Lace cowl
A beautiful lace cowl in exquisite but rather complex pattern.

MATERIALS
- 3 hanks of Alchemy Silk Purse yarn (100% silk, 126m/50g) and 2 balls of Grignasco Kid seta (70% mohair 30% silk, 210m/25g) – hold these two yarns together throughout. Alchemy has Haiku yarn that's very similar to Kid seta by Grignasco. You can use practically any yarn and needles for this project, just swatch to see how many stitches you'd like to cast on.
- US 9/ 5.5mm needles
- Scrap yarn and hook or other tools and materials you prefer for provisional cast on
- DK or heavier weight cotton yarn for placing live stitches for blocking. I recommend cotton yarn as it's smooth and it will be easy to transfer stitches back on needles. The scrap yarn should be thick enough to keep the size of the life stitches.
- Darning needle for Kitchener stitch grafting
- Scrap yarn for life lines /strongly recommended

SIZES
One size
Finished measurements – 30 cm (11 ¾ in) wide by 140 cm (55 in) long before grafting.

GAUGE
Approximately 16.5 sts x 15 rows = 10x10 cm (4x4 in).

ABBREVIATIONS
ss – selvage stitch (the very first and the very last stitch of every row). Use any you like, I recommend slipping first stitch of each purlwise, and knitting last stitch of every row.
k – knit
ktbl – knit through the back loop
yo – yarn over
skp – slip one stitch, knit the next one, pass the slipped stitch over. You can use any other left=slanting decrease, like ssk.
k2tog – knit 2 together
p – purl
p2tog – purl two together
p2togtbl – purl two together through the back loops
() – repeat stitches in brackets, until you get to the number of stitches required to do the part after the brackets.

PATTERN

Cast on number of stitches divisible by 8 (but not less than 16), plus 2 more stitches for selvage.

Please note, that the number of stitches at the end of odd rows is different than at the end of even rows. On the odd rows, you have two increases and one decrease per pattern repeat, so at the end the number of stitches should be divisible by 9, plus two selvage stitches. On the even rows, you have one decrease per pattern repeat and no increases, so at the end the number of stitches should be back to divisible by 8, plus 2 selvage stitches – one on each side.

Row 1: ss, yo, ktbl, yo, (skp, k5, yo, ktbl, yo), skp, k5, ss.
Row 2: ss, p4, p2togtbl, (p7, p2togtbl), p4, ss.
Row 3: ss, yo, ktbl, yo, k2, (skp, k3, yo, ktbl, yo, k2), skp, k3, ss.
Row 4: ss, p2, p2togtbl, (p7, p2togtbl), p5, ss.
Row 5: ss, ktbl, yo, k4, (skp, k1, yo, ktbl, yo, k4), skp, k1, yo, ss.
Row 6: ss, p1, p2togtbl, (p7, p2togtbl), p6, ss.
Row 7: ss, k5, (k2tog, yo, ktbl, yo, k5), k2tog, yo, ktbl, yo, ss.
Row 8: ss, p3, p2tog, (p7, p2tog), p4, ss.
Row 9: ss, k3, (k2tog, k2, yo, ktbl, yo, k3), k2tog, k2, yo, ktbl, yo, ss.
Row 10: ss, p5, p2tog, (p7, p2tog), p2, ss.
Row 11: ss, yo, k1, (k2tog, k4, yo, ktbl, yo, k1), k2tog, k4, yo, ktbl, ss.
Row 12: ss, p6, p2tog, (p7, p2tog), p1, ss.

Row																					Row
12	■	■	■	■	■	■		/		■	■	■	■	■	■	■		/		■	
	♦	o	■	■	■	■	/		■	o	♦	o	■	■	■	■	/		■	o	11
10	■	■	■	■	■		/		■	■	■	■	■	■	■		/		■	■	
	o	♦	O	■	■	/		■	■	■	o	♦	o	■	■	/		■	■	■	9
8	■	■	■		/		■	■	■	■	■	■	■		/		■	■	■	■	
	o	♦	O	/		■	■	■	■	■	o	♦	o	/		■	■	■	■	■	7
6	■	\			■	■	■	■	■	■	\			■	■	■	■	■	■		
	o	■	\		■	■	■	■	o	♦	o	■	\		■	■	■	■	o	♦	5
4	■	■		\		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	\			■	■	■	■	■	
	■	■	■	\		■	■	o	♦	o	■	■	■	\		■	■	o	♦	o	3
2	■	■	■	■	\		■	■	■	■	■	■	■		\			■	■	■	
	■	■	■	■	■	\		o	♦	o	■	■	■	■	■	\		o	♦	o	1

Symbol	Meaning
■	knit on RS, purl on WS
o	yarn over
♦	knit through the back loop
\	skp on RS, p2togtbl on WS
/	k2tog on RS, p2tog on WS
(empty box)	pattern repeat

Empty boxes are no action, just skip them. Odd rows read from right to left, even rows – left to right. The chart doesn't show selvage stitches.

INSTRUCTIONS

Cast on 50 stitches using provisional cast on method. I prefer to crochet a chain of 4-5 stitches longer than the number of stitches you need with scrap yarn, then using your main yarn pick up the stitches through the bumps on the back side of the chain. Here: http://bellaknitting.typepad.com/bella_knitting/2007/10/provisional-cas.html - is a good tutorial on how make that. The advantage is that you will have as many live stitches on the provisional cast-on side, as you will on your regular end of knitting.

To make a wider cowl, add or substract number of stitches divisible by 8 (e. g. cast on 42, 58 etc stitches).

If you cast on 50 stitches, you will make 4 repeats of the pattern plus the stitches in the beginning and the end of the row. Each additional 8 stitches will give you one pattern repeat more.

Purl one row, and then knit in pattern for the length desired. I did 18 repeats of the pattern. The length depends on you – how many times you wish to wrap the cowl around your neck and how tightly.

I strongly recommend placing a lifeline every 1 or 2 pattern repeats.
Here: http://www.knittingdaily.com/blogs/daily/archive/2008/12/05/my-lace-scarf-and-a-free-project.aspx is a good explanation and some tips about lifelines. Do make sure your lifelines are long enough and you have plenty of room for lace to stretch during blocking – I recommend keeping your lifelines on until you are finished with the project – take them out after blocking and grafting.

When you have got enough of length it's time to block. Take some thick smooth cotton scrap yarn and using a darning needle transfer the live stitches on it. Leave plenty of room for blocking on each side. Make some knots at each end so that stitches do slip off by accident. Cut the working yarn, leaving a very long end (4 times the width of the cowl after blocking. Wind it on a small piece of plastic, so that it does not get tangled during washing/blocking). Now undo your provisional cast on, and place the stitches on the cotton scrap yarn too. This will allow both ends to block in the same way.

Block the cowl, using your preferred way. I washed mine carefully and then blocked.

Now transfer your stitches on needles, making sure that when you fold the cowl in two, your stitches are positioned so that the long end of the yarn is at the tip of the needle, and that the bottom stitches are aligned accordingly.

Graft using Kitchener stitch. Here's my favourite tutorial on Kitchener:
http://knitty.com/ISSUEsummer04/FEATtheresasum04.html.