



(Text)  
Karoline GASTENICA-BRYJAK

# Beauty and *the Bigger Picture*

Her style: omnipresent right now. Her mission: to bring beauty into our lives. Laura Karasinski is an art director, designer and creative dynamo. Her taste is in greater demand than ever. For ten years she has been coming up with design ideas and shaping spaces all over Vienna supported by her team at Atelier Karasinski. Guided by an unwavering eye for beauty and the bigger picture – from door handles to ceilings.

ARCHITECTURE, FASHION & DESIGN



Motto

Photo: © Atelier Karasinski

In her early 20s, she founded the Atelier Karasinski design studio out of her apartment in the eighth district. Today, her new studio – complete with pastel pink kitchen, bright communal workspace and ochre brown meeting room – is just two streets away, also in a traditional old-style Viennese apartment building. Often, there is no reason for Laura Karasinski to set foot outside the district: her work is here. And so is her life. Over the past few years, the boundaries between the two have become increasingly blurred, the young artist tells us, mug



Office and meeting room at Atelier Karasinski  
Photo: © The Daily Dose

of decaf coffee – with oat milk – in hand. She doesn't have a lot of free time as the scope of her operations is as diverse as the palette of colors and styles she works with. The 31-year-old Vienna-born designer with Polish roots says with conviction: "You can shape anything." Her work proves this beyond a doubt: she adds her inimitable touch to everything from websites and logos to a company's overall identity.

She loves to engage with Vienna and its

history. Especially when a new project comes up, she studies the backstory in impressive detail. In 2015, Motto, a restaurant in the fifth district, became one of Karasinski's first major interior design projects. Nine months of research went into her preparations. It turned out that the restaurant had been through four makeovers in its 40-year history. The search was on for photos, guest books and even former employees who could shed more light on Motto's past. Old aspects were reinterpreted and fed back into the composition, ensuring that previous elements were brought into the present: such as the striking green velvet that once adorned the walls. Today, the benches are covered in the same material – in the same color.

Other projects followed, such as the Adlerhof, a complete redesign of a classic Viennese eatery executed in collaboration with Gerd Zehetner from Archiguards architects (see pages 72-73), and two beauty concept stores: the Babetown nail studio with integrated shop and the Gepp brothers' hair-dressing salon with coffeehouse and patisserie. The list goes on – lots of work that speaks for itself. With its very own aesthetic. Which comes as a surprise to Karasinski: "Lots of people say that they recognize our style. I ask myself: where?"

#### Eye for Detail

Elegant colors, expansive patterns and lots of vintage – all elements that Karasinski loves to work with. She always relies on her instincts to tell her

how to accentuate the fundamental aesthetic of a space. A little like before, when people paid more attention to the aesthetics of utilitarian everyday objects. So it is hardly surprising to discover that she likes to incorporate centuries-old artisanal crafts. "Ideally, I work with manufactories directly. The handcraftsmanship techniques are passed down and perfected over generations. Quality that always shines through," she says and shows us a small hinge made by arts and crafts metal studio Kyril (est. 1910) exclusively for one of her projects. The vintage look



Hotel Karasinski

Photos: © Atelier Karasinski

is intentional and achieved through patination. Another perfectly thought-through detail.

The tried-and-tested quality standards have always made this city an attractive location for artists and creative artisans. "I would have loved to have experienced the Vienna of the previous turn of the century – a hotbed of creativity that was home to Alma Mahler, Gustav Klimt and Koloman Moser. Although it definitely wouldn't have been easy for a woman then either. But the city continued to evolve. Today, I am very happy about the direction that life and work are taking here. Vienna is loosening up. And it is ready for change. It takes a little convincing, but I am able to get a 'yes' out of even the most skeptical of Viennese clients for new projects," she explains. As a woman she often has to prove herself, but she remains true to her idea and vision, and successfully so. Her customers love her design concepts. Striking without being too overt, they always have a common goal: the beautiful bigger picture.

#### A Beautiful Future Ahead

Karasinski's love for design and art blossomed at an early age. "Beautification" has always been a passion of hers. When she was in school, it took the form of sketches of her classmates and sometimes even tattoos. Today, she is adding a certain something to the city's interiors. Most recently to the 178 rooms – or individually crafted "Buden" – at new modern hotel Superbude at Perspektivstrasse 8 in the second district. It is also the location of the smallest hotel in Vienna: Hotel Karasinski, a hotel within a

hotel, is just big enough for two. It is a suite oozing old-style Viennese charm to turn any stay in the city into an unforgettable experience: a free-standing bathtub, stylish vintage furniture, a cozy bed and no end of surprises. Each month, Laura carefully curates new individual notes including snacks, books and personalized playlists. Bicycles are also available for guests to use during their stay. The idea is that anyone staying at Hotel Karasinski will feel at home. In familiar surroundings. Which is what Vienna is all about in her eyes. Reservations can either be made via the studio website or with Superbude Wien Prater directly.

That she is hard at work on her next project is clear enough, but it's all still top secret at the moment. So it remains to be seen what 2022 has in store.

#### ADRESSES

Atelier Karasinski  
● Piaristengasse 17  
1080 Vienna  
→ [www.atelierkarasinski.com](http://www.atelierkarasinski.com)

Motto Wien  
● Schönbrunner Strasse 30  
1050 Vienna  
→ [www.motto.wien](http://www.motto.wien)

Babetown  
● Piaristengasse 17  
1080 Vienna  
→ [www.babetown.at](http://www.babetown.at)

Gepp  
● Babenbergerstrasse 7  
1010 Vienna  
→ [www.gepp.wien](http://www.gepp.wien)

Superbude Wien Prater  
● Perspektivstrasse 8  
1020 Vienna  
→ [www.superbude.com](http://www.superbude.com)