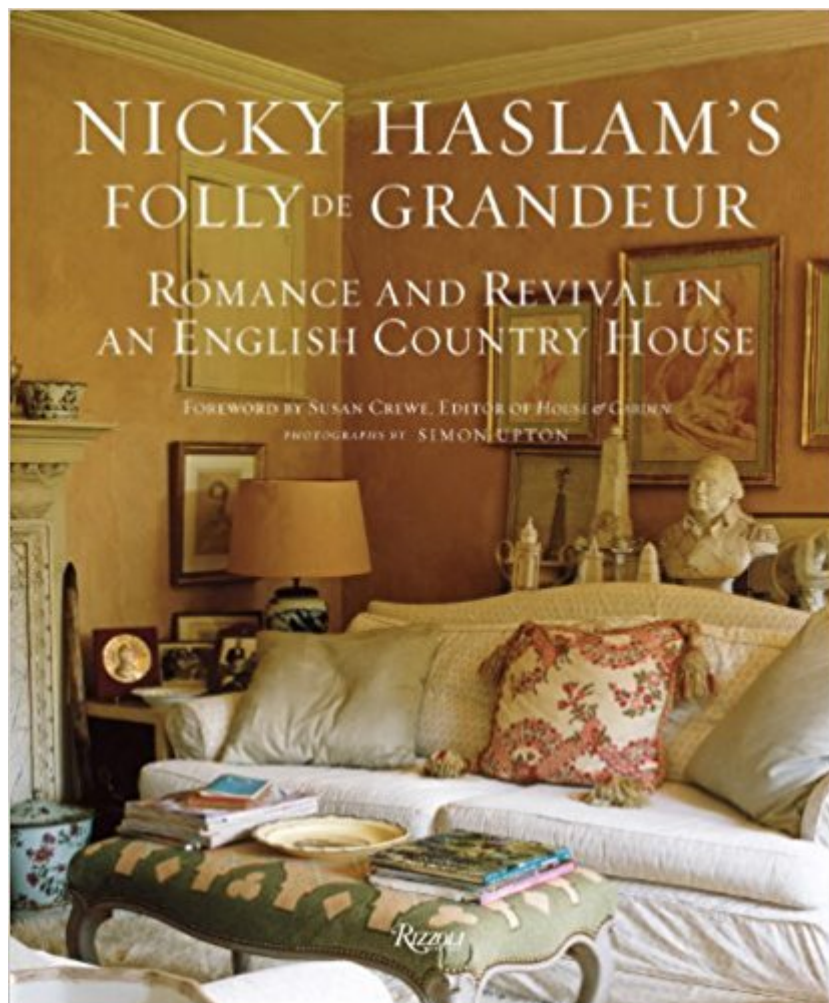


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# Nicky Haslam's Folly De Grandeur: Romance And Revival In An English Country House



## Synopsis

For anyone who has nurtured the dream of having a country house in the English style, celebrated designer Nicholas Haslam has created an inspiring series of exquisite yet relaxed interiors that blend traditional comfort with elegance and a passion for collecting art and antiques. Nicholas Haslam's delightful "Folly de Grandeur" is a unique country house that many in the interior design community consider to be one of the world's most inspiring and picturesque places. The interiors and grounds represent a tasteful yet relaxed vision for a country house in the English style. Haslam restored and nurtured the house and garden, and today it is the epitome of relaxed yet comfortable good taste and refinement. Haslam explains the intricacies and delights of carefully mismatched antique and vintage furniture, a color palette of subtle, warming, welcoming tones, and a collection of art and objects that is nothing short of inspirational. The wealth of muted colors and visual interest makes each room feel larger, and this handsome, inspiring volume will appeal to anyone interested in interior design and the art of living beautifully, comfortably and well.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"For a glimpse of a real, and gorgeous, English country house, dip into Haslam's splendid book. Haslam's rooms look as though they're loved. Things are allowed to age and shred and crumble, and therein lies their charm. The 192 pages of Folly de Grandeur,

uncover every smart, cozy, and chic detail of the designer's home." ~New York Times

"The book covers five centuries of the house, living with its history, as well as the traditional garden, the furnishings, the comfort, versatility and ease of every corner. ...Every page and each image is a design lesson from vignettes showing how to make sofas comfortable, to creating tableaux, classical elements, hallways, evening cocktails (his bar is inspiring), and entertaining with panache." ~thestylesaloniste.com

"...the fascinating story of the country house through color photographs so lush you will feel like you spent the night there." ~Array Magazine

"...a charming yet detailed look at how the English country house can be re-imagined for today (and for any country location) in his decades-long makeover of a historic country house. In this book, Haslam presents in detail his 'folly de grandeur,' a beautiful English country house lovingly tended for over 40 years, and known for its exquisite architecture and decoration, providing new insights into the enduring appeal of the English country house." ~Editoratlarge.com

Nicholas Haslam is one of the world's leading interior decorators, credited with reinventing interior design in Britain and America. Based in London, he has designed interiors for many notable clients, including Ringo Starr and Mick Jagger. His work has been featured in *The World of Interiors*, *Vogue*, *Architectural Digest*, and many other publications.

You will savor every word and image in this book as Nicky Haslam takes you on a remarkably personal tour of his folly of an English home which he describes as "quite simply the prettiest small house in the world." Formerly the home of renowned designer John Fowler, Haslam fell in love with its "fairy-tale facade", as Fowler did shortly after the end of WWII. Haslam describes seeing the folly for the first time: "History does repeat itself. And so it was that, some thirty years later, I turned the last bend in the rough lane through these woods, came to a clearing by a lake, and, turning, saw this rose-pink, brick-gabled folly glinting in the evening sun." Haslam recounts, "I like to think of him (Fowler) standing in the doorway as his celebrated clients like Debo Devonshire or the Pembroke drew up to be greeted by his quizzical smile and promise of a nifty Blood Mary. One of his early assistants, Nina Campbell, told me recently that, even before he came to live here, John's nickname was 'Folly' Fowler...."

"Situated on the hunting grounds of King Henry VII, the home has a rather magical past before Fowler. It was on these grounds that Catherine of Aragon first set her black Spanish eyes on King Henry's son Arthur, Prince of Wales, to whom she was betrothed. You may sense a certain magic pervading the house, or maybe it's Haslam's unabashed affection for it. In its Tudor beginnings as a refuge from hunting, it was a humble three rooms. Around 1720-40 a fanciful

Jacobean facade was affixed to the front, and it was expanded. Describing his first walk-through after Fowler inhabited it, Haslam allows us to see it through his eyes: "There was no furniture inside the house the first time I saw it.... But in each of the tiny rooms - not one is more than 12 feet wide - the walls were beautiful.... Shabby drapes, some edged in fading hand-painted borders, fell forlornly at dusty windows. Le Grand Meaulnes and Miss Havisham had nothing on this sleeping timeless Wunderkammer. And, strange as it seems now, I knew then that I must retain an echo of this delabre atmosphere; it seemed an essential element of the building's magical being." You may feel you are in the midst of an E.M. Forster novel as you read this, complete with iridescent photos by Simon Upton, to accompany the descriptions. Leaving much of the home the way Fowler left it, Haslam brings fresh life and luster to it with his original and fresh style. He says of his style: "It would be hopeless to pretend that my style, at home, is anything but a hodgepodge of the things I love.... And the house's soul doesn't seem to object to the hodgepodge." It seems every room and piece in the home has a story, and Haslam is happy to tell them in his colorful and amusing storytelling style. His storytelling matches his decor: charming, lighthearted, insouciant, droll and sentimental. You may find yourself raptly reading every word and studying the pages as Haslam chats about the house and its history, walls, soft furnishings, curtains and drapery, and furniture. Then he takes you on a grand tour of the rooms: the old hall, the staircase hall, the library, the dining room, the kitchen, the flower room, the guest rooms and master bedroom and John Fowler's old bedroom, which, surprisingly was one of the smallest bedrooms in the home. Along the tour, Haslam sprinkles his design admonishments: "Increase the scale of wall coverings in small spaces." And "I never buy anything purely for its monetary value. I like possessions that smile back at me." Then there's: "Edging chintz in a solid color is an essential touch." (This book may make you wonder if it will be the catalyst for reviving the classical appeal of chintz in a major way.) You will get to stroll outside, too, and view the terrace, the conservatory, the lake and the unique Garden Room. You may feel you have stayed for a pleasant weekend as Haslam's guest. This is already one of my favorite of the many decor and design books I own. It should become a classic in design libraries. If you like florals, stripes, painted walls and furniture, tole and hurricane lamps, ruffles, chinoiserie, slipcovers, skirted tables, leaded glass, carved mantels, flagstone, portraits, architectural engravings, busts, books, flowers and rooms that look like they have evolved for 30 years - because these did - you should adore this book. If you enjoy English, cottage or European country styles, you should have this book in your library, or on your ottoman to peruse over and over again. Because you will.

At last, a book on the Hunting Lodge! Nicky Haslam is fun to read and I enjoy his style, but I must say that I bought this book because I was already a fan of the house, from its association with John Fowler. The house has been much photographed, with pictures scattered throughout various books for decades. The rooms are surprisingly small and incredibly pretty. In this new book, it's wonderful to finally see the house layout, how the rooms connect, and to see rooms I had never seen before, such as Fowler's own minuscule bedroom, the pantry, and the bathrooms. And that Mauny wallpaper, wow. Truly spectacular, and I can see why Fowler loved it. There is inspiration here for anyone who loves romantic English style, especially if you have small rooms that don't seem "all that" - anyone can use pretty paint colors and fabrics and look for modest antiques and prints. If it's old, shabby and worn, all the better. If it has personal meaning to you, that's the best. I only wish the old photos from Fowler's time had been included. It would've been nice to have it all together in one book. But that's alright, what's here is fantastic. Thanks, Nicky, for keeping so much of JF's work intact and thank you for putting this book together for us Fowler and Hunting Lodge fans.

This book is very nicely done with great photos. The house has been previously written about extensively in magazines and at least two books because the previous owner, as mentioned in the book, was John Fowler. The previous books were one (excellent) on the firm of Colefax and Fowler and the other by Martin Wood was a coffee table size book on John Fowler. For people who have read the other two, this book is a bit of a re-hash. For those who haven't read the other two, a definite read.

I was not overly impressed with this book. There are many pages that show the "details" of a room such as fireplace surrounds, art work, and wallpaper samples, rather than "full-view" rooms. I do admire Mr. Haslam's style, as he has no constraints when decorating his own home. However, I am appalled at his bathrooms in which he has installed rather ugly wall-to-wall carpeting!! He might be "decorator to the stars", but his design expertise falls extremely short in the bath arena. I would only recommend this book if you are primarily interested in reading about this specific house, the Hunting Lodge (formerly owned by John Fowler).

I couldn't put it down and finished it in one sitting. I'd highly recommend this one. I've already gone back and browsed through the book several times after first reading it. I think one might refer to it often. Mr. Haslam's little Jacobean/Tudor cottage orné surely must be one of the most beautiful and delightful ones in existence. It's not a museum set or filled with precious untouchable objects -

though it is certainly a magical place. It's the type of house on a rainy day you'd want to curl up on one of the plump sofas with a good book and a cup of tea. Being able to live in this house, Mr. Haslam is indeed a lucky and fortunate man. If only he'd invite me for the weekend, I'd be on the next plane.

I have loved the front facade of John Fowler's home ever since the first time I saw it. It has a story book look. It was good to be able to see more of the place than in previous magazines/books. The grounds are magnificent. I was pleasantly surprised that Haslam was able to preserve the integrity yet give Fowler's old home a new and fresh look. I expected it to have a dated feel but it does not. If you love the old master decorators/designers I recommend this book. It is one you'll want to add to your collection.

HAD to have this book. Since it was John Fowler's before it was Nicky Haslam's...it's in my library next to my Colefax & Fowler book. Fun to compare the space and what these two exceptional decorators did with the property.

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