



Wild HORSES

**Laid back, muted tones, retro graphics, quirky.
Pony Rider does it to perfection, writes RACHAEL GAVIN.**

Relaxed homewares with a street edge, that's what Kelly Searl was looking for to decorate her home. When she couldn't find anything in that style she decided to create it herself by launching her own brand, Pony Rider.

After working with some of Australia's most iconic fashion labels, including Sass & Bide and One Teaspoon, Searl wanted a project she could grow with. She also wanted something that had a smoother pace than fashion. Given homewares has two seasons, not four, and there's no need for fittings and complex patterns, it seemed like a natural move.

That said Searl's fashion industry skills are paramount in the running of Pony Rider. It shows in the way the products are merchandised, the pricing and brand positioning. "We always have a season and we always have an influence in the season," she says. "Where some brands just continue with the same type of product, we always try to mix it up a little and make it feel a bit different every time."

"The concept behind the brand was 'use the best in the everyday' originally. We've now changed the brand philosophy, purely because we found a lot of brands starting to say the same thing... We decided for the brand

philosophy to be 'lovely gear for creative folk', so the whole point with Pony Rider is we produce affordable premium cushions that were treated like a t-shirt garment really... because I suppose your home should be treated with the same amount of respect as your garments."

Pony Rider offers cushions, throws, blankets, tea towels, table cloths and wall flags. Products have a retro look and a casual feel. Design inspiration comes from Searl's love of 1950s typographic print. While she says the look started out quite feminine it has now got a more masculine feel though it changes all the time. The brand is also well-