based on broader conceptions of young people's abilities, of how to promote their motivation and self-esteem, and of the skills and aptitudes they need. Creative and cultural education are fundamental to meeting these objectives.[425]

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[422] Nicholson, H. (2005), p11.
[423] Bianchini, F. & Parkinson, M. (eds), (1993), *Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration: the West European Experience,* Manchester: Manchester University Press.
[424] Schlesinger, P. (2007), "Creativity: from discourse to doctrine?", *Screen,* 48 (3): 377-387, p9.
[425] *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education* (May 1999) p 9/10 The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education available at http://www.cypni.org.uk/downloads/alloutfutures.pdf (last accessed 26/06/07).

The report outlined a national strategy for implementing these changes, which embraced three principal objectives. The first two related to the integration of creative and cultural education within teacher training and the national curriculum. The third principle objective was "to promote the development of partnerships between schools and outside agencies which are now essential to provide the kinds of creative and cultural education that young people need and deserve".[426] The report both reflected the trend, and also legitimised and encouraged further developments and initiatives towards, integrating creative approaches to learning within both local and centralised government policies.

In Scotland, the Scottish Executive's Education Department continues to fund the Impact Database which, following on from the work of the Literature Review of the Evidence Base for Culture, the Arts and Sports Policy,[427] provides a continually updated summary of research evidence from around the globe on the "social and economic impacts of culture, the arts and sport".[428] The motivation behind the report and the Impact Database was to "inform Scottish policy development and future investment in culture, the arts and sport, and also investment in wider policy areas which can achieve their objectives through initiatives employing culture, the arts and sport".[429] The *Literature Review* suggested that the arts had both direct and indirect economic impacts, including increased employment opportunities, tourism and promoting a sense of civic pride. The *Literature Review* also suggested that there was 'robust' evidence to support the social impact of the arts in the following areas: personal and community development, social justice, health, education, and participation. Thus, the political discourses regarding the democratisation of culture, discussed in chapter one, converge with economic discourses around creativity. Nevertheless, this new industry of research - justifying the cultural and economic impacts of culture, creativity and the arts - may be either ignored or appropriated by government. As discussed, the New Labour Government and the Scottish Executive have embraced and encouraged these discourses and the NTS has developed this within its founding vision. However, as discussed later in this chapter, this project is also reliant on political will.

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[426] *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education,* supra, p13.
[427] Ruiz, Janet (2004) *A Literature Review of the Evidence Base for Culture, the Arts and Sports Policy.* Research and Economic Unit, Scottish Executive Education Department, Edinburgh.
[428] Ruiz, ibid, p1.
[429] Ruiz, ibid, p1.

Returning to Learn

It appears that, certainly in the first year, the Learn 'department', with great ambition, sought to apply many of the expectations contained in the theory of applied theatre. The transformative potential of theatre, both in terms of its impact on the individual or a community, appeared to motivate Sharkey's drive to engage as wide a spectrum of participants in Learn projects as achievable. Sharkey was awake to the theoretical influences of applied theatre practices - citing both Boal and Robinson as influences on his own work - and was also conscious of both the opportunities and potential restraints of the cultural and educational policy environment in which the Learn department operated. Sharkey took advantage of the opportunities that policy might present and engaged with responding to, and leading in, the various policy areas that NTS Learn encountered – including education, health and well-being, community planning and culture. Sharkey said, "I think we have a responsibility to respond to [cultural policies]. When the Executive or the elected councillors or the communities that we are working with are making certain demands or have those expectations then I think we have to be able to respond to that. And those expectations are usually framed up in policy".[430]

Transform

One Learn project that linked directly with policy initiatives implemented under the previous Labour-Liberal coalition government was Transform.

According to the NTS website:

> Transform is a collaborative project with Scottish Power Learning, Determined to Succeed and local authorities that allows Schools of Ambition to transform their approaches to learning.

> By bringing these schools together with cutting edge theatre professionals, communities and groups of local primary schools, the partnerships produce a high impact theatre event that uses the local environment as a backdrop to tell compelling stories.

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[430] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Simon Sharkey, 21/06/07.

> We place a director, assistant director and producer into the school and its community. These artists create the vision and programme, working to realise it along with all the stakeholders.
>
> They have a dedicated budget and timescale to achieve the vision. We back them up with all the production, marketing and management resources required.[431]

Transform invited applicants from designated Schools of Ambition, a scheme in which schools - either single, secondary comprehensives or clusters of secondary and primary schools in a given area – bid to the Scottish Government for funds and support to help them achieve certain ambitions. The application process was relatively open in terms of what those ambitions might be. Successful applicants were granted a minimum of £100,000 per year for an unspecified period of time and were encouraged to find additional business sponsorship, in order to help them achieve their identified goals. With Transform, NTS Learn also collaborated with private business Scottish Power through Scottish Power's Learning[432] strategy, which aimed to provide, through sponsorship, "development opportunities" for young people aimed at increasing their employability. Additionally Transform incorporated the Scottish Government's Determined to Succeed[433] programme – which aimed to encourage and support, through the education system, a more entrepreneurial and enterprising culture.

Thus, the framework for the Transform projects was created through a network and merger of business and state interests. Within this network of external national interests, the Transform projects developed in response to more local concerns. Since February 2006, NTS Learn have collaborated on a number of Transform projects, each one tailored to respond to the particular needs of the schools involved. For example, on June 28th 2007 two schools, Hunter High and Claremont High, both of which were to be amalgamated into one new school, Calderglen High, in August of the same year, performed *Transform South Lanarkshire: Fusion*. Through this Transform project - a collaboration between Visible Fictions Theatre Company and the NTS - over an

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[431] http://www.nationaltheatrescotland.com/content/default.asp?page=s4_9 (last accessed 18/09/08).

[432] http://www.scottishpower.com/ScottishPowerLearning.htm (last accessed 18/09/08).

[433] For research evaluating the DtS programme between 2004 – 2005 see, http://www.nfer.ac.uk/research-areas/pims-data/outlines/national-evaluation-of-determined-to-succeed---phase-1.cfm (last accessed 18/09/08).

approximately twenty week period, professional artists worked with pupils from both schools on a process that began with regular weeklong work-shops in the schools and culminated in an intensive one month residency. During this process, with the support of the professional artists, the participants devised a large scale, site-specific performance that combined various performance-related skills, including dance, music, aerial work and comedy. The intense creative process of working towards the performance of Transform encouraged pupils to communicate and negotiate together on a shared practice within a neutral environment. This collaborative exercise aimed to help create a shared experience and shared history between the two merging schools that might potentially ease latent frictions inherent in their enforced union.   Thus, *Transform South Lanarkshire: Fusion* was a response to the particular circumstances facing the two schools involved, likewise *Transform: Inverclyde; Bolt* responded to the situation that immediately confronted the schools involved there.

Transform: Inverclyde; Bolt was initiated as a creative response to the social and environmental changes that people living in Inverclyde, approximately twenty miles west of Glasgow, are currently facing. Though Port Glasgow, the main town in Inverclyde, was, from the nineteenth century, a rich shipbuilding centre, the effects of twentieth century de-industrialisation brought with it high unemployment and associated social problems. In 2006, the Scottish Executive had singled out Inverclyde as one of Scotland's most "deprived communities"[434] and made it a priority area for the Executive's renewed regeneration strategy.[435] The Transform event was set in motion at a time when the local community was beginning to face the necessary forced adjustments to the changes implemented through the instigation of this ten-year £400 million re-generation programme. [436] *Transform: Inverclyde; Bolt* was thus established in order to help enable young people in the area to discover ways in which they might begin to connect with, and meet both the challenges and opportunities presented by the transformation of their environment. As well as providing the opportunity to develop specific and transferable skills for the participants, the performance, devised and performed by pupils at Port Glasgow and St Stephen's High Schools, potentially helped

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[434] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2006/02/28123144/Q/Video/325 (accessed 4/04/08)

[435] Which, as well as identifying three priority areas, including Inverclyde, for regeneration programmes also included a commitment to supporting a stronger and more effective relationship between combining public and private investment.

[436] http://www.riversideinverclyde.com/ (last accessed 18/09/08).

them, their families, friends and the wider community to reassert some sense of ownership over the urban landscape through this site-specific event.

Heather Lynch, Research Fellow at the Stirling Institute of Education, wrote in positive terms of *Inverclyde: Bolt* in her evaluation of the project, commissioned by the Scottish Government. Lynch voiced initial scepticism over the project's ambitious aims writing,

> *Transform* states a bold and potentially problematic ambition as it exposes issues around the ethics of a theatre company seeking to change the lives of individuals and communities.

However, she continued,

> the director Simon Sharkey's sensitivity towards the differing experiences, sensibilities and skills of the range of contributors…balanced by an awareness of the importance of coherence and direction made the ambitions seem achievable.

Her only criticism was that some of the pupils may have not been able to experience all of the art forms offered during the workshop process and that those pupils who were less involved in the final performance may have experienced some negative feelings. However, she suggested that the scale of the project and "the multiple possibilities generated by the approach made this less likely". Lynch was also impressed that,

> all of the school spaces appeared transformed by creative approaches to learning. The class spaces in layout and energy were more animated and democratic than those I would generally expect to encounter.

Giving the project an overall rating of 'excellent', Lynch also drew attention to the project's more long-term legacy and "significant … sustainable outcomes…[which] have the capacity to support progression for all involved", through, for example, "the form of a youth theatre and connections with local agencies". However, undoubtedly not all the Transform projects have managed to fulfil their original ambitions. For example, Sharkey spoke of his disappointment during the process of creating *Transform: Footprint,* a co-production with Borderline Theatre Company on the island of Arran in North Ayrshire. It was, according to Sharkey, "an awful experience" which,

from Sharkey's perspective, involved a constant negotiation with the local authority and schools involved who were insistent that the project be used to further their own particular objectives in what appeared to be a box ticking exercise. Although Sharkey tried to insist that the fulfilment of external agencies' policy objectives was not the aim of Transform, according to Sharkey, local authority representatives "wouldn't move, they wouldn't budge, they were happy that the boxes were being ticked and in the end that compromised the event and the outcome".[437]

The Transform projects have crystallised into a significant element of future NTS programming with ten further Transform events planned to take place between March 2008 to March 2010.[438] Unlike much of the NTS's work to date, Transform events do not appear to have courted a high profile and, as such, are perhaps symbolic of the NTS's real intent to invest in creating an accessible network of well resourced, theatrical public spheres throughout Scotland. Although Transform is the end-result of top-down policy-making, Transform events are, essentially, grassroots events – contained within a very specific area and targeted towards an essentially uncritical audience, for the most part, related to and supportive of the participants. With Transform, the process is as significant as the product, the final performance. However, the increased qualitative uncertainty of theatre events involving un-trained, un-paid, voluntary participants is a potential risk for NTS Learn projects and the NTS as a whole.

During the Scottish Arts Council's Creative Nation cultural summit (25th – 27th February 2008) at Edinburgh's International Conference Centre, a central debate raised was the concept of 'excellence' in the arts - a debate prompted, in particular, by Brain McMaster's recent report on that theme.[439] While there was no attempt to define this nebulous concept and only tentative ideas about how it might be evaluated there was, nevertheless, a certain degree of unanimity over the need for excellence to be the guiding principle for arts subsidy. However, there was also some recognition that, though many arts organisations may aspire towards excellence, the reality is that very

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[437] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Simon Sharkey 21/06/07.

[438] As of 21/09/08, Transform projects were advertised as being not only available to Schools of Ambition but, more broadly, to school clusters within local authority areas throughout Scotland.

[439] McMaster, B. (2008), *Supporting Excellence in the Arts: From Measurement to Judgement,* Department of Culture, Media and Sport, London. Available at http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/supportingexcellenceinthearts.pdf (Last accessed on 18/09/08).

few artistic outputs ever achieve this always disputable and subjective aim. Excellence in the creative arts is more often than not a fortunate coincidence of circumstances that cannot be proscribed or repeated. Nevertheless, the expectation on the NTS to meet certain apparent standards of excellence, place Learn in a particularly vulnerable position in projects that do court publicity, a high profile and a broad audience. NTS Learn's *Elgin Macbeth*, discussed below, offers an example of some of the compromises that may result from the contradiction and tension between the ideological ambitions contained within Learn's remit and the NTS's goal of striving for artistic excellence.

The Elgin Macbeth

Using Elgin Cathedral as a backdrop, *The Elgin Macbeth* was an adapted version of Shakespeare's play using a professional cast of five alongside over one hundred community and schools performers, including a Gaelic choir and a Parkour[440] group. Four artists in Moray, in the North East of Scotland, were employed by NTS Learn from November 2005 to work, in the first place on the NTS's 2006 *Crucible Project* and then on *Project Macbeth* before being brought in to lead the community involvement of *The Elgin Macbeth*. From November to mid December 2006, the creative team gave 'taster' sessions in various schools throughout the region and, from this, five schools chose to participate in the process of creating *The Elgin Macbeth*. Some of the workshops were 'process' based, i.e. they were not necessarily aimed towards a specific outcome but were rather exploring the themes of *Macbeth* through different media (for example, video, sound, visual art, dance or/and drama). Other workshops were more focused on 'product', i.e. the pupils and community cast used the workshop to rehearse their parts in the production of *Macbeth* to be performed in Elgin Cathedral in June 2007. The structure and content of these workshops was left to the creative team based in Moray, who were given the freedom to run these as they chose.

The Elgin Macbeth was a large scale, ambitious project that was able to assemble a range and quality of resources - technical, human and environmental - that would have been harder, if not impossible, to obtain without the status afforded by way of the

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[440] 'Parkour' is the name for a highly physical sport/ dance/ philosophy developed in the late 1990s, for more information see, for e.g. http://parkournorthamerica.com/plugins/content/content.php?content.17 (last accessed 21/4/09).

project's affiliation with the NTS. For example, the company was able to negotiate access to Elgin Cathedral through Historic Scotland, and was, likewise, financially and technically able to equip the Cathedral with high-quality lighting, sound and video technology. The NTS were also capable of attracting a large number of participants to the project and could employ local artists to work with these groups over a number of months. Jeni Herbert (choreographer on *The Elgin Macbeth*) had worked for Moray Council as a dance development officer for four years, and is well known, like all the creative team, in the local community in that capacity. However, Herbert said that working for the NTS had given her an added status and credibility, a view shared by all her colleagues. In just over a year of operation, the NTS had already created a strong presence in this area of northeast Scotland, as Chris Lee, community director on *The Elgin Macbeth,* said,

> people have really embraced that National Theatre thing and…from my perspective – as someone who's always lived and worked in quite rural areas in Scotland – the West Highlands and Lochaber and over here on the West coast – you do feel part of it. And there's a big national theatre presence and…that's one thing I think it's doing brilliantly. The fact that they open a show in Orkney and bring it down through the country rather than everything being in a building somewhere…Everybody's really felt the effects of the NTS and there's been a seismic shift. Not just that, in terms of audiences as well – people coming out to theatre who didn't before. More people are going to see theatre. You can just feel it – it's a real cultural injection – much needed as well. And thank God its not 'heuchty teuchty' nonsense. It's very kind of engaged and modern and experimental and risky and everybody can feel part of it. [441]

While this was publicised as a NTS Learn production and did involve the community cast, in the final weeks of production a professional cast of actors, who had been rehearsing in Glasgow under Sharkey's directorship, was brought in to act in the lead roles. The work of the community cast was adapted around the professionals, rather than vice versa, and the community cast took on a more secondary, supporting role. The paid professional actors, unlike the community cast, were also equipped with radio microphones, thus further highlighting the hierarchy of roles between the professional and community casts. By employing professional actors, it appeared that NTS Learn

sought to minimise the potential risk of compromising the "high artistic standards" demanded of the NTS by way of its national status. The production received mixed critical acclaim, with *Scotsman* critic Joyce Macmillan positively reviewing it as "a searingly fast-paced 70-minute cut of *Macbeth*, featuring fine and intense broad-brushstroke work from the professional cast...some thrilling choreography... spine-chilling sound ...and a terrific sense of focus and commitment from the young people who form the chorus".[442] Mark Brown, writing in the *Sunday Herald,* was less effusive, stating that the production had "failed to deliver on its promise".[443]

As *The Elgin Macbeth* was channelled through NTS Learn, the production's promise embraced a more complex range of both objectives and expectations than might be anticipated from the company's main stage programme. As a Learn project, each individuals' "contribution or participation" in *The Elgin Macbeth* was expected to be "recognised, developed and valued in a context that is enlightening, engaging, empowering and innovative".[444] These valuable principles and ideals run in parallel with, amongst others, the expectation that the NTS strives to meet the "highest professional artistic standards".[445] However, these dual aims are, of course, not necessarily compatible and striving to achieve both may result in the kind of comprises evident in *The Elgin Macbeth.* Thus, *The Elgin Macbeth* highlighted the challenging relationship between NTS as a national flagship company and its educational or learning aims.

The Young Company and Emerging Artists

Inevitably, there have been, and will continue to be, areas of change, crystallisation and development within the NTS. One area that has seen significant changes is the Young Company - created "to give the best emerging talent from Scotland a platform to make theatre and develop...supporting the long-term development of theatre and young artists in this country". [446] The company, comprised of a director, two producers

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[441] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Chris Lee, 21/06/07.
[442] McMillan, J.'Theatre Reviews: The Elgin Macbeth', *The Scotsman,* Edinburgh, June 22nd 2007.
[443] Brown, M. (24/6/07) 'Toil in Trouble', *Sunday Herald, Seven Days*.
[444] *National Theatre of Scotland, Business Plan,* 2005/06 – 2007/08, p69.
[445] *Annex A: Criteria for Attaining And Maintaining Status A National Performing Company*, The Scottish Government, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Directorate, Culture and Gaelic Division, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ. Dated 29th March 2007, p3/4.
[446] The Young Company Programme, 2006-2007 'An Introduction by Vicky Featherstone'.

and four actors was based in The Bridge arts complex in Easterhouse, since the building's opening in 2007. The Young Company was envisioned as being autonomous - working independently from, although with the support of, the administrative and artistic infrastructure of the NTS. The Young Company was established as an 'ensemble', i.e. with a permanent company of actors, directors and producers, rather than freelance actors being contracted in for individual shows, as is generally the case in British repertory and touring theatres. In actor-led[447] ensembles there is often an aspiration or commitment towards, what Forced Entertainment identifies as "collective practice", [448] which although not necessarily antithetical towards working with directors, aspires to this relationship being more of a collaborative, rather than hierarchical, process; for example, with the director/s working as an 'outside eye' who might influence the final direction taken, rather than as a director-auteur who might impose a particular artistic vision. The Young Company, constituted with an already established and conventional director led structure - with the roles of 'actor', 'director', 'producers' being pre-assigned - appear to have struggled to establish an ensemble based on an equality of roles. In some ways the Young Company - as a top-down, policy-led initiative – could be seen as a microcosm of the NTS itself and, had the NTS been created as a purely producing company, the NTS might have followed a similar fate to the Young Company. For, the NTS received criticism from the press for its privileging of a particular group of young theatre makers,[449] a situation that was perceived as having a potentially divisive effect on their peers.[450] As Joyce McMillan wrote in her review of the Young Company's *Oedipus the King* in *The Scotsman* newspaper:

> the fact is that the central belt of Scotland is full of young interesting theatre companies like this, with bright ideas, and a variable capacity to put them in front of an audience in a persuasive and fully professional form. The decision of the NTS to single out this particular group of artists, to give them a home for a year, and to set them up in a well-supported competition to the rest of their

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[447] There are precedents for non artist led ensemble theatre companies, particularly outwith Britain – for example, the Danish National Theatre has a lengthy tradition of employing an ensemble of actors who are under permanent contract with the company, whilst in Scotland, since 1999, Dundee Rep has successfully experimented with various permutations of ensemble theatre. However, in Britain, probably the most common form of ensemble companies are those established by actors who may often share a common theatrical training and artistic 'language'/short-hand (for e.g. Theatre de Complicite and Benchtours) or those ensembles established by a group of artists who share a desire to explore a particular performance aesthetic (e.g. Forced Entertainment).

[448] See http://www.forcedentertainment.com/?lid=12 (last accessed 18/09/08).

[449] Cooper, N. (20/11/06) 'Review: Oedipus: the King' *The Glasgow Herald.*

peers, therefore remains a mystery; as well as a distinct departure from the central idea behind the NTS which is that it should not compete with the rest of Scottish theatre, but work with it, to generate the highest standards of achievement all round.[451]

Featherstone felt that the pressure conferred on the Young Company because of their privileged status, as well as the NTS senior management's lack of ability to support them due to the other demands on their time, meant that the Young Company was not a sustainable project. Therefore, in the second year the NTS Young Company was disbanded. In its place, rather than a separate, semi-autonomous ensemble company, a small number of 'emerging artists' were integrated within Learn and given the opportunity to develop their own work as well as assisting with NTS productions, either as assistant directors on productions or through delivering educational work through Learn programmes. This safer, less exposed, option provides, perhaps, a more nurturing environment through which emerging artists can be more closely mentored. However, the demise of the Young Company does also suggest the NTS's gentle but steady navigation away from the more risk taking elements of its work.

With the Young Company, The Project and Connecting Communities all removed from the 2008 programme, the Learn programme has become increasingly distilled and focused. While projects such as Transform, Exchange and Diaspora continue to crystallise within the NTS, new initiatives, for example the Emerging Artists programme, are also being developed. Attempts to more organically merge Learn within the NTS also continue, with an increasing programme of Learn workshops and resources accompanying the main programme of productions and also plans for future Transform events to be directed from within the company. Both Featherstone and Sharkey are unanimous that the objectives of Learn should be central to the NTS ideology and as such Learn should not, in effect, be separate from the NTS as an organic whole. However, in contradistinction to the NTS's approach towards diversity, discussed in chapter four, in which the concept of diversity was initially embedded in the company's profile but then became identified as a more deliberate strand and strategy of the company's work, a separate Learn department existed from the start. Its existence aimed to create a declaration of intent regarding the significance of Learn to

[450] MacMillan, J. (22/11/06) 'Review: Oedipus the King' in *The Scotsman*.
[451] MacMillan, J. (22/11/06) 'Review: Oedipus the King' in *The Scotsman*.

the NTS ideology. Nevertheless, the sense that Learn is somehow separate from the rest of the NTS has been further ingrained by the Learn team's relocation to the Bridge in Easterhouse in October 2007. This move was pragmatic, motivated by the impracticality of housing the growing NTS staff in the temporary office in Glasgow, coupled with perceived mounting government pressure on the NTS to be seen to inhabit the Easterhouse site. However, this has, both practically and symbolically, highlighted Learn's separate identity within the NTS as a whole.

Conclusion

Learn has helped to reinforce a culture of participation in theatre making through the expansion and institutionalisation of a public sphere geared towards that aim. However, the SNP Government have announced their intention to cut funding to the Schools of Ambition programme as well as the Cultural Coordinator posts which have helped to support involvement in the arts, including Transform, in schools throughout Scotland. At the present time, it is uncertain whether the funding from the cancellation of these programmes will be transferred into other cultural programmes or merely redistributed into other policy areas. Learn projects are perhaps most vulnerable to, as well as potentially most gainful of, the exigencies and capriciousness of political decision-making. Featherstone responds pragmatically to such changes saying that if, for example, the funding for the Transform projects was no longer available:

> We wouldn't do it anymore. But, we would change things anyway. I mean we've never set up something to run forever. We would go, "what's the next thing we want to do?" …I wonder if after [the next planned Transform projects] we should, anyway, be refreshing ourselves and coming up with another project. But if we had a project that we thought was important and exciting we would pay for it out of core [budget], we wouldn't have to get it from outside sponsorship.[452]

Thus, as with many other facets of the NTS, the Learn department and the projects facilitated from within it, may change, develop and, on occasion, crystallise into something more permanent.

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[452] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Vicky Featherstone 26/06/08.

Chapter Seven: Change, Development and Crystallisation.

Introduction

While the Learn department, as discussed in the previous chapter, maintains a distinct identity within the NTS, the New Work department appears to be more embedded within the NTS as a whole; work generated from within the New Work department crosscuts across other areas of the NTS and, therefore, identifying projects specific to New Work is less clear. Therefore, this chapter touches on some of the initiatives and projects developed by the New Work department specifically, but also explores, more generally, the working processes of the NTS through, for example, co-productions and collaborations with other artists and theatre companies. While the first year's programme was analysed in chapter five, here, more recent programming and productions are discussed, particularly in relation to local, national and international influences and focus. The chapter then goes on to explore the ways in which the NTS has contributed to the discourse on 'cultural diplomacy' and the ways in which that term is not always or necessarily distinguishable from a discourse on global niche marketing. This leads to a discussion of the SNP government's current position regarding the promotion of Scotland abroad and the ways in which the NTS has and may continue to be appropriated for this aim. The proposed establishment of the new cultural body, Creative Scotland, is also revisited in this chapter in relation to its potential impact on the future of the NTS. In conclusion, the chapter combines various strands established in this thesis to deliberate on whether the NTS will be able to maintain its position as an independent and critical, democratically representative public sphere in the current political and economic environment.

The New Work Department

As discussed in chapter four, the New Work department aimed to support the NTS in particular through focussing on the company's artistic aim:

to develop, produce and present excellent and world-class theatre in partnership with the Scottish theatre community; work which constantly questions the definition of theatre – in location and content; work which is innovative, international in outlook and relevant to the diversity of life in Scotland today.[453]

This desire to question definitions of theatre in both form and content thus communicated the NTS's apparent objective to break with the dominant, mainstream British theatrical tradition with its emphasis on literary drama presented in dedicated theatre spaces. Rather than being one of the "prime 'tradition bearers'"[454] of Western European classical heritage, the NTS, rather, from the outset, asserted the company's affiliation with contemporary theatre practice, aligning itself with the 'cutting-edge' of the arts world. According to Featherstone, all NTS productions could be considered, in various ways, to go under the heading of 'new work' - from Scottish playwright David Greig's contemporary adaptation of *The Bacchae* to, more obviously, Anthony Neilson's devised production entitled *Realism*, at the Edinburgh International Festival. The term 'new work' was thus used to embrace a broad spectrum of performance practice: from new adaptations of classic texts, to collaboratively created devised performances**.** As discussed in chapter five, the NTS first year's programme in particular featured a high proportion of new work which employed a postdramatic performance aesthetic; mounting productions often created through a collaborative creative process**,** with non-linear narratives, a proportion of which were presented as site-specific.

While Vanden Heuvel defines literary drama as "representative…of a larger cognitive activity of imposing structure and meaning on reality"[455] his distinction between that and "performance" corresponds, in many ways, to Lehmann's use of the term postdramatic theatre, discussed in Chapter Five. Vanden Heuvel's argues that performance, while traditionally understood as the medium through which the dramatic text was translated,

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[453] *National Theatre of Scotland, Business Plan,* Appendix One: New Work Strategy, 2005/06 – 2007/08, p44.
[454] The SAC's description of the role of National Performing Companies in: *Education Culture and Sport Committee: Report on Inquiry into the National arts Companies, 2000* available at : http://www.scottish .parliament.uk/business/committees/historical/education/reports-00/edr00-01-01.htm#remit (last accessed 16/08/08).
[455] Vanden Heuvel, M. (1993), *Performing Drama/ Dramatizing Performance: Alternative Theatre and the Dramatic text,* Michigan: University of Michigan Press, p3.

has become an "autonomous art form" and an alternative to literary drama that deconstructs "conventional dramatic semiosis".[456] Performance, Vanden Heuvel suggests, is an "affirmative response to a reality and a language defined by slippage, leaks, gaps, and indeterminacy".[457] Within this "reality" Vanden Heuvel vaunts theatre's role, suggesting that it has:

> become the privileged site of difference in a culture increasingly given to simplified dichotomies. In opposition to culture's flattening out of difference, theatre has maintained itself as an arena where potentially conflictual, even antithetical, issues and value perceptions about the world - including those values and cognitive activities associated with text and performance – are transformed into interactive energies that can be made to sustain, rather than dominate, one another.[458]

While Vanden Heuvel's suggestion perhaps overvalues theatre's exclusive ability to produce art that generates democratic forms of expression (i.e. an art that can simultaneously express both egalitarian and conflictual representations of experience) nevertheless he does draw attention to this particular art form's aptitude to generate this within a communal public sphere. The NTS's early emphasis on "performance" over "literary drama" indicated that the NTS tended towards privileging a politics of representation that resisted narrative closure or the imposition of meaning. This was, at the very least, an innovative approach in terms of the type of work expected from a prototypical National Theatre and perhaps, above all, signalled the company's artistic intent to focus on and produce new work that would seek to engage in re-imaginings of the nation.

In the first year, through the New Work department, a variety of projects and strategic initiatives were instigated to encourage, support and develop the creation of new work. Originally, the remit of the New Work department was deliberately broad and, in keeping with the company's early orientation towards an emphasis on performance, aimed to create opportunities which could support a broad range of artists. As Caroline Newall, the NTS New Work's Workshop Director stated in May 2007,

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[456] Vanden Heuvel, M. (1993), p3.
[457] Vanden Heuvel, M. (1993), p6.
[458] Vanden Heuvel, M. (1993), p6.

> New Work was created rather than a literary department…We only had a
> certain amount of resources and we didn't want to be just a literary department
> which is a kind of classical model [of a medium to large-scale Theatre
> Company]. We wanted a much wider remit really and to allow work from lots
> and lots of different kinds of disciplines.[459]

In keeping with the NTS's original aim, at the outset, these ventures were also
designed to not replicate developments already taking place within the existing theatre
sector in Scotland. So, for example, rather than duplicating the new writing initiatives of
the Traverse or the performance-based development opportunities at the Arches
Theatres, the NTS partnered with these two companies on the Arches Award for Stage
Directors; aimed at encouraging new, emerging directors. The NTS, alongside other
partners, also invested in Fuse, an initiative managed through the Playwrights' Studio,
which aimed to provide a centralised, professional play reading resource for theatre
companies that could evaluate and make recommendations on the unsolicited scripts
received by the participating companies. The New Work department also
commissioned a number of writers to create work for the company and assigned artists
from a range of disciplines to research the feasibility of developing specific projects.
For example, as discussed in Chapter Five, the commissioned play *Black Watch*
originally evolved from an 'assignment' offered to writer Gregory Burke to follow the
story of the amalgamation of the Black Watch regiment when the story originally broke
in the news in early 2005.

The NTS workshop - described as the "innovative heart"[460] of the NTS - was also
established to provide "non-product based development opportunities [for directors,
companies and artists]… to take risks".[461] The Workshop was envisioned as a
laboratory for artists from differing fields to develop and experiment with ideas,
supported by the administrative, artistic and financial infrastructure of the NTS; the
artistic focus being on experimentation rather than finished product. Certainly, early on
in her tenure, Featherstone imagined the NTS Workshop as providing theatre makers
the opportunity "to take risks, to put on work in ways that they wouldn't have imagined,

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[459] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with NTS Workshop Director Caroline Newall, 1st May
2007.
[460] http://www.nationaltheatrescotland.com/content/default.asp?page=s5 (last accessed 11/09/08).
[461] National Theatre of Scotland, Business Plan, 2005/06 – 2007/08, p45.

it's about enabling risk".[462] In its original incarnation, the Workshop had a very open policy in terms of accepting and funding applications for short periods of development work. On the NTS Workshop Web Page theatre makers were encouraged to submit brief applications and, in its first year, NTS Workshop supported approximately thirty new projects. However, although at least some of these development projects – for example, Burnt Good's *Venus as a Boy* (2007) - did develop into full-scale productions, many of the projects did not go beyond the experimental stage. Speaking, retrospectively, about NTS Workshop's strategy during its first year, Newall stated;

> a lot of the time last year, I mean to a degree, some of the projects that got supported…we made the decisions [to support a particular project] politically. It was perhaps a company or artist that we thought 'actually, we probably won't be able to find a place for you in our main programme, because we don't think your work's at the right level yet. Or, you know, your ideas are different'. But, actually, we wanted, in that first year especially, to be able to support as much of the existing theatre community as possible, because that's what we're here to do, to work with people rather than just creating something new. So, there were some political decisions made last year.[463]

This tension between the NTS's role in supporting the work of the existing theatre sector and their responsibility as a national company – evident in Newall's statement, above – appears to have been, in many ways, a constant and continuing challenge to the NTS during its formative years. This tension demands that the NTS create opportunities that showcase and support the aesthetic aspirations of the existing theatre sector whilst also meeting public expectations of it as a flagship national institution. In the case of the Workshop, acknowledging it was, effectively, acting as another funding agency, following an evaluation of their procedures in December 2006, the Workshop team decided to change the focus; supporting fewer projects by creating a selection criteria that only considered proposals from practitioners with whose work the NTS was already familiar. Although Featherstone had been opposed to replicating the perceived elitism associated with the London-based National Theatre's experimental Studio – equivalent to NTS's Workshop – within two years of its inception the NTS Workshop has however already adopted a more selective, and, therefore

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[462] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Featherstone, 5th April 2006.

elitist, selection criteria. Speaking in 2007, Featherstone said that the previous year the company had acted "like teenagers"[464] in their willingness to take risks but that they were now less willing or able to do so. Arguably, this contraction of the parameters of risk-taking was reflected in NTS Workshop's more measured approach towards supporting projects.

Indeed, the NTS's second year's programme (February 2007 to February 2008) appeared to contain fewer productions that continued to develop on the more innovative, risk-taking elements of performance, so evident the previous year. This perception was in part skewed by the fact that while *Home* was publicly perceived to be part of the NTS's first year's programme; in fact, it was produced under the previous year's budget. As such, in comparison with the first year, the following year's programmes appeared to be less extensive and the NTS's initial emphasis on producing devised and/or site-specific work, discussed in Chapter Five, was less in evidence. The perception that the programme had fewer new productions was also emphasized by the second year, when productions from the previous year, began embarking on international tours, i.e. *Black Watch* and *Wolves in the Walls.* While this development of a NTS repertoire was evidence of the company's success, in itself it did not augment the number of actual productions appearing on stages in Scotland. At the same time, in the second year, 2007, a number of productions were adaptations of previously existing texts[465] or remounts of previously existing productions now under the NTS banner.[466] The following year (February 2008 to February 2009), the reliance on adaptations appeared to be even more marked,[467] with Featherstone's *365* being the only large-scale production not based on a previously existing text.[468] While this reliance on adaptations may not be particularly problematic and still comes under the rubric of new work, it nevertheless appeared to indicate a reliance on tested themes and narratives. It also indicated a move away from performance towards a more literary focus. This literary focus was further highlighted with the employment in early 2008 of a Literary Manager, Francis Poet.

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[463] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with NTS Workshop Director Caroline Newall, 1st May 2007

[464] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Vicky Featherstone 28/02/07.

[465] For example, *Tutti Frutti*, *Venus as a Boy*, *A Sheep Called Skye, The Bacchae*.

[466] For example, *Wonderful World of Dissasocia, Aalst, Molly Sweeney.*

[467] For example, *Little Otik, Emperors New Kilt, Something Wicked, Be Near Me, Dolls.*

[468] A season of three new plays were produced at the Traverse and a new co-production with Wee Stories entitled *One Giant Leap,* which toured small scale venues.

Programming and National Overview

As has been discussed in previous chapters, the NTS national remit has been interpreted and fulfilled structurally by engaging in a geographically far reaching programme of work. Whether the content of NTS programming reveals a particularly 'national' perspective has, to date, not always been so clearly discernible. Certainly, the programming needs of venues and the potential inclinations of audiences are a constant factor in programming decisions. However, due to the collaborative nature of the NTS model, the NTS programme is balanced between both proactive and reactive projects, i.e. between both self-generated and externally suggested productions. Therefore, as Featherstone stated;

> It's quite hard keeping a balance of work that tours certain kinds of venues, responds to different kinds of audiences when you're responding to what artists want you to do …So that's become more of a challenge as we go on and that's more about responding to what people, what the companies want to do whilst still looking at the overview of the kind of work we should be doing to fulfil our national remit, if you like.[469]

Although, at least until April 2007, the NTS had not been given any explicit criteria regarding their role as a 'national' company, Featherstone acknowledged the company's 'national' status and respected the responsibilities that this conferred; not least in terms of prioritising co-productions with Scottish based companies. Indeed, the majority of NTS co-productions to date have been with producing theatre companies, rooted in Scotland, both building–based (e.g. The Citizens, The Lyceum and Dundee Rep) and touring (Grid Iron, Suspect Culture, Catherine Wheels and NVA). Some co-productions mounted under the NTS banner have been produced in accord with the commissioning NTS model originally envisaged by the FST, i.e. productions created by existing theatre companies in Scotland that have been, essentially, showcased through the NTS. A number of these co-productions have been with small to medium scale touring theatre companies and the involvement of the NTS has, in effect, provided them the opportunity to create work on a larger scale and with higher production values. For example, under the auspices of the NTS, the small scale touring children's

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[469]Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Vicky Featherstone 28/02/07.

theatre company Wee Stories was able to remount their successful 2004 tour of the *Emperor's New Kilt* in 2008. The original production, which transposed and adapted the Hans Christian Anderson story *The Emperor's New Clothes* into a Scottish context, had toured to small venues, such as village halls and community centres, around Scotland. By co-producing with the NTS, the company were able to remount the production in larger scale venues, such as the Theatre Royal in Glasgow and His Majesty's in Aberdeen as well as larger scale venues in England.

While the *Emperor's New Kilt* was a restaging of a previous production, co-producing with the NTS has also enabled the creation of new work under the NTS banner. For example, by co-producing with the NTS, the small to mid scale touring theatre company, Catherine Wheels mounted Ray Bradbury's own stage adaptation of his American novel *Something Wicked This Way Comes*. The co-production was on a larger scale and had higher production values than their usual SAC funding alone would have allowed and also resulted in a tour to the larger capacity theatres such as the Tramway in Glasgow, the Royal Lyceum in Edinburgh and Eden Court in Inverness. However, the NTS's perceived and actual 'ownership' of co-productions is not always clear. For example, to name but a few, in the co-productions of the *Emperor's New Kilt* and *Little Otik* as well as Suspect Culture's *Futurology*, Anthony Neilson's *Dissocia* and Grid Iron's *Roam,* the NTS's artistic contribution has been minimal and, in such instances, the NTS's role appears the same as a funding body. However, as will be discussed in more detail below, according to Matthew Lenton, Artistic Director of Vanishing Point, the artistic relationship with NTS is dissimilar from that of a funding body, for example, the SAC.

Case Study: Vanishing Point's Little Otik

Since working as a freelance director on the NTS's *Home: Caithness* (2006) and *Mancub* (2006) with NTS Ensemble, Matthew Lenton, Artistic Director of Vanishing Point Theatre Company, had been in discussion with Featherstone about the two companies collaborating together on a co-production. Featherstone responded positively to Lenton's suggestion of adapting Jan Svankmajer's Czech film *Little Otik* for the stage and a budget, to which Vanishing Point contributed approximately £50,000 of their SAC subsidy to the overall production costs of £250,000, was agreed. According to Lenton, most aspects of the co-production were negotiated in constant partnership

with the NTS so that decisions on issues such as marketing, publicity, casting and tour dates were decided by the mutual agreement of both partners. Although the NTS oversaw the management of the budget, Vanishing Point led the artistic process. As the artistic relationship and degree of administrative and financial input varies with each NTS co-production such processes need to be renegotiated anew each time and managing the inherent challenges involved has comprised a significant core of NTS activities to date.

As Huxham and Vangen write, collaborative working requires, "very large amounts of resources in the form of energy, commitment, skill, and continual nurturing on the part of a 'leader'. Leading across the full range of activities and processes that need to be addressed to drive collaboration forward holistically is thus highly resource consuming".[470] While the NTS has now developed a comprehensive list of co-producing protocols, nevertheless, Featherstone said that co-productions "always change and every relationship is different …it's a very, very complicated area and requires quite a lot of patience". [471]   Nevertheless, according to Lenton, the actual process of co-producing with the NTS had been a "very positive experience";

> Some people want to hear that it was negative but it was all good. However, the success of the co-production was as much down to the professional way both organisations are run and also that the NTS is run by the right person; Vicky's a young theatre maker who's prepared to take risks, prepared to invest in artists who want to make modern theatre.

The only slight criticism that Lenton aired about his experience of co-producing with the NTS was, in a sense, related to the NTS's success;

> When the show opened the NTS were very focused on getting it opened but, once it had, they had other productions to concentrate on and moved on. It was hard for them to keep a presence at venues when the show was up on tour and sometimes it would have been good to have had an NTS presence when we were on tour. But this was discussed at the feedback meeting with the

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[470] Huxham, C. & Siv Vangen, S. (2000), 'Leadership in the Shaping and Implementation of Collaboration Agendas: How Things Happen in a (Not Quite) Joined-UP World', in *Academy of Management Journal,* Vol. 43, No. 6:1159-1175, (1171).
[471] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Vicky Featherstone, 13/03/07

marketing department and with Vicky and Neil ….and everyone was willing to learn. They engaged in a fairly honest dissection of what happened.

Lenton said that the NTS had respected his preference for no outside intervention during the rehearsal process. However, Featherstone, Tiffany and Murray did attend the dress-rehearsal, preview and opening night of the production and Lenton took on board suggestions made by them because, he said, "I respect them as theatre makers". Nevertheless, although the NTS's influence on the artistic direction of *Little Otik* was minimal, Lenton felt that the process had been quite different than had been his experience of being funded by the SAC;

> With the Arts Council you put in an application for a project and they either do or don't give you the money. The relationship with the SAC feels like child to parent – they give you pocket money. With the NTS it's much more like brother and sister - two companies working together and investing in artistic ideas.[472]

Nevertheless, with the NTS contributing only minimally to the artistic process yet providing the majority of the funding, it could be argued that the NTS's role did remain that of an interested funding body. However, over and above the economic and administrative resources that the NTS had invested in *Little Otik,* Lenton felt that the NTS had made a real artistic investment in the project. Lenton suggested that, "the association with the NTS enabled our company to work in ways that they wouldn't have otherwise". For example, on *Little Otik* Vanishing Point worked with internationally renowned sound and projection designers, respectively, Christopher Shutt and Finn Ross. This international collaboration was made more easily achievable because of NTS' staff previous professional connections. In addition, Lenton suggested, the NTS's general status as a 'national' company and the prestige attendant on that title as well as the NTS's own growing international profile and reputation for professionalism made the company an attractive proposition for potential high profile collaborating partners, such as Shutt and Ross.

Lenton had not initially been in support of the idea of an NTS, believing that funding for the NTS would have been better spent on supporting the existing theatre companies in Scotland. However, just over two years after the launch of the NTS, he said;

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[472] Author's telephone interview with Matthew Lenton, 22/09/08.

now I feel differently….before the NTS came along there was a complacency in Scottish theatre that the NTS has helped to get rid of. Indirectly, NTS has provoked people to up the game. Our works now known down south and internationally, which is important to us…[the NTS is] making the other companies make more challenging, new and fresh work.

Lenton felt that for theatre in Scotland the NTS's arrival has been, "like splitting open a previously closed box. Broadly speaking, [before the arrival of the NTS] Scottish theatre didn't have those connections outside that box".

While Lenton's suggestion, above, may be arguable, nevertheless it is certainly evident that a focus on engaging with artists and theatre makers from nations beyond Scotland – both within the UK and further afield - has been part of the NTS's approach from the outset. For example, the NTS's first main stage production, *Wolves in the Walls,* was a co-production with English based Improbable Theatre Company while choreographer Steven Hoggett, of the English based physical theatre company Frantic Assembly, has worked on a number of productions with the NTS to date, including *Black Watch* and *365.* Beyond the UK, an international collaboration was also forged in a co-production with the Belgian based theatre company Victoria with the production *Aalst.* The original play – based on the real court transcripts of a couple tried for the murder of their two young children in the small Belgium town of Aalst in 1999 – had been a success in Belgium and had subsequently enjoyed an extensive international tour. Rather than bringing the Flemish production to Scotland, the NTS commissioned Scottish writer Duncan McLean to write a version of the original play in English. The production featured three Scottish actors and was directed by the original creator of the piece, Pol Hayvaert, of Victoria.

While the NTS's version of *Aalst* transposed certain elements of the Belgian production into a Scottish context, NTS Workshop's co-production, *Architecting,* with New York based theatre company, Team, was devised and performed by the US company and maintained an essentially North American perspective. The production, which played at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2008, explored American identity through a deconstruction of the text and themes within Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind.* As mentioned above, alongside these international collaborations, NTS co-productions with Scottish based companies have also staged work by international authors.

Putting the 'nation' into the National.

While, as discussed above, international influences have featured in the work of many NTS co-productions, an emphasis on more local and/ or national connections is more visible in some NTS productions. Indeed, work more directly linked and rooted to Scotland has found expression - whether aesthetically and/or thematically or through working practices - in particular, in the productions directed by both Featherstone and Tiffany. For example, both directors have exclusively[473] employed Scottish writers in their own productions[474] and have attracted high profile Scottish émigré actors back to Scotland. For example, to much press coverage, Scottish actor, turned émigré Hollywood film star, Alan Cumming, made a theatrical comeback to Scotland in Tiffany's production of *The Bacchae* at the Edinburgh International Festival in 2007. More recently, in 2009, Ian McDiarmid, another feted émigré Scottish actor, returned to appear in his own adaptation of Scottish novelist Andrew O'Hagan's Booker prize nominated novel *Be Near Me.*

Nevertheless, even while productions such as Tiffany's *Home: Glasgow* or Featherstone's *365* are framed within Scottish settings, both directors' productions have resisted replicating or constructing uncomplicated visions and representations of Scottishness. For example, even while *Black Watch* exploited traditional stereotypes, national symbols and imagery, the production's representation of nationhood, as discussed in detail in Chapter Five, was complex, at times contradictory and always ambiguous. Indeed, all of Tiffany's work produced under the NTS banner, has engaged with issues of identity in ways that disrupt easy definitions of the term whether used in relation to ideas of, for example, class, sexuality or national identity. For example, *Be Near Me* presents an uncomfortable picture of a fictional, post-industrial, depressed Scottish town blighted by unemployment and divided by sectarianism. When the novel and play's protagonist, David Anderton, a Scottish born but Oxford educated Catholic

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[473] With the exception of the NTS's first main stage production, *Wolves in the Walls,* which had been a project previously planned by Featherstone in a co-production with Improbable theatre company before Featherstone's appointment as NTS Artistic Director.

[474] For example, Tifffany directed *Home: Glasgow* written by Davey Anderson, *Elisabeth Gordon Quinn* by Chris Hannan, *Black Watch* by Gregory Burke, *The Bacchae* in a version by David Greig, *Nobody Will Ever Forgive Us* by Paul Higgins and *Be Near Me* an adaptation by Ian McDiarmid of the Booker nominated novel by Scottish born writer Andrew O'Hagan. Featherstone directed Fredrich Schiller's *Mary Stuart* in a version by David Harrower, the same playwright who also wrote her production entitled *365,* and *Cockroach*, by Sam Holcroft.

priest, finds himself drawn to a young local teenage boy in his new parish, an ensuing fumbled kiss brings external chaos to a life already rendered barren by deep and enduring internal grief. The universal narrative of the novel and play is thus set against the particular parochialisms and prejudices of a Scottish context. The roots of Scotland's divisive Catholic-Protestant sectarianism were also touched on in Featherstone's version of a decisive moment in Scotland's history in her production of *Mary Stuart,* while *365* explored a group of young Scottish teenagers' first experience of independent living after leaving 'care homes'.

Taking the National out of the 'nation'

As previously mentioned, the NTS have increasingly exported their own productions to audiences outwith Scotland. Indeed, there appears to be a tendency for, particularly, the larger scale, in-house NTS productions, discussed above, to tour more widely beyond, than within, Scotland. This was most clearly evidenced with *Black Watch,* which enjoyed a far longer run in New York than it did throughout its tours of Scotland. NTS's co-production with the Edinburgh International Festival, *365,* also hardly registered its presence on stages in Scotland[475] before transferring to the Lyric Hammersmith in London where it enjoyed more than a two-week run. Likewise, Tiffany's production, *Be Near Me* (2009), previewed in Kilmarnock's Palace Theatre for four days, before then officially opening at the Donmar Warehouse in London for a seven week run. The production did then return to Scotland for a one-month tour of four venues, before completing the run with various dates in England. As a co-production with the Donmar Warehouse, there was a contractual obligation for *Be Near Me* to appear in the venue. Nevertheless, regardless of any pragmatic justifications, the message conveyed is one that appears to privilege audiences beyond Scotland. There is a danger therefore that this touring strategy - which sees NTS productions briefly previewing in Scotland before officially opening in London - revisits and reinforces the metropolitan superiority and London-centric bias, discussed in Chapter Two, that saw Scotland appear to be inferiorised as a peripheral region of Britain.

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[475] *365* previewed for three nights at Eden Court Theatre in Inverness before transferring to the Edinburgh Playhouse where it had five performances. The Edinburgh Playhouse is a large capacity venue – able to seat audiences of up to 3,039, however, as this was an EIF production the show was predominantly aimed at an international, rather than a local, audience in this venue.

However, in a move that suggests that the government not only supports but also actively encourages NTS productions to tour outwith Scotland, an NPC International Touring Fund[476] has been established by the SNP government. Indeed, *Black Watch's* tour to the US was made possible through additional finances made available through this fund. In an article commissioned to mark the NTS's debut in the US, Nicholas Cull wrote about theatre's role in the processes of cultural diplomacy, suggesting;

> theatre operates within cultural diplomacy in four main ways, each with a varying expectation of interactivity with the target public. At its first and most basic level it can be a prestige gift; second, it can be a way of shaping perceptions and informing; third, it can be a mechanism for generating engagement between the originating and target populations; and fourth, it can be part of a strategy to develop the arts and the creative public sphere in the target country.[477]

Black Watch has certainly facilitated and inspired inter and cross-cultural debate; for example, spawning a number of conferences and events in the United States and Scotland, sponsored by the British Council and its partners. For example, in Scotland, the Scotland's Place in the World[478] conference used *Black Watch* as a case study to explore the role of cultural diplomacy as a tool to encourage dialogue and exchange. While, in the US, the British Council hosted a number of British Council Conversations; public events with representatives from the arts, media and the military which aimed to explore "our attitudes to war and the military, the 'special relationship between the US and Britain, and what role the arts can play in discussing divisive social issues".[479]

Yet, there remains a potential tension between the incompatible aims of creating a critical public sphere and appropriating the NTS for use as a promotional tool. As an example of the latter, SNP First Minister Alex Salmond has been quoted to say, "*Black*

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[476] For the period 2007/08 an additional £350,000 was made available to the NPCs to "assist with their international touring plans". According to the government's website, this fund will continue at least until 2008-09.   For   more   information   go   to: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/ArtsCultureSport/arts/NationalCompanies (last accessed 19/01/09).

[477] Cull, N. J. (2008), 'The National Theatre of Scotland's Black Watch : Theatre as Cultural Diplomacy', British Council Publication, available at http://www.britishcouncil.org/files/documents/usa-arts-theater-black-watch-cultural-pub.pdf (accessed 16/05/08).

[478] http://www.britishcouncil.org/scotland-society-scotlands-place-in-the-world-conference-report.htm

[479] http://www.britishcouncil.org/usa-arts-theater-black-watch.htm

Watch is worth a hundred trade fairs" [480] and certainly *Black Watch* can be seen as a shrewd and highly marketable Scottish commodity from its new National Theatre; providing an accessible and attractive vehicle for representations of Scotland to local and diasporic audiences. The Scotland that the SNP has chosen to promote abroad – encapsulated in their advertising campaign for Homecoming Scotland 2009[481] - is a Scotland steeped in "clichéd tourist-industry images of what Scotland has to offer - golf, whisky, clans, ancestry, the kitsch version of Robert Burns".[482] Indeed, the SNP actively privilege and promote aspects of culture that could be considered distinctively Scottish, as exemplified by Fabiani's statement, "the importance of our indigenous arts and languages has been at the forefront of our minds since we came into government…the indigenous and traditional arts …are a priority of ours, of course they are".[483]

A Creative Scotland?

Such a narrow framing of a national culture appears to run counter to Featherstone's original conception of the NTS in which she was adamant that productions would not be mounted in terms of deference – whether to a national 'canon' of work or to a collaborative relationship - but only in terms of, what Featherstone calls "urgency". Urgency, Featherstone says, is:

> a really hard word to define. I think that it's something that demands to be put on stage – whether it's do with what it's about or the way that it's written or the experience the audience will have …And I think we always ask the question why are we putting this on now – what relevance does it have – what's urgent about it. Why will our company be better for putting this piece on?[484]

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[480] Dave McLellan speaking on *Quay Conversations,* BBC Radio Scotland (30/1/08).

[481] Homecoming Scotland 2009 was a year-long tourist campaign, marking the 250th anniversary of Robert Burns' birth, targeted towards encouraging those of "Scottish descent" to visit Scotland see the Scottish government's official Homecoming website at http://www.homecomingscotland.com/default.html (last accessed 19/01/09).

[482] Macmillan, J.(29/11/08), "Homecoming 2009 and the return of those old Scottish stereotypes", *The Scotsman.*

[483] Linda Fabiani Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture speaking at a Parliamentary Committee meeting regarding the establishment of Creative Scotland. Scottish Parliament, Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture, Official Report, 8th October 2008, Col, 1541. Available at; http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/ellc/or-08/ed08-2402.htm#Col1538 (last accessed 19/01/09).

[484] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Vicky Featherstone, 13/03/07.

However, as was discussed in Chapter Four, direct government funding and with it the removal of the arms length principle and its associated link with protecting artistic independence, places the NTS in an uneasy alliance with government in which the insidious pressure to meet political expectations and demands may potentially lead to the compromise of artistic aims. Indeed, whereas the NTS's first Business Plan suggested only that the NTS would collaborate with Scottish artists and companies,[485] the more recent Business Plan stated, more specifically, that the NTS would stage, amongst others, the rather ambiguously termed, "Scottish political drama" and "new versions of classics (Scottish and others)".[486] This does suggest that the NTS is either moving in the direction of a more deferential approach towards valuing the idea of a national canon or repertoire or, alternatively, responding to external expectations or pressure. For example, Paul Scott, a former Vice-President and spokesperson for the SNP, President of the Saltire Society, vocal campaigner for a Scottish National Theatre and friend to First Minister, Alex Salmond,[487] declared in an article in *The Scotsman* in July 2008;

> the NTS needs its remit changed. The NTS has so far shown no interest in outstanding Scottish plays from the past, or in Gaelic or Scots works. What has gone wrong?…If these objectives are not in the current remit of the National Theatre, then the Scottish Government should draw up a new one.[488]

There is no necessary compatibility in constructing some sense of a 'national' perspective over the NTS programme whilst also responding to the varying creative ambitions of the broad range of theatre companies with which the NTS collaborates. As Featherstone stated;

> I think the original model would not have created a national theatre if it had been what the theatre community actually needed it to be [i.e. as purely a commissioning and co-ordinating body]. I don't think it would have fulfilled the national remit for audiences or for artists in a bigger sense …the tension

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[485] *National Theatre of Scotland, Business Plan,* 2005/06 – 2007/08, p11.

[486] *National Theatre of Scotland, Business Plan,* 2008 to 2011, p6.

[487] Scott's autobiography provides more details regarding his relationship with Salmond and the SNP and also includes a chapter about cultural life in Scotland and the NTS, (see Scott, P. H. (2007), *A Twentieth Century Life,* Glendaruel: Argyll Publishing).

[488] Scott, P. H. (7/7/08), 'The not-quite-National Theatre of Scotland needs its remit altered', *The Scotsman.*

between the national remit and then what we were originally created to be for –
for the theatre community – and there's hardly any connection. You can see
that, that's a real challenge for me …I think that's one of the hardest things…it
will become harder to do co-productions with the national theatre – we will
become much more demanding of people. We'll make much harder choices
…as the expectations on us become higher it's harder for us to say to a
company 'great idea come and do it' – it's harder and harder to do that. Which I
think is a sad thing.[489]

As Featherstone's statement above suggests, the NTS appears to be moving
increasingly towards a more centralised and hierarchical approach that, though
empowering and creating a more defined identity for the institution itself, may alienate
those not within its immediate vision; those artists and theatre companies not already in
the NTS fold, have less opportunity to be invited in. Added to this, the formation of
Creative Scotland – as discussed in more detail, below - potentially threatens to
diminish the pool of theatre companies from which the NTS does still currently draw the
main body of its work.

As touched on previously, Creative Scotland is the proposed new cultural body created
through an amalgamation of Scottish Screen and the SAC. The remit of Creative
Scotland, unlike the SAC, encompasses the broader concept of the creative industries
and, as such, signals the government's intent to align art's subsidy with economic
development models, for example, through the establishment of loans rather than
grants to artists. This coupled with the, as yet, unknown, transition costs, have led to
fears that Creative Scotland's overall budget will be reduced, both in the short and
longer term. A reduction in the budget of Creative Scotland would undoubtedly affect
the drama budget resulting in a decrease in the number of professional theatre
companies operating in Scotland. While similar cutbacks in music and dance would
have a lesser impact on the other National Performing Companies, cutbacks in drama
would have an immediate and direct effect on the NTS – depending, as it does, on
working in collaboration with the existing theatre sector.

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[489] Author's recorded and transcribed interview with Featherstone (17/04/08).

Conclusion

While the current executive directors and board of the NTS have continued to support the original collaborative model of the company, and have collaborated with the FST to create a 'memorandum' that formally identifies this legacy, the funding agreement itself does not recognise or provide assurance of the continuation of the relationship with the existing theatre sector. This omission potentially places the rest of the sector, and therefore also the NTS's artistic foundation, in a vulnerable position. In June 2008, Featherstone spoke of her concern regarding these developments: "I'm really, really nervous about where theatre's going to sit in Creative Scotland…and I don't see anything that…shouldn't be making us feel nervous".[490] It is, as yet, too soon to predict whether the establishment of Creative Scotland – with its greater emphasis on the economic development of the 'creative industries' – will affect the future funding and security of the existing theatre sector. If the formation of Creative Scotland does lead to a reduction in the number of theatre companies then there is a possibility that the NTS would become the main provider of theatre in Scotland and would move even nearer towards the monolithic, National Theatre prototype, discussed in Chapter One. Currently, the very composition of the NTS, as a commissioning body comprised of a network of various theatre companies and artists allows it to respond to new and changing ideas, experiences and understandings of nationhood.

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[490] Author's interview with Vicky Featherstone 11/6/08

Conclusion

This thesis has examined the contours the NTS during its formative years within the context of both post devolution Scotland and an increasingly globalised world in which the significance and boundaries of the nation are often ambiguous and contested. The recent constitutional changes in Britain have allowed for the creation of a more distinct public sphere to be defined in Scotland. Over a relatively short period of time the NTS played a role in helping to mark out and delineate this new national public sphere – a public sphere that is both distinct within, but also overlapping with the UK, European and global public spheres. This thesis offers a snapshot of the NTS during its formative years exploring the ways in which this particular public sphere has been created from within, and influenced by, the specific cultural, political and economic context and circumstances within which it was born.

The notion of a national public sphere has been employed throughout as an analytic frame of reference through which to examine changing conceptions, constructions and representations of nationhood; allowing the nation to be conceived of as an often-contested idea played out in a public arena. This analytic framework has provided the vehicle for a broad exploration of some of the transformations and labyrinthine journeys that have occurred in one example of the public sphere – that of the National Theatre. The thesis has sought to explore the social morphology that has seen the façade of the National Theatre transform from its prototypical formation - as a grand, monolithic building – to a National Theatre in the twenty-first century whose most prominent public façade is a website - a virtual frontage which actually and symbolically represents networks of diffuse and diverse connections.

As discussed in Chapter One, the birth and development of National Theatres in Europe were coterminous with the rise of the ideology of nationalism as an assembly through which the people could be governed. In their early formations, National Theatres reflected the hierarchical and elitist systems of government of that time. However, the public sphere's exclusive focus on bourgeois concerns was disrupted by the rise of socialism - national theatre projects were established to reach a wider public, while avant-garde artists sought to create work which fractured dominant bourgeois representations of experience. For, as those with the right to vote in political processes gradually increased in many parts of Europe, so there came a pressure on

the public sphere to become representative of this now broader voting constituency. As such, some National Theatre projects began to attempt to represent and address a wider public. This move towards greater cultural representation also reflected the perceived changing processes of power – away from centralised, hierarchical intuitions of government to decentralised networks of control – of governing through 'governance'. As Pierson notes:

> Central to contemporary forms of government (and thus governance) is the idea of networks – that is, the idea that policy is made and implemented not by a governing authority *independent* of social actors but in the process of on-going exchange of information, resources and opportunities between elements in the governing apparatus and more-or-less organised interests in society. Relationships within the networks thus created are not uni-directional and hierarchic but based on negotiation and exchange, in a web of relationships which is consciously maintained across time.[491]

In line with these processes, towards the end of the twentieth century, constitutional changes in Britain led to the devolution of the Scottish parliament and the creation of Scotland's first National Theatre on a model that reflected these new constellations of power. Indeed, through its system of governance, the NTS reflected the stated intentions of the newly devolved Parliament in Scotland, aimed towards increased inclusion, cooperation and democratic representation. The first chapter then, established the general conceptual framework of this thesis before examining the particular social, political, economic and cultural circumstances that led to the formation of what was perceived as a unique new model of a National Theatre in Scotland.

Part of the NTS's uniqueness was the way in which this National Theatre could be seen to be influenced by particular historical strands and trajectories not necessarily associated with conventional imaginings of a national cultural institution and a National Theatre in particular. For example, through its desire to question the definition of theatre in both form and content, the NTS immediately traced a historical thread back to the avant-garde movement, discussed in Chapter One. Indeed, the NTS's early orientation towards mounting site-specific productions and new work which adopted a postdramatic performance aesthetic could be seen as an artistic approach aimed

specifically at encouraging a non-theatre going audience to enter this national public sphere. In addition, as a non-building based organisation the NTS was not hidebound by its physical and geographical location but could engage, work with and represent audiences, artists and participants from diverse constituencies. Thus, in its very form, by eschewing a theatre building, the NTS model immediately reflected a more democratically representative model of a national cultural institution in that it existed as an already dispersed network that, by default, represented, both aesthetically and demographically, a broad population. Therefore, both structurally and strategically, a democratic bias was integrated within the NTS during its formative years.

From February 2006, when the company opened with its inaugural event, *Home,* the NTS began to establish itself as a significant cultural force, its impact evident in an overwhelmingly positive plethora of media reporting, as well as through the international demand for its productions and, from 2008, enhanced levels of Government funding. In terms of content, with *Home,* the company immediately appeared to convey its intent to construct a National Theatre that was not only geographically but also socially accessible, not seeking to represent a particular or singular worldview but creating opportunities for the expression of many. For, as discussed in Chapter Four, both the privileging of performance rather than literary drama, as well as the structure of the NTS itself, had seemed to make the company particularly well placed to accommodate heterogeneous and potentially conflicting expressions of identity. As explored in this thesis, many NTS productions, including the company's most successful production to-date, *Black Watch,* touched on ideas of nationhood and identity without ever presenting easy definitions. Indeed, the encouragement of representations of diversity was integrated into the NTS's structure as a non-building based company and reflected in the content of NTS collaborative working practices.

With its emphasis on new work, risk-taking was as central to the NTS ethos as was accessibility – the latter evidenced not only in the original touring strategy of the NTS but also through its investment in the Learn department, with its policy of engaging a wide public in the NTS's work. Indeed, from the outset, methods of widening access to, and participation in, the NTS were embedded within this publicly funded national institution. For, in addition to being a non-building based, non-centralised and,

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[491] Pierson, C. (2005), *The Modern State,* Routledge: London ibid, p158.

consequently, a relatively geographically accessible company, through its focus on Learn, the NTS sought to attract and engage audiences previously "disenfranchised"[492] from theatre. The Learn department explicitly embraced an agenda that sought to create a theatrical public sphere in Scotland, accessible to a wide and participating audience. The creation of NTS Learn helped to institutionalise a culture of participation in theatre making through the expansion of a public sphere geared towards that aim. Risk, diversity and accessibility were therefore practically embedded into the workings of the NTS from the outset. Through this, the NTS appeared to seek to re-construct notions of what a National Theatre could be and, as such, contributed to a re-imagining and redefinition of post devolution Scotland.

However, as discussed in this thesis, within three years of its inauguration, internal institutional developments and external political and economic events appear to have smoothed the NTS's more radical and progressive edge. In terms of the work produced under the NTS banner, some of the more risk-taking projects had been abandoned while others had emerged in a more conservative form. For example, as discussed in Chapter Seven, the Young Company – which promised young theatre makers the opportunity to develop and take artistic risks – was removed from the programme, while the New Work Workshop – "the innovative heart of the NTS" – became increasingly selective in its selection criteria. At the same time, the company's early emphasis on site-specific work – so much in evidence in the first year's programme – had all but vanished from the programme three years later, even if future plans for such work did remain in the offing.[493] The NTS's early focus on postdramatic, non-text based theatre also became less evident, with the employment of a literary director as well as an increasing reliance on adaptations of previously existing texts showing a bias towards text-based work. Furthermore, the company's approach to touring, which at times, had resulted in productions being staged more frequently outside Scotland than within it, appeared to question the company's commitment to extending the company's

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[492] *National Theatre of Scotland, Business Plan,* Appendix Four: Marketing and Communications Strategy, 2005/06 – 2007/08, p5

[493] A large-scale citywide site –specific NTS project is currently in the planning stages (author's interview with Vicky Featherstone, (1/4/09).

accessibility to audiences within Scotland.[494] Rather than the NTS focusing on being democratically representative within Scotland, the direction of the company thus seemed to be shifting towards representing Scotland abroad – with the company becoming apparently appropriated by government as a useful tool of 'soft diplomacy', as discussed in Chapter Seven. All these factors diluted the NTS's initial image of being a risk-taking yet accessible organisation with ambitions towards being a radical and progressive new version of a National Theatre.

As a non-building based producing and commissioning institution the NTS has drawn much of its creative source from the diverse theatre industry that already exists. However, as discussed earlier, the imminent arrival of the new cultural body, Creative Scotland, potentially threatens to diminish the funding, and therefore the existence, of Scotland's current theatre sector. In addition, at best, so the National Performing Companies have been informed, they can expect standstill funding in the coming year. At the time of writing, in May 2009, the latest incumbent with the remit of culture in his ministerial title, Mike Russell, has pledged that Creative Scotland will be brought into being within the next twelve months.[495] Without a parallel increase in its budget, unlike its predecessors (the SAC and Scottish Screen), Creative Scotland's sphere of activity will be considerably expanded to include the more broadly conceived 'creative industries' as well as the arts.[496] Fears that the funding of theatre in Scotland will diminish under Creative Scotland seem, therefore, well founded. While the NTS may continue to receive at least standstill funding, without – or with a diminished version - of the existing network of theatre companies to draw on and work with, it is hard to envisage how the NTS, in its current collaborative model, can thrive or even survive. Therefore, it would appear to be crucial that government formally recognise the vital part that the existing theatre sector plays in the long-term viability of the NTS as it is currently conceived.

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[494] Since completing this thesis, the NTS have instigated a touring policy that should set a limit on the number of performances produced outside Scotland. Those productions and tours that do take place beyond Scotland will only be justified if they provide some economic benefit to the company or allow performances to take place in Scotland that would not otherwise have been economically feasible (author's interview with Vicky Featherstone, 1/4/09).
[495] Mike Russell speaking on 29th April 2009, available at http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/ArtsCultureSport/arts (last accessed 9/5/09).

As discussed, the NTS was first established when the UK was enjoying a period of unprecedented economic growth. In the newly devolved Scotland, the NTS was also originally instituted by the ruling Labour-LibDem coalition, which sought to maintain Scotland's political relationship within the UK. As such the NTS was first established by a government in power in Scotland who were in support of a national cultural institution that would represent the expression of diverse identities. The unique model of the NTS as first proposed – a non building based, commissioning and producing body – appeared particularly well structured to fulfil this aim. Additionally, though funded, at the beginning of its birth, by government, the NTS was administered through the SAC: at arms length from its main investor. Therefore, until direct government funding of the NPCs was initiated in April 2007, government had little direct influence on the shape or direction of the NTS.

However, shortly after direct government funding of the NPCs came into being, the SNP party – with a chief ambition to gain political independence – formed a minority government in Scotland. The SNP's nationalist agenda was founded on the idea of Scotland having a distinct and distinctive national identity. Within a year of the SNP taking office, the NTS were presented with an appendix to their funding agreement that, amongst other things, explicitly requested that the company "consider how [their] programme of activity might correspond with Ministers' aims for Scotland".[497] This clause – introduced so soon after direct funding had been introduced – exemplified the very real dangers to artistic freedom that direct government funding of an arts organisation can engender. For, regardless of how the NTS responded to this additional clause in this instance, what the addition of the clause highlighted was the apparent ease with which direct funding allows party political agendas to influence the content and direction of the arts.

In addition, as discussed in Chapter Four, the shift in the language of the NTS Business Plans – from the postmodernist conceptions of identity penned in the first to the more nationalistic flag-waving of the second – seemed to be evidence that direct

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[496] For example, as well as the arts, Creative Scotland will support other areas of the creative industries; including advertising, publicity and computer gaming (Ewan Brown, Chair of Creative Scotland speaking on 29th April 2009, available at http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/ArtsCultureSport/arts (last accessed 9/5/09).

[497] *National Theatre of Scotland: Revenue Grant in Respect of 2008/09,* 21st May 2008, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Directorate, Edinburgh, Annexe E.

funding had influenced the way in which the company chose to publicly define itself.[498] As discussed, the second Business Plan also saw diversity emerging as a deliberate policy issue for the company rather than, as previously, a concept embedded within the company's DNA. This seemed to be an admission of the company's failure to represent diversity both in terms of the employment of the company's personnel and through the content of the productions that it staged. Taken together, all the above seemed to point in the direction of an increasingly conservative and conventional approach towards the company's interpretation of its national remit.

Although it is still too early to make any definitive assessment, it would appear that direct government funding had at least some role to play in the NTS's, latterly, more conformist approach. With a funding agreement that is under annual review, the NTS exists in a perpetual state of long-term financial insecurity, reliant on government approval for the company's future proposed programme of work. The indications so far suggest that direct funding has exerted some force, however insidious, on the company to bow under the weight of political pressure. Whether this pressure is manifested negatively through threatened withdrawal of funding or positively through the lure of incentives, either way, the weight of government control may be hard, if not impossible, to ignore.

Eriksen argues, "democracy has become the sole legitimation principle of government in modern, post-conventional societies based on an inclusive public sphere, enticing everyone affected to take part in deliberation on common affairs".[499] Indeed, Keating suggests that, in the twenty-first century, the role of the nation-state governments may, above all, be understood to be "confronting the market with political and cultural priorities and about establishing public spaces beyond the market place".[500] In post devolution Scotland, with the NTS, a structurally, potentially inclusive, public sphere "beyond the market place" was established which, strategically, aimed to entice "everyone affected to take part in deliberation on common affairs". However, with direct

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[498] As a postscript, the NTS are currently in the process of re-writing the second Business Plan perhaps in part in response to the criticisms aired in this thesis.
[499] Eriksen, E. O., 'Conceptualising European public spheres: general, segmented and strong publics', in Fossum, J.E. & Schlesinger, P. (eds), (2007), *The European Union and the Public Sphere: a Communicative Space in the Making?*, London & New York: Routledge, p25.
[500] Keating, M. (2001), *Plurinational Democracy: Stateless Nations in a Post-Sovereignty Era,* Milton Keynes: Open University Press, p136.

government funding, it would appear that this new national public sphere will first have to confront the ruling political party's own party political priorities.

Bruce McConachie has argued that "National Theatre ambitions today cannot be disentangled from global and niche marketing" and suggests that "one can 'imagine' the national-theatre Scots [*sic*]…selling the spirit, identity, and character of their nation to theatre-going tourists in much the same way that other merchandizers niche-market bagpipes, tartans and whisky".[501]   Contrary to McConachie's contention, at its beginning, the NTS began to mark out a radical, progressive and inclusive public sphere in Scotland which sought to express and represent a diversity of identities, national and otherwise. Refusing to be hidebound by its national title, the company used its national status to reach out to the nation rather than being defined by one version of what that might be. After little more than three years of operation, the NTS continues to constantly change and evolve and it would be premature to make any definitive claims to the company's future; how the NTS develops within the current political and economic environment and how the contours of this new national cultural institution begin to settle, as yet, remain unclear. Therefore, it remains to be seen whether McConachie's downbeat premonition proves entirely prescient or, whether a democratic and critical public sphere can still be disentangled and sustained from among competing conceptions and perceptions of nationhood in Scotland.

The NTS continues to constantly change and evolve, it has not, as yet, become institutionalised in its working practices; it remains an institution in flux. However, this is not so clearly the case with all National Theatres. For example, according to Mikkel Harder Munch Hansen, former artistic director of one of Europe's oldest National Theatres - the National Theatre of Denmark – working practices there became so entrenched as to be almost impossible to change.[502] Munch Hansen experienced powerful resistance - from both the Board and audiences - to his proposed changes to the company. Perhaps in some years, the NTS could be revisited and researched to examine which areas of the company have become more firmly institutionalised and

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[501] McConachie, B. 'Towards a History of National Theatres in Europe' in Wilmer, S. E. (ed), (2008), *National Theatres in a Changing Europe,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p59.

[502] Authors interview with Mikkel Harder Munch Hansen (20/6/06).

which elements – which may seem integral now – no longer remain. For example, will Learn still be a significant element of the NTS's work and strategy and what is the emphasis of NTS Learn's work? Is it still concerned with empowering individuals and communities or encouraging new audiences? Will the NTS's current focus on new work still be integral to the company's artistic direction or has it become sidelined?

More generally, how will the contours of the public sphere created through the establishment of the NTS change, develop and crystallise over the coming years?

Will direct funding of the NTS affect the company's artistic direction?

Will Creative Scotland policies result in fewer theatre companies in Scotland as feared?

Will the NTS continue to be able or willing to collaborate with other theatre companies - both in Scotland and abroad – or will it increasingly concentrate resources on producing its own body of work?

While the National Theatre of Denmark or a more recently established European National Theatre – such as the National Theatre of Catalonia, Spain (set up in 1996) - could offer a useful area of comparative research, the soon to be established English-speaking National Theatre for Wales offers a particularly significant site of future comparative research with the NTS. An English-speaking National Theatre for Wales – to complement the already established Welsh speaking National Theatre – is to be established on the model of the NTS, as a non-building based collaborating theatre company. At the time of writing, although a Chair and Board of the company have been engaged, the company has not, as yet, mounted any productions. Charting the evolution of this company within the particular context and circumstances that prevail in Wales would provide important insights into the differing relations between nations and theatre within the UK. Such a comparative analysis of the Welsh and Scottish National Theatres would offer a productive source of future research in the area of representations of nationhood.

Appendix A

Interviewees

Name	Job Title	Date of Interview	Method
Alison Peebles	Theatre Practitioner (Director, *NTS Home: Glasgow)*	22nd November 2006	Recorded and Transcribed
Ben Walmsley	NTS Administration and Operations Manager	25th March 2007 11th May 2007 3rd July 2007 12th October 2007 19th December 2007 24th April 2007 8th July 2007 24th April 2008	Unrecorded
Caroline Newall	NTS Workshop Director	10th May 2007	Recorded and Transcribed
Chris Lee	Director (*NTS Elgin Macbeth*)		Recorded and Transcribed
Dave Martin	Sound Designer (NTS *Elgin Macbeth*)		Recorded and Transcribed
David Brew	Head of Cultural Policy Division (Scottish Executive)	11th September 2006.	Unrecorded
David Taylor	SAC Head of Drama	19th April 2007	Unrecorded Telephone Interview
Denis Agnew	Member of Scottish National Theatre	1st November 2005	Unrecorded Telephone

	Working Group		Interview
Ewa Hibbert	Team Leader, Arts and Creative Industries Policy Unit, Scottish Executive	2nd October 2006	Recorded and Partially Transcribed
Geoff Roberts	Visual Arts Installation Artist (NTS *Elgin Macbeth*)	21st June 2007	Recorded and Transcribed
Gillian Gourlay	NTS Learning and Outreach Manager	13th June 2007	Recorded
Hamish Glen	Former Director of the Federation of Scottish Theatre	8th May 2006	Unrecorded Telephone Interview
Helen Webster	National Performing Companies Unit, Scottish Executive	31st May 2007	Recorded and Transcribed
Jenni Herbert	Choreographer (*NTS Elgin Macbeth*)	21st June 2007	Recorded and Transcribed
Lisa Kapur	Support and Development Officer of the Board and Chair of the NTS	30/10/07	Recorded and Transcribed
Lizzie Niccols	Director, Federation of Scottish Theatre		Recorded and Transcribed
Margaret Anne O'Donnell	NTS Producer	14th February 2006	Unrecorded
Matthew Lenton	Artistic Director of Vanishing Point	22nd September 2008 25th September 2008	Unrecorded Telephone Interview
Richard Findlay	Chair of the NTS	12th June 2006	Recorded and

	Board of Directors		Transcribed
Sarah Morrel	Team Leader, National Performing Companies Unit, Scottish Executive	31st May 2007	Recorded and Transcribed
Simon Sharkey	NTS Associate Director (Learn)	21st June 2007	Recorded and Transcribed
Vicky Featherstone	Artistic Director of the NTS	25th October 2005 5th April 2006 30th August 2006 27th February 2007 28th February 2007 13th March 2007 5th April 2006 17th April 2007 31st May 2007 17th January 2008 29th January 2008 11th June 2008 26th June 2008 1st April 2009,	Recorded and Transcribed
Mikkel Harder Munch-Hansen	Artistic Director of the Royal Danish Theatre	26th June 2006	Unrecorded

Appendix B

Establishment of NTS Timeline: 1999-2007

- The Federation of Scottish Theatres presented a proposal for a National Theatre of Scotland to the Economic, Culture and Sport Committee's Enquiry into the National Performing Companies (November 1999).

- Scottish Art Council Independent Working Group (SACIWG) established to deliver feasibility study into the proposed national theatre model (Nov 2000 – March 2002). The report was delivered to the Scottish Executive in May 2001.

- 2000 Scottish Executive commit to taking "steps to develop a national theatre for Scotland" in the First National Cultural Strategy *Creating our Future…Minding our Past*

- July 2001, the SAC agree to support the NTS commissioning model as proposed by the SACIWG report.

- May 2002 – Sept 2003: Independent Steering Group convened by the SAC to advise on plans and timescale for launch of the NTS.

- September 2003 – the Minister of Finance and Public Service, Andy Kerr, announces that £7.5 million has been allocated over two years to fund the new NTS, with the funds in place as of April 1st 2004.

- December 2003 – Richard Findlay appointed Chairman of the NTS.

- April 1st 2004 – First NTS Board of Directors appointed.

- July 2004 – Vicky Featherstone appointed first Chief Executive and Artistic Director of the NTS.

- November 1st 2004 – Vicky Featherstone takes up her post at the NTS.

- January 2004 – further appointments announced – John Tiffany (Associate Director – New Work), Neil Murray (Executive Director), David Greig (Dramaturg) and Liz Lochead (Artistic Associate).

- March 2004 – Simon Sharkey appointed as Associate Director (Learn).

- November 1st 2005 – NTS launch of inaugural programme.

- February 2006 – NTS inaugural production/s of *Home* opens.

- April 2007 – funding for all the National Performing Companies is transferred from the SAC to the Scottish Executive.

Appendix C

The Scottish National Theatre Independent Working Group

Following the Scottish Executive's launch of the National Cultural Strategy, the SAC were called upon to conduct a feasibility study into the establishment of a National Theatre for Scotland. The SAC invited an Independent Working Group to undertake this study which culminated in the *Scottish National Theatre: Report of the Independent Working Group* (May 2001) – which provided the blueprint for the NTS. The Working Group comprised:

Donald Smith, (Chair), Director of the Scottish Storytelling Centre.

Denis Agnew, Theatre Practitioner.

Maggi Allan, Director of Education, South Lanarkshire Council.

James Brinning, Artistic Director, TAG Theatre Company.

Hamish Glen, Artistic Director, Dundee Rep; Chair Federation of Scottish Theatre.

Iain Macauley, Arts Development Officer, Scottish Borders Council.

Joyce McMillan, Theatre Critic, Journalist and Broadcaster.

Vladimir Mirodan, Director of Drama, RSAMD.

Janet Paisley, Playwright.

Shona Powell, Director, The Lemon Tree.

Jean Urquhart, Director, The Ceilidh Place.

The NTS Steering Group

The NTS Steering Group first convened around March 2002 to advise on NTS Board appointments and the planning and timescale for the launch of the NTS. The NTS Steering Group comprised:

Donald Smith (Chair), Director of the National Storytelling Centre.

Heather Baird, Director of the Federation of Scottish Theatre.

Kathleen Benham, Partner of Benham Conway Arts and Media Ltd.

Lorne Boswell, Scottish Organiser, Equity.

Roberta Doyle, Head of Public Affairs, National Galleries of Scotland.

Eddie Jackson, Chief Executive, Bordeline Theatre Company.

Liz Lochead, Playwright and Poet.

The NTS Recruitment Panel

The panel invited to recruit the Chair and Board of the NTS comprised:

Donald Smith, Director of the National Storytelling Centre.

James Boyle, Chair of the SAC.

Graham Berry, Director of the SAC.

Joyce McMillan, Theatre Critic, Journalist and Broadcaster.

James Brining, Artistic Director of Dundee Rep.

Chris Masters, Chairman of the Festival City Theatres Trust.

Bob Irvine of the Scottish Executive, David Taylor of the SAC and Victoria Goodsman from the recruitment firm Saxton Bampfylde Hever also played advisory roles in the recruitment process.

Appendix D

Chair and Board Members (2005-2007)

The biographies, below, are reproduced from the NTS Business Plan, 2005/06 – 2007/8.

Richard Findlay (Chair)

Richard Findlay retired as Chief Executive of Scottish Radio Holdings plc in October 2004. He is a respected businessman, who successfully expanded Scottish Radio Holdings over a number of years, bucking the trend for the media industry as a whole.

Richard Findlay is a trained actor and a graduate of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, with a lifelong interest in theatre. He was Chairman of the of the Royal Lyceum Theatre for six years, Governor of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Chair of Lothian Health Board and former rector of Heriot-Watt University.

Richard lives in Edinburgh and is currently chairman of the RSAMD Endowment Trust.

Anne Bonnar [503]

Anne is Director of Bonnar Keenlyside Ltd, one of the UK's leading cultural management consultancies, specialising in organisational development and governance in the cultural sector with a portfolio of independent, community, public and private arts and cultural organisations.

Educated at the University of Glasgow, and with postgraduate diplomas in education and arts administration, Anne held posts at London's Young Vic Theatre, Glasgow's Citizens' Theatre, and gained festival experience with the Edinburgh Fringe and Glasgow's Mayfest. She was General Manger of the Traverse Theatre at the time of its

transition from the Grassmarket to Saltire Court, and simultaneously Chair of the Federation of Scottish Theatre, before leaving to set up her consultancy business.

Anne lives in Fife and is a Trustee of the National Galleries of Scotland.

Allan Burns

Allan is Joint Executive Director of Diageo Scotland and Director of Global Procurement.

Among a huge range of responsibilities, he led the development of Diageo's Brand Technical Centre to become a leading scientific centre for development and innovation in the Scottish whisky industry, and recently completed a £25 m investment plan with the opening of the world's fastest whisky bottling plant. He has built collaborative partnerships for Diageo with organisations such as St Andrews University, Generation Science and the Govan Initiative.

Educated at Strathclyde University and in the United Sates, Allan is a visiting lecturer at Napier University, a committee member of CBI Scotland, a principal supporter of the Scottish Council Foundation, an executive member of Scottish Council for Development and Industry and, in 2002, Chairman of Scottish Enterprise Fife. He is also a regular contributor to debates on entrepreneurialism, enterprise and lifelong learning, education and corporate and social responsibility, including work with the International Futures Forum.

Allan lives in St Andrews and his interests include golf, hillwalking, gardening, music and learning to play the piano. He is also a keen supported of indigenous Scottish visual artists and has an expanding collection of paintings.

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[503] In 2007, Bonnar stepped down from the NTS Board due to a potential conflict of interests after being recruited to head the transition team overseeing the amalgamation of Scottish Screen and the Scottish Arts Council into Creative Scotland.

Peter Cabrelli

Peter retired as Group Human Resources Director of HBOS plc in 2004, where he was closely involved in the large and complex merger of Bank of Scotland and the Halifax.

Educated at St Andrews University and the London School of Economics, Peter has wide board-level experience, including directorship of several service subsidiaries of Pearson Group. He has a broad view of business and cultural practices, having previously worked in London, Europe, Africa, and the Middle and Far East, including spells with ITT in Brussels, and with the Chartered Standard Bank in Hong Kong.

Peter lives in Edinburgh, where he combines keen and regular theatre-going with an active involvement in the Scotland Committee of the National Playing Fields Association. Peter is a native Dundonian who has been a Dundee United supporter since boyhood and has recently been appointed as an Associate Director of the Club.

Maggie Kinloch

Maggie has recently been appointed Head of Drama at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow. She previously held a range of posts at Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh, including Head of the School of Drama and Creative Industries, where she was Professor of Drama; Associate Dean of the Faculty of Business and Arts; and Director of the Gateway Theatre.

Educated at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and the University of Glasgow, Maggie has taught drama in secondary and special schools; been Director of Drama at Glasgow Arts Centre; and Associate Director of TAG and Annexe Theatre Companies. Following five years as Chief Executive and Artistic Director of the Byre Theatre in St Andrews, Maggie moved into education at London's Central School of Speech and Drama, moving back to Scotland in 2001. She has extensive Committee and Board experience with a range of arts organisations, and is International Advisor to the School of Drama at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, USA.

As well as running a busy department, Maggie commissioned and directed work for the Gateway Theatre in Edinburgh, liasing widely with the Scottish theatre sector and with international artists and producers.

Iain More

Iain is Creator and Principal Consultant of Iain More Associates, a fundraising consultancy based in Dundee with clients in higher education, arts, conventional charities, schools, museums and galleries throughout Scotland, the UK and Europe. His cultural clients include Plymouth Theatre Royal and the Royal Shakespeare Company, The Piping Centre, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and Rambert Dance.

Educated at the universities of St Andrews, Loughborough and Oregon, Iain's career history includes spells in the UK with British Petroleum, Edinburgh College of Art, and as a Development Director with the University of Edinburgh and Imperial College, London. In addition, he was Director of Development with the prestigious business school INSEAD, in Fontainbleau. He also spent ten years (1969-78) in the US where he taught physical education, worked with the Oregon State Legislature and the Ford Foundation, and ran a visual arts/ jazz/ traditional music café bar.

Iain lives in Dundee, where he is Patron of Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre, and also enjoys all kinds of music and cinema.

Dr Donald Smith

Donald is the Director of The Netherbow: Scottish Storytelling Centre, which trains and supports professional and volunteer storytellers, and arranges a programme of national and local events, including the highly successful annual Scottish International Storytelling Festival.

Educated at the University of Edinburgh, Donald gained a first in English Literature and Greek, and a PhD in 'The Fiction of Naomi Mitchison'. He is a member of the Institute of Teaching and Learning and has published widely on a variety of topics, including Shakespeare, Greek theatre and Scottish literature.

Appendix E

Scottish Executive Funding Agreement (2007)

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Education Department
Cultural Policy

Victoria Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

Telephone: 0131-244-0920
Fax: 0131-244 0353
Sarah.morrell@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
http://www.scotland.gov.uk

Vicky Featherstone
Artistic Director and Chief Executive
National Theatre of Scotland
Atlantic Chambers
45 Hope Street,
Glasgow G2 6AE

29 March 2007

Dear Vicky

NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND: REVENUE GRANT IN RESPECT OF 2007-08

I am writing formally to offer revenue grant funding of £4,099,760 to National Theatre of Scotland in respect of its activities during 2007-08.

I attach 3 annexes setting out the conditions on which grant funding is offered to National Theatre of Scotland. These are as follows:

Annex A: Criteria for Attaining and Maintaining Status as a National Performing Company

Annex B: Programme of Activity for 2007-08

Annex C: Offer of Grant and Associated Schedules

You should read these Annexes and the associated Schedules carefully. If you wish to accept the offer of this Grant on the whole terms and conditions as set out in the Annexes and Schedules, you should sign and date both copies of the Grant Acceptance attached and return one copy of the letter, Annexes and Schedules to me at the above address. You should retain the second copy of the letter, Annexes and Schedules for your own records.

If you require clarification of any of the points in this letter or its Annexes, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

T H Gowan

p/p **SARAH MORRELL**

1

GRANT ACCEPTANCE

On behalf of National Theatre of Scotland I accept the offer of Grant by the Scottish Ministers dated 29 March 2007 on the whole terms and conditions as set out in the letter, Annexes and Schedules. I confirm I hold the relevant signing authority.

Signed: *V. Featherstone*

Print Name: *V. FEATHERSTONE*

Position in Organisation of Person Signing: *Chief Executive*

Date: *20th April 2007*

Place of Signing: *Glasgow*

Signed: *Roberta Doyle* [Witness]

Witness Name: *ROBERTA DOYLE*

Address: *2 GARRIOCH DR.*
GLASGOW G20 8RP

Date: *20th April 2007*

Place of Signing: *Glasgow*

2

CRITERIA FOR ATTAINING AND MAINTAINING STATUS AS A NATIONAL PERFORMING COMPANY

In order to attain and maintain the status of National Performing Company, National Theatre of Scotland, working in partnership with the Scottish Executive, must:

1.   Demonstrate that they have implemented the programme of activity detailed within their annual funding agreement, carried out large-scale productions, operated on a scale which is international, national and local, and met the criteria set out in this annex, to appropriate high standards.

2.   Achieve the highest professional artistic standards, subject to available resources, including a continued commitment to:

- performance excellence;
- bringing forward work of a high international standard;
- the ongoing development of new works and productions;
- innovation, in terms of the work produced and the way it is produced;
- inspiring audiences, enriching their lives and fostering creativity;
- quality education activities; and
- the development of artists.

3.   Operate within the budgets agreed with the Scottish Ministers. In doing so, National Theatre of Scotland will

- provide Scottish Executive with copies of budgets, business plans, and strategy documents;
- provide detailed monthly management accounts, and quarterly updated cash flow projections, demonstrating that they are operating sustainably within agreed budgets;
- provide draft annual accounts within three months of the financial year end, and copies of the final audited accounts once signed off, highlighting the reasons for any significant variations between draft and audited accounts;
- adhere to the financial monitoring procedures set out in the Scottish Executive's grant offer letter;
- provide the Scottish Executive at regular intervals with copies of all Board papers and reports to the Board; and
- ensure that any difficulties or significant changes in anticipated expenditure, and/or changes to the programme, that may arise are notified to the Scottish Executive immediately.

4.   Demonstrate that they have endeavoured to achieve a year-on-year increase in private sponsorship and other non-public income, together with a genuine corporate commitment to developing this avenue of funding and thereby reducing the proportion of the Company's income from the public purse.

5.   While maintaining their distinctiveness with their own sector, work with the other National Performing Companies to:

- share best practice;
- develop new ways of working together;
- explore joint artistic planning and scheduling; and
- identify and deliver efficiencies and contribute to the Scottish Executive's Efficient Government programme.

6.   Cost-effectively deliver broad access to theatre by:

- ensuring that a range of high quality performances take place across the country (including full-scale where it can be accommodated), working with local authorities and others;
- developing a broad and diverse audience base;
- providing outreach community involvement programmes of an appropriately high standard, designed to give people across Scotland in all age and socio-economic groups the opportunity to experience, and where possible to participate in, theatre; and
- providing a full range of quality education activities targeted at people across Scotland, of all ages, and evaluating the success of those activities on an annual basis.

7.   Provide leadership for the theatre sector in Scotland, including:

- leading the way in new developments and practices, and ensuring that best practice is shared throughout the sector;
- demonstrating compliance with relevant legislation such as employment law, including pay and conditions and trade union recognition, and health and safety legislation;
- working with the Scottish Arts Council/Creative Scotland to develop theatre;
- playing a major role in the development of talent, and provide entry-level career opportunities for those who have the talent to benefit from such opportunities;
- attracting and retaining the very best talent available in the sector, to work within National Theatre of Scotland;
- being a leading exponent of Scotland's cultural distinctiveness; and
- securing international recognition as a leader in their sector.

8.   Represent Scotland internationally, both in promotional terms and as a demonstration of the excellence of Scotland's culture. In this context, National Theatre of Scotland should:

- show the world that Scotland is a modern, innovative country with a vibrant, diverse culture;
- through international performance, raise Scotland's profile, attract artistic acclaim and stimulate pride; and
- develop interest among those who may be able to bring potential economic and other benefits to the country, in partnership with the Scottish Executive.

4

ANNEX B

NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND
MAIN PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITY FOR 2007-08

Activity	Venue	Performances	Audience (Projected)
The Wonderful World of Dissocia Mid-scale new work/remount	Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh + 6 English venues	5	400
Black Watch Mid-scale new work/remount	Harlaw Academy, Aberdeen Old Fruitmarket, Glasgow Loreburn Hall, Dumfries Highland Football Academy, Dingwall + 1 English venue	6 12 4 7	1,200 2,400 800 1,000
Aalst Small-mid scale new work (UK premiere) International co-production with Tramway, Glasgow and Victoria, Gent (Belgium)	Macrobert Arts Centre, Stirling Eastgate Theatre, Peebles Brunton Theatre, Musselburgh Paisley Arts Centre Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh + 3 English venues	2 1 1 1 5	150 50 100 50 375
Futurology Large-scale new work Co-production with Suspect Culture, Glasgow	SECC, Glasgow Corn Exchange, Edinburgh AECC, Aberdeen + 1 English venue	6 6 4	600 500 400
Tutti Frutti Large-scale new work/remount Musical theatre	King's Theatre, Glasgow King's Theatre, Edinburgh + 1 English venue	11 7	10,000 7,000
The Bacchae Mid-scale new version of classic Co-production with EIF	King's Theatre, Edinburgh Theatre Royal Glasgow (tbc) + 1 English venue (tbc)	11 6	7,000 2,500

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Ensemble 2 small-scale shows 1 young people's theatre 1 adult drama Rural Scottish tour	15 small scale venues/village halls tbc.	40	1,750
Peer Gynt Mid-large scale classic Co-production with Dundee Rep	Dundee Rep Theatre	20	5,000
Six Characters in Search of an Author	Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh	22	9,000
Mid-scale contemporary classic Co-production with Citizens' Theatre, Glasgow and Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh	Citizens' Theatre, Glasgow	16	5,000
Half Life Large-scale, site-specific project Cross-artform new work Co-production with NVA, Glasgow	Various outdoor locations	28	4,000
One mid-scale show tbc.	venues tbc.	20	4,000
TOTAL (for Scottish Venues)		241	63,275

NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND
PROGRAMME OF EDUCATION AND OUTREACH FOR 2007-08

Activity	Venue/Region	Performances /Workshops	Participants/ Audience
Transform	Arran	12 weeks of workshops	200
		2 performances	200
	South Lanarkshire	21 weeks of workshops	450
		2 performances	200
Aalst	Tramway, Glasgow Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh Macrobert Arts Centre, Stirling	3 workshops (1 per venue)	30
Black Watch	Port-Na-Craig House, Pitlochry Harlaw Academy, Aberdeen Old Fruitmarket, Glasgow Loreburn Hall, Dumfries Highland Football Academy, Dingwall	10 workshops	250
Futurology	SECC, Glasgow Corn Exchange, Edin. Aberdeen Exhibition Centre	8 workshops	90
Exchange Youth Theatre Festival	Macrobert Arts Centre, Stirling	20 weeks of workshops + 1 week's residency	80
		8 performances	900
Elgin Macbeth	Elgin Cathedral	20 weeks of workshops	120
		4 performances	750
Argyll project	tbc.	2 tbc.	20
Diaspora	Tramway tbc.	4 x 10 day workshops	15
		4 performances	300
TOTAL			3605

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NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND
PROGRAMME OF WORKSHOP ACTIVITY FOR 2007-08

Activity	Venue	Performances	Audience
Venus as a Boy Small-scale new work Adaptation of contemporary Scottish novel Co-production with Burnt Goods	St Magnus Festival (Gable End Theatre Hoy, Orkney Arts Theatre Kirkwall, Stromness Town Hall) Ullapool Village Hall Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh Soho Theatre, London	3 1 10 tbc	250 60 700
Rupture Small-mid scale new play Co-production with Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh	Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh Tron Theatre, Glasgow tbc. Lemon Tree, Aberdeen tbc.	10 tbc 4 tbc 2 tbc	500 200 100
Dolls (Working Title) Large-scale adaptation of a Japanese film Co-production with Hush Productions	Tramway, Glasgow tbc.	5 tbc	200
TOTAL (for Scottish Venues)		35	2010

7

ANNEX C

OFFER OF GRANT FOR NATIONAL THEATRE OF SCOTLAND

The Scottish Ministers in exercise of their powers under section 23 of the National Heritage (Scotland) Act 1985 hereby offer to give to National Theatre of Scotland, a National Performing Company ("the Grantee") a grant of up to Four Million, and Ninety-Nine Thousand, Seven Hundred and Sixty Pounds (£4,099,760) STERLING in connection with the Grantee's programme of activities for 2007-08 ("the Programme"), as defined at Annex B and subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Definitions and Interpretation

1.1   In these Conditions, the words and expressions set out in Schedule 3 shall have the meanings ascribed to them in that Schedule.

1.2   In these Conditions unless the context otherwise requires, words denoting the singular shall include the plural and vice versa and words denoting any gender shall include all genders

1.3   The headings in these Conditions are for convenience only and shall not be read as forming part of the Conditions or taken into account in their interpretation.

1.4   Except as otherwise provided in these Conditions, any reference to a clause, paragraph, sub-paragraph or schedule shall be a reference to a clause, paragraph, sub-paragraph or schedule of these Conditions.

2. Purposes of the Grant

2.1   The Grant is made to enable the Grantee to carry out the Programme.

2.2   The Grant shall only be used for the purposes of the Programme and for no other purpose whatsoever.

2.3   No part of the Grant shall be used to fund any activity designed to affect support for a political party.

2.4   The main objectives/expected outcomes of the Grant are as defined in Annexes A and B.

2.5   The targets/milestones against which progress in achieving objectives/expected outcomes shall be monitored are as defined in Annexes A and B.

2.6   The eligible costs for which the Grant can be paid out are all costs relating to the operation of National Theatre of Scotland.

2.7   The eligible costs exclude all expenditure which does not appear in the annual accounts of National Theatre of Scotland.

3. Payment of Grant

3.1   The Grant shall be paid by the Scottish Ministers to the Grantee by the seventh calendar day of each month in accordance with the terms of Schedule 1 attached.

3.2   The Grantee shall within three months following the end of each financial year in respect of which the Grant has been paid submit to the Scottish Ministers a statement of compliance with the Conditions of the Grant using the form of words provided in Schedule 2. The statement shall be signed by the Grantee's head of finance.

3.3   In the event that the amount of the Grant paid by the Scottish Ministers to the Grantee at any point in time is found to exceed the amount of the expenses reasonably and properly incurred by the Grantee in connection with the Programme, the Grantee shall repay to the Scottish Ministers the amount of such excess within 14 days of receiving a written demand for it from or on behalf of the Scottish Ministers. In the event that the Grantee fails to pay such amount within the 14 day period, the Scottish Ministers shall be entitled to interest on the sum at the rate of 2 per cent per annum above the base lending rate (or the equivalent) of the Royal Bank of Scotland plc prevailing at the time of the written demand from the date of the written demand until payment in full of both the sum and the interest.

3.4   Notwithstanding the conditions described at paragraph 3.3, Scottish Ministers will normally regard reserves, not exceeding 10% of projected turnover, as falling within the description of 'expenses reasonably and properly incurred'. It should be noted that this arrangement is not indicative of Scottish Executive policy and is offered solely on the basis of the specific circumstances relating to the grantee. As such, there can be no presumption that this condition will feature in other Scottish Executive grant offers.

3.5   The Scottish Ministers shall not be bound to pay to the Grantee, and the Grantee shall have no claim against the Scottish Ministers in respect of, any instalment of the Grant which has not been claimed by the Grantee in accordance with this clause by 31 March 2008, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Scottish Ministers.

4. Governance Standards

4.1   The Grantee shall ensure that adequate internal control and risk management systems are in place and that all resources are used economically, effectively and efficiently.

5. Inspection and Information

5.1   The Grantee shall keep the Scottish Ministers fully informed of the progress of the Programme in the form of regular reports. Details shall include actual expenditure to date compared with profiled expenditure and any change to estimated expenditure for the financial year and/or the Programme as a whole, plus progress in achieving objectives/outcomes. For the purposes of this clause reports should take the form of monthly management accounts and any relevant forecast outturn variations. The frequency of reporting arrangements is eligible for review and will be considered prior to any subsequent grant offer letter.

5.2 All material revisions to targets/milestones against which progress in achieving objectives/outcomes are monitored shall be subject to the written agreement of the Scottish Ministers.

5.3 The Grantee shall, on completion of the Programme, submit a report to the Scottish Ministers summarising the outcomes and performance of the Programme. Such a report shall include such statistical and other information relating to the impact of the Programme as shall be required by the Scottish Ministers.

5.4 The Grantee shall also provide any other information that the Scottish Ministers may reasonably require to satisfy themselves that the Programme is consistent with the Agreement. The Grantee shall provide the Scottish Ministers with prompt access to any information they reasonably require to ensure compliance with these Conditions.

5.5 The Grantee shall keep and maintain for a period of 6 years after the expenditure occurs, adequate and proper records and books of account recording all receipts and expenditure of monies paid to it by the Scottish Ministers by way of the Grant. The Grantee shall afford the Scottish Ministers, their representatives, the Auditor General for Scotland, his/her representatives and such other persons as the Scottish Ministers may reasonably specify from time to time, such access to those records and books of account as may be required by them at any reasonable time in response to a written request for such access from the person seeking it. The Grantee shall provide such reasonable assistance and explanation as the person carrying out the inspection may from time to time require.

6. Confidentiality and Data Protection

6.1 All parties will respect the confidentiality of any commercially sensitive information that they have access to as a result of the Programme.

6.2 Notwithstanding the above, any party may disclose any information as required by law or judicial order. All information submitted to the Scottish Ministers may need to be disclosed and/or published by the Scottish Ministers. Without prejudice to the foregoing generality, the Scottish Ministers may disclose information in compliance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, any other law, or, as a consequence of judicial order, or order by any court or tribunal with the authority to order disclosure. Further, the Scottish Ministers may also disclose all information submitted to them to the Scottish or United Kingdom Parliament or any other department, office or agency of Her Majesty's Government in Scotland, in right of the Scottish Administration or the United Kingdom, and their servants or agents. When disclosing such information to either the Scottish Parliament or the United Kingdom Parliament it is recognised and agreed by both parties that the Scottish Ministers shall if they see fit disclose such information but are unable to impose any restriction upon the information that it provides to Members of the Scottish Parliament, or Members of the United Kingdom Parliament; such disclosure shall not be treated as a breach of this agreement. In the event of Scottish Ministers determining they will disclose information relevant to the grantee this will be confirmed at the earliest opportunity.

6.3 The Grantee shall ensure that all requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 are fulfilled in relation to the Programme.

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7. Acquisition and Disposal of Assets

7.1   The Grantee shall not, without prior written consent of the Scottish Ministers, acquire any individual asset (excluding motor vehicle) over £25k and/or total assets over £100k in the year.

7.2   The Grantee shall not, without prior written consent of the Scottish Ministers, dispose of any asset funded, in part or in whole, with Grant funds within 20 years of the asset being acquired for land and buildings or 6 years for other fixed assets. During that period the Scottish Ministers shall be entitled to the proceeds of the disposal – or the relevant proportion of the proceeds based on the percentage of grant funding used in connection with the acquisition or improvement of the asset against the whole proceeds. Recovery by the Scottish Ministers shall not be required where the net book value of the asset is less than £5,000.

8. Publicity

8.1   The Grantee shall where reasonably practicable acknowledge in all publicity material relating to the Programme the contribution of the Scottish Ministers to its costs. The Scottish Ministers may require to approve the form of such acknowledgement prior to its first publication.

9. Default

9.1   The Scottish Ministers may re-assess, vary, make a deduction from, withhold, or require immediate repayment of the Grant or any part of it in the event that:

9.1.1   the Grantee commits a Default;

9.1.2   the Scottish Ministers consider that any change or departure from the purposes for which the Grant was awarded warrants an alteration in the amount of the Grant;

9.1.3   the Grantee fails to carry out the Programme;

9.1.4   the progress on the Programme against the agreed terms of the Programme is not satisfactory; or

9.1.5   the completion of the agreed terms of the Programme is in jeopardy.

9.2   The Scottish Ministers may withhold the payment of the Grant if at any time within the duration of the Agreement:

9.2.1   The Grantee passes a resolution that it be wound up, or a court makes an order that the Grantee be wound up, in either case otherwise than for the purposes of reconstruction or amalgamation, or circumstances arise which would enable a court to make such an order or the Grantee is unable to pay its debts within the meaning of section 123 of the Insolvency Act 1986; or

9.2.2   A receiver, manager, administrator or administrative receiver is appointed to the Grantee, or over all or any part of the Grantee's property, or circumstances arise which would entitle a court or a creditor to appoint such a receiver, manager, administrator or administrative receiver.

9.3   In the event that the Grantee becomes bound to pay any sum to the Scottish Ministers in terms of this clause, the Grantee shall pay the Scottish Ministers the appropriate sum within 14 days of a written demand for it being given by or on behalf of the Scottish Ministers to the Grantee. In the event that the Grantee fails to pay the sum within the 14 day period, the Scottish Ministers shall be entitled to interest on the sum at the rate of 2 per cent per annum above the base lending rate (or the equivalent) of the Royal Bank of Scotland plc prevailing at the time of the written demand, from the date of the written demand until payment in full of both the sum and interest.

9.4   Notwithstanding the provisions of this clause, in the event that the Grantee is in breach of any of the Conditions, the Scottish Ministers may, provided that the breach is capable of a remedy, postpone the exercise of their rights to recover any sum from the Grantee in terms of this clause for such period as they see fit, and may give written notice to the Grantee requiring it to remedy the breach within such period as may be specified in the notice. In the event of the Grantee failing to remedy the breach within the period specified, the Grantee shall be bound to pay the sum to the Scottish Ministers in accordance with the foregoing provisions.

9.5   Any failure, omission or delay by the Scottish Ministers in exercising any right or remedy to which they are entitled by virtue of this clause shall not be construed as a waiver of such right or remedy.

10. Assignation

10.1   The Grantee shall not be entitled to assign, sub-contract or otherwise transfer its rights or obligations under the Agreement without the prior written consent of the Scottish Ministers.

11. Termination

11.1   The Agreement may be terminated by Scottish Ministers giving not less than 12 months notice in writing from the date of the notice being sent.

12. Corrupt Gifts and Payments of Commission

12.1   The Grantee shall not offer or give or agree to give any person any gift or consideration of any kind as an inducement or reward in relation to this Grant. The Grantee shall ensure that its employees shall not breach the terms of the Prevention of Corruption Acts, 1889 to 1916 in relation to this or any other grant.

13. Continuation of Conditions

13.1   These Conditions shall continue to apply for a period of 5 years after the end of the financial year in which the final instalment of the Grant was paid.

14. Compliance with the Law

14.1   The Grantee shall ensure that in relation to the Programme, they and anyone acting on their behalf shall comply with the relevant law, for the time being in force in Scotland.

SCHEDULE 1

PAYMENT OF GRANT

1.   The total Grant of Four Million, and Ninety-Nine Thousand, Seven Hundred and Sixty Pounds (£4,099,760) shall be payable by the Scottish Ministers to the Grantee in monthly instalments as detailed at paragraph 3.1 of the Terms and Conditions.

2.   The total Grant shall be payable over the financial year 2007-08.

3.   The Grantee shall provide a monthly cash flow before the start of the financial year. Changes to the cash flow profile, and to the overall forecast 2007-08 income and expenditure costs of the Grantee shall be notified to the Scottish Ministers at the earliest opportunity.

4.   Each grant payment shall be for an amount equal to the estimated amount of the Grant required to meet the reasonable cash flow requirements of the Grantee in connection with the Programme until the next payment is due.

5.   Such explanatory or supplementary material as the Scottish Ministers may from time to time request will be provided as required.

6.   The Scottish Ministers shall, where possible, pay the amount determined to the Grantee by the agreed date each month during the financial year.

SCHEDULE 2

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS OF GRANT

Scottish Executive – National Performing Companies

I hereby certify that the grant sums received by National Theatre of Scotland during financial year 2007-08 are properly due and have been used for their intended purposes in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Grant.

Signed:

Name in block capitals:

Position:

Date:

SCHEDULE 3

DEFINITIONS

"**Agreement**" means the agreement constituted by the Conditions as per Annexes A, B and C, including related schedules, and the Grantee's acceptance of these Conditions;

"**Conditions**" means these grant conditions;

"**Default**" means:

(a) Any breach of the obligations of either party under this Agreement (including, but not limited to, any breach of any undertaking or warranty given under or in terms of this Agreement);

(b) Any failure to perform or the negligent performance of any obligation under this Agreement;

(c) Any breach of any legislation; or

(d) Any negligence or negligent or fraudulent miss-statement, or any other default,

In all cases by either party, its employees, agents or representatives;

"**Financial Year**" means a period from 1 April in one year until 31 March in the next;

"**Grant**" means the grant offered by the Scottish Ministers to the Grantee as specified in the Award Letter, as varied from time to time in accordance with these Conditions;

"**Grantee**" means the person, organisation or body to which the Grant will be payable as specified in these Conditions. Where two or more persons, organisations or bodies are the Grantee, references to the "Grantee" are to those persons, organisations or bodies collectively and their obligations under the Agreement are undertaken jointly and severally;

"**Programme**" means the purpose for which the Grant has been awarded as described in the Offer of Grant;

"**Payment**" means each of the payments specified in Schedule 1 hereto.

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