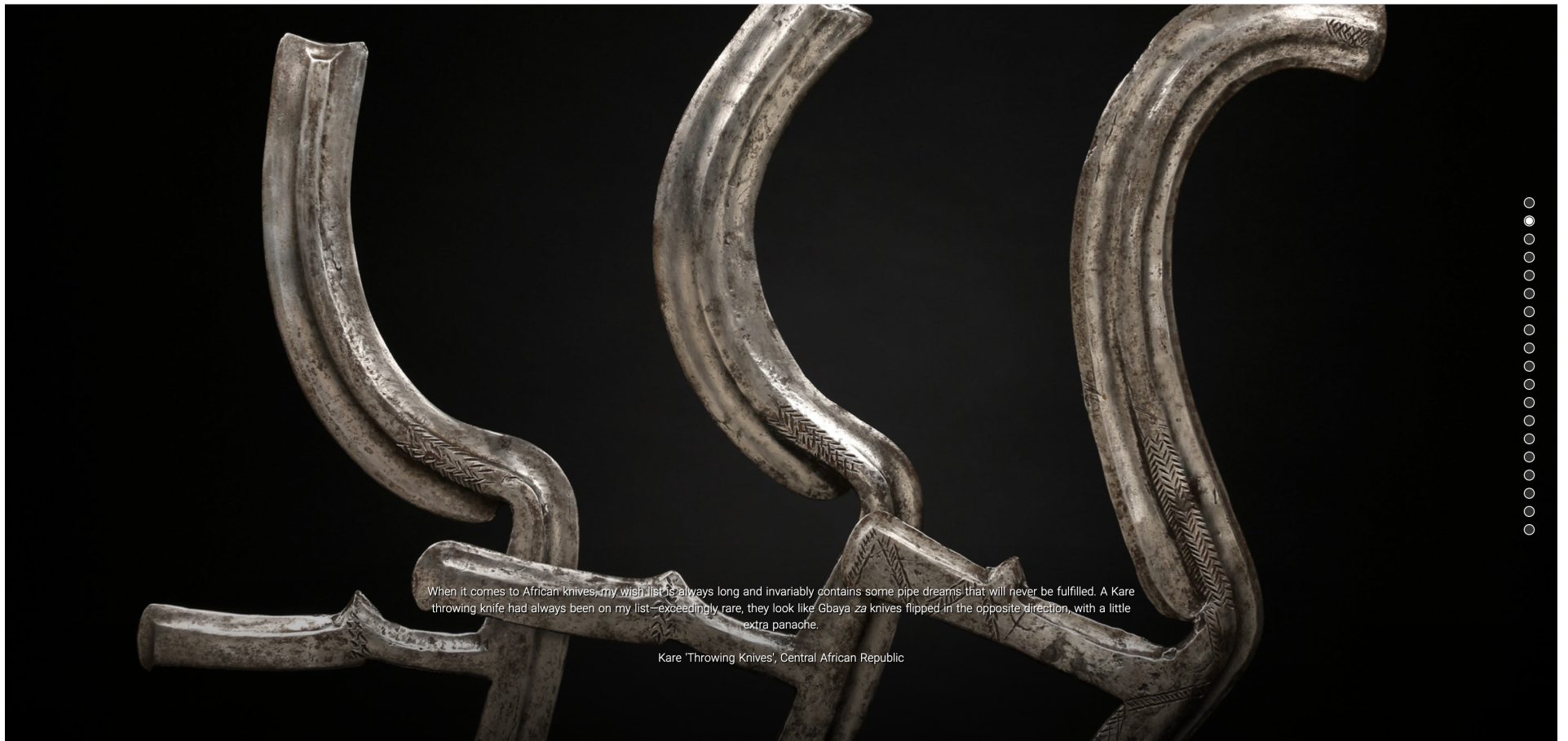


KNIFE GROUPS

Iron Forests

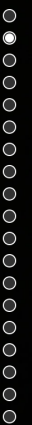
August 01, 2020
By: Ethan Rider





When it comes to African knives, my wish list is always long and invariably contains some pipe dreams that will never be fulfilled. A Kare throwing knife had always been on my list—exceedingly rare, they look like Gbaya za knives flipped in the opposite direction, with a little extra panache.

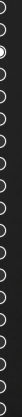
Kare 'Throwing Knives', Central African Republic





My plan was to lust after the two examples that I knew of and accept the fact that I would never own one. So I was shocked when in 2016, a lot of THREE Kare throwing knives came up at auction. While the bidding was not surprisingly competitive, I made sure they came home to me in Oakland, California.

Kru | Grebo | Dan | Ngere 'Curved Swords', Liberia and Ivory Coast





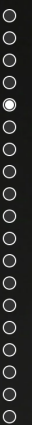
Holding three of these knives in my hand was surreal. Knowing that they would sell quickly (besides the one I kept for myself), it occurred to me that I should take a photograph of the trio before they were separated forever.

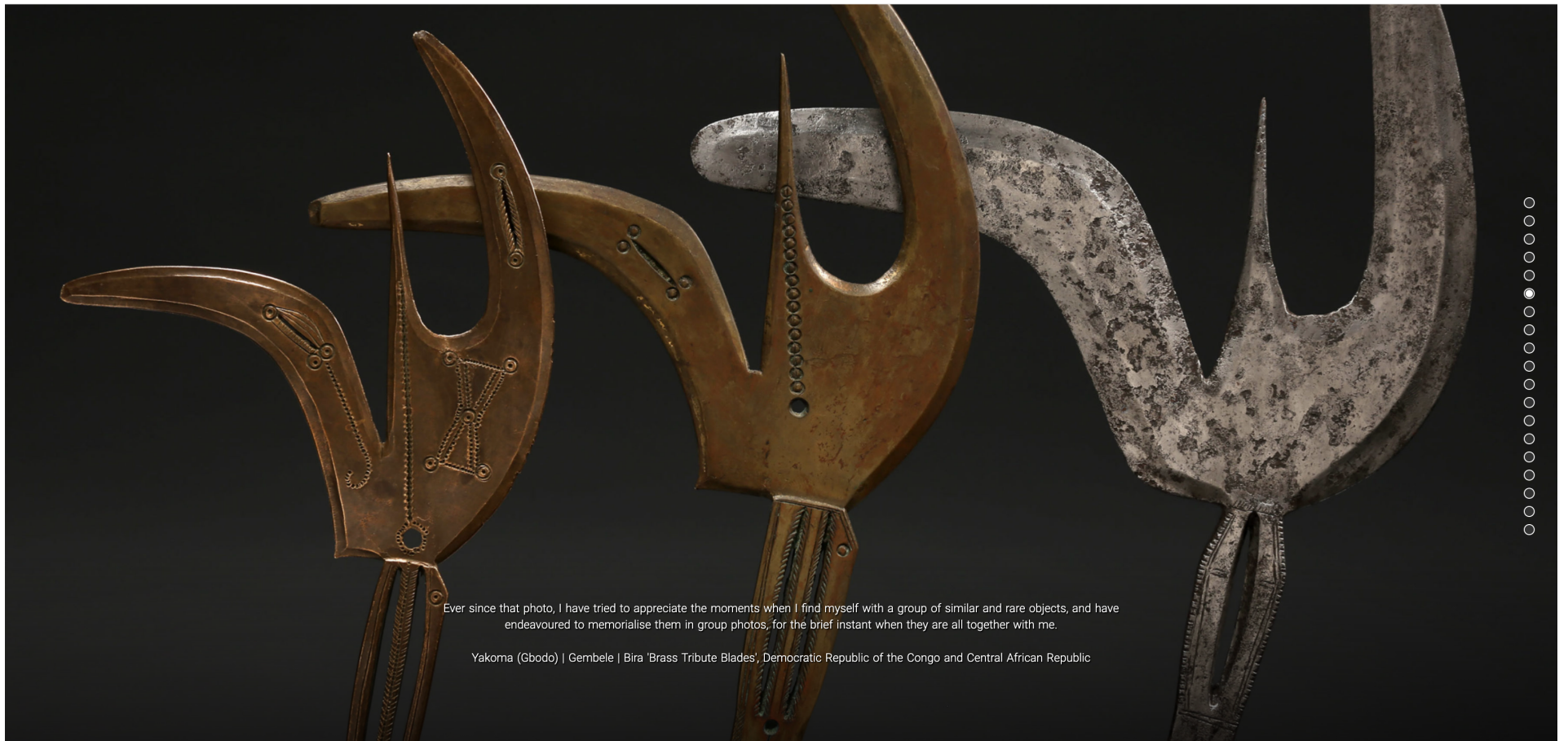
Teda | Tubu-Daza | Zaghawa *Musri* 'Prestige / Throwing Knives', Chad and Sudan



I didn't want a simple shot of the three knives placed next to each other—I wanted a photograph to commemorate the trio; I wanted something special to remember them.

Gbaya | Bumali | Bekwil | Njem | Konabem 'Sabre Knives', Cameroon, Central African Republic, Republic of the Congo, and Gabon



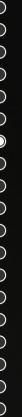


Ever since that photo, I have tried to appreciate the moments when I find myself with a group of similar and rare objects, and have endeavoured to memorialise them in group photos, for the brief instant when they are all together with me.

Yakoma (Gbodo) | Gembele | Bira 'Brass Tribute Blades', Democratic Republic of the Congo and Central African Republic



Banda 'Crowless' Throwing Knives, Central African Republic and Democratic Republic of the Congo



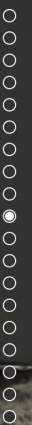


Bango | Wagogambanza Lobala | Mondzombo | Ngbaka | Bondjo 'Double Sickle Blades', Democratic Republic of the Congo



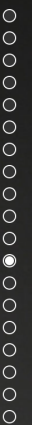


Ngul | Yanzi | Mbuun 'Mossa' Knife Handles, Democratic Republic of the Congo





Fur 'Asymmetric Prestige Blades', Sudan





Ngbandi | Mbanja *Gbo / Ndundo* Throwing Knives, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Central African Republic



BEHIND THE SCENES

In every photograph, the knives are positioned mostly with magnets, but sometimes with other materials. I always try to minimise the amount of Photoshop that goes into each shot—typically, the heaviest manipulation involves removing the pole that holds the magnet. Aside from that, I try to keep these photos as organic and true as possible.





