

OASIS OF BEIGE

The Polish design studio Anke Design created a magnificent monochrome flat in Krakow. Raw materials are combined with natural finishes and an earthy colour palette. Modest and sober but warm in character, this is the perfect retreat.

Before we show you around this eye-catching project, it's time to tell you a bit more about the brains behind this design gem in Poland. Anke Design is a Krakow-based studio founded by interior designer Anna Gawlik. She has developed her own design language that is calm and refocused on nature. Her projects always radiate serenity and calm thanks to a neutral and soft colour and material palette.

SIGNATURE AESTHETICS

Having her own studio was written in the stars for Gawlik. 'For as long as I can remember, interior design has been my passion. Even as a child I was constantly rearranging my room. Space and its relationship to people has always been important to me,' says the designer. Yet, she first decided to study literature. Only halfway through that study did she decide to also study interior architecture. 'In the end I made a choice, I knew for sure that this is what I want to do all my life.' And how lucky for us and the rest of the design world that Gawlik made that choice, because she has already realised several beautiful and, above all, unique interi-

ors. The designer developed her own identity as a designer with a distinctive aesthetic. 'In fact, I feel like I've always had that aesthetic in my head. In the past, I've had to make some compromises in my projects that were not at all in line with my perception of space and my vision of interiors. It's a complicated story, but I'm convinced that this practice has brought me to where I am today, from where I see an interesting perspective. Summarising the decade of my design career, I feel that my thoughts have calmed down





and the vision has become clearer. I have learned to eliminate. I have returned to nature. Looking back, I know that many of my projects were like disguises, today I try to make the spaces that come out of my hand feel like the second skin of the inhabitants. I try to create homes that are real havens,' she says. A home should be a safe haven and not just a "jewel" according to Gawlik. In this, you can recognise the serene and soft aesthetic she developed. 'I strive for the ideal situation in which the interiors I design resonate with the energy of their inhabitants. My aesthetic has evolved a lot, I think it is still in a constant process of change, that I am still on my way, constantly exploring, not only professionally.'

NATURAL & PERSONAL

As mentioned before, Gawlik returns to nature in her interior designs. She does this especially with the choice of materials and colours. 'I am passionate about sustainable materials that are a gift from the earth. I would like more people to share this passion and to agree and understand the imperfection and beauty of the aging natural object. I think I am moving in the direction of minimalism. One that frames nature, but at the same time I care deeply about understanding the personality and individuality of the people I work with,' says the designer. That personal touch and Gawlik's eye really give Anke Design interiors a soul and even a touch of magic. 'I get my inspiration from everywhere. In art, crafts, nature, even in a fleeting moment. The right light, sound, coincidence. You only have to look for it. A bit like for magic.'

SIMPLY WARM

Speaking of magic, let's take a look at one of Gawlik's recent enchanting projects: an apartment in Krakow. The images of this property alone give you a sense of peace and security. The project includes a small apartment with a large terrace that had to be redesigned for a young lawyer.

Gawlik herself describes it as follows: 'Modest in design, as monochrome as possible and designed around the main function: home as a safe haven after a busy day of hard work. Without too many embellishments and contrasts. It is simple, monochrome and contemporary. Despite the raw materials, the experience of the interior is warm.' The classic proportions, simple floor plan, functionally selected finishing materials and earthy palette create 'an homage to craftsmanship and natural light' and ties everything together.

Modest in colour as well as decoration and materials, only three materials are dominant throughout the project, namely micro

concrete (on the walls, ceilings and floors), a grooved natural veneer panel and natural stone. 'Natural finishes that gently reflect the incoming natural light create a calming space,' says Gawlik. The designer used natural plaster to visualise the multidimensionality of the walls and ceilings,

'I TRY TO CREATE HOUSES THAT ARE TRUE HAVENS'

opening up the space and creating flowing transitions. It also emphasises the monochrome aspect of the house. Gawlik also mentions natural Polish linen as a tribute to the local craft and soft finishing element. In addition to the choice of materials, the neutral colour palette also contributes to the monochrome and serene aesthetic. The flat is located in a densely built-up area of Krakow.



understanding of space always through the prism of function. Theoretically unadorned. Natural, simple and raw materials, harking back to the products of human hands, it all shows how timeless images can be. My design will always be a search for beauty: material, natural framework and human environment.'

TO LOOK FORWARD TO

After seeing this wonderful project, we – and our readers, I'm sure – are looking forward to seeing a lot more Anke Design realisations. Gawlik gives us a glimpse of what she is working on at the moment. 'I am in the middle of an urban retreat project in one of Krakow's historic districts. This is what I am devoting all my attention and energy to right now. The idea of creating an oasis in the middle of the city, a place where you can relax and just "be", is very close to my heart. The interior will draw much inspiration from the Japanese philosophy and aesthetics of wabi

sabi. The basis will be a natural colour palette and only a limited number of materials.' We can't wait to admire this realisation.

In the next five or ten years, Gawlik hopes to have even more opportunities to design interiors for people who see space as she does. The designer feels a childlike enthusiasm and excitement for each new design and she never wants to lose that. 'I have no dreams of big or international projects because I have experienced both. I care more about the quality, importance and footprint of my next actions. Regardless of their size and where they are created.' For example, she has a dream house in mind that she would like to realise one day from first sketch to final adaptation. 'An archetype of shelter according to Anke Design, born from my experiences and design solutions of the past years. Embedded in a specific spot at the lake. I believe this project will come to me one day.' (Text: Caroline Meeusen)



Both the owner and Gawlik herself wanted to create an atmosphere that was completely different from the bustle of the city centre. This very much determined the choice of colours. The natural micro concrete and the rounding off of sharp corners are also a result of this. 'This allowed us to create a calm and revitalising space,' we hear. The apartment is surrounded by a large terrace that they want to turn into a natural garden that you can admire from every room.

'MY DESIGN IS A SEARCH FOR BEAUTY'

Like all of Anke Design's projects, this home is also an expression of pure harmony and simplicity. 'With my projects, I want to appeal to people who want to maintain a balance between the tumult of the outside world and the tranquillity of the interior. In my opinion, the pursuit of minimalism is an expression of maturity and a particular sensitivity to the space and nature that surround us. In my case, it is a consequence of the path I have taken to achieve this balance; it is the



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