



Christa Giles designs beautiful stuff. Functional, whimsical, detailed, interesting stuff. You can see a whole bunch of her work in Twist, including [Boundless](#) and [Lara](#). Here she shares her inspiration, process and some helpful tips for the gorgeous [Candlewick](#), from our newest issue. Keep up with Christa on her [website](#)!



This sketch was first submitted to Twist Collective for Fall 2011 (when they chose [Boundless](#) and [Asher](#) (!!)), resubmitted for Winter 2011 (when they chose [Corinth](#) and [Thornia](#) (!!!)), and then held for Spring 2012 (!!!!!) The mood boards prepared by Kate and her team are always so inspiring that my head is overflowing with ideas. Sometimes I send them a ton of swatches and sketches, other times I send photos of fully-made things that fit the theme.



My original design idea came from this question- if a Bond girl wore handknits, what would they look like? I think I had been watching Casino Royale while working on another project, and this idea began drifting around in my head. It would be black; it would be close fitting; it would have a high collar but a plunging neckline, and it would be sexy. I had also been noticing that the lace patterns that were sticking in my head were those with a fair amount of texture to them, those made by combining decreases, plain stitches, and yarn overs in ways that created changes in fabric depth, not just opacity.



My laptop had been suffering from a cracked case for several months, and just before it was time to start writing up the pattern, the screen decided to die, so my new glam writing space was a table in our living room, with a HUGE old monitor taking up most of the table while I used the laptop's keyboard to type. The pieces of graph paper you can see here are bits of chart that I printed and cut apart, so I could figure out the spacing for every size that would keep the main Honeybee motif in the right place while removing or filling in extra stitches for larger or smaller bodies. Sandi Rosner and the tech editing team at Twist Collective deserve special credit for this pattern, as it got a major rehashing of the charts that resulted in each size having its own page, instead of the knitter having to do all the cutting and pasting manually!



Candlewick is written to be worked in pieces, from the bottom up, and then the fronts are joined to the back with a saddle extension from the sleeves. Above is what the piece will look like when you get to the blocking stage.



To get the collar to stand up during blocking, I propped it around the lid from a small wicker basket that has been living in my collection of containers for years... see? There's a reason why I don't like to get rid of things, they might be useful someday!



Post-blocking, the sleeves are ready to be set in, then side seams worked from hem to armpit and cuff to armpit- I recommend these seam-paths so the most visible areas look smooth, and you can leave any fudging for the less-inspected armpit.



I love these buttons. I wanted something with a bit of subtle glam, but knew that cut glass would be too heavy for this airy sweater. These are made from mussel shells, and I found them at the glorious [Button Button](#) shop in the Gastown section of Vancouver. The yarn from [Elann](#) is wonderful too - I'm making a second version in my size, using the same Peruvian Baby Silk in the same colour.



Final photos here were taken on the shop mannequin at Three Bags Full (thanks Francesca and Zoe! [best bosses ever]) You can see that the stitches are expanded a fair bit, especially on the

upper back.. the mannequin is a 36 bust, the sweater is a 34ish, and the model that Twist Collective used for Jane Heller's photos was probably a 32!



This is the joy of knitting for yourself, getting to choose the size you make based on the amount of ease you want (bloglady's note- for more on ease, see [Sandi's article](#)). The size I am making for myself is the 46?, with short rows in the front to give my 38Es a bit more space without adding extra width (I've made that mistake too many times before, and have the baggy-busted sweaters to prove it) so it will be fairly close-fitting at my bust, and hang from there. Photos can be found on my [Ravelry project page](#) whenever I finish it!



Are you thinking of making Candlewick? I'd love to see your projects! Please share your photos on Ravelry (I watch for user activity on my patterns pretty regularly so I will spot them when you post) or drop me a note in the comments if you are sharing your photos and project notes elsewhere!