



Photos: Dan Mahon.



homebodies

KATHRYN WILSON / SHOE DESIGNER.

WORDS JO WALKER

In the middle of Auckland stands an apartment building dating back to 1919, which used to house the priests of nearby St Benedict's Church. These days the residents are a bit less spiritually exalted. Cult shoe designer Kathryn Wilson is one of them.

Living alone, Kathryn shares her space – "all stucco archways and wooden floors and high ceilings" – with her Cornish Rex cat, Mr Bigglesworth. He's "a little messy in the litter box", she says, but otherwise good company. And not your average cat, it seems. "He plays fetch and jumps up on your shoulder and he's really cool. I'm so in love with him!"

He's also inspiration for a wodge of "joke presents" strewn throughout the apartment: cat-themed cushions and perfume holders that sit alongside Kathryn's collection of vintage mirrors and, of course, many, many shoes.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Kathryn doesn't actually know how many pairs she owns. "That shoe wall that's in my bedroom, my boyfriend got that built for my Christmas present, so that was really cute. I think we fit about 80 pairs of heels in there." A countless number of flats live in separate shelving. "In the morning I wake up and go, 'Ah, which one shall I wear today? Which lucky one of you gets to come with me?' I love it!"

A self-confessed "clean freak", Kathryn certainly has a thing for whites. "All my friends hassle me because everything is white, but I do like everything to look a bit crispy because then I know my life's in order." Small and neat as a pin – with no home phone or Internet – Kathryn's place is a "haven" away from her busy working life. "It's a safe little quiet place that you know you can escape to when the rest of the day's been so hectic." ❁

