

***PERPETUAL
COMBAT
MACHINE***



**THE DESIGN PHILOSOPHY
OF LACI SZABO**



Laci Szabo has been around the block a few times. He has served in both the military and law enforcement, starred in an action film (The Vault), and practiced martial arts with some of the world's most notorious self-defense and knife fighting experts (Fred Perrin and James Keating immediately come to mind). In addition, he is perhaps best known for his work as a designer and purveyor of the most efficiently designed combat tools of the modern age.

In a brief interview with Laci, I was able to gain insight into his background, design philosophy, and the different mentalities of self-defense.

Can you please explain your general philosophy behind the design of your weapons and tools?

Ergonomics – adapt the tool to the human form, not the other way around. I want my weapons to be the extension of the arm or to deliver the maximum power with minimum effort. You lose fine motor skills in a fight – my weapons do not require a user's manual, they just fall into place when you pick them up.



KABRI KABRONG



UUK



How did you become interested in this field of expertise?

My dad is Hungarian – I had a knife in my hand before I could walk. In the Marine Corps, we had the “line” system for combatives, it further sparked my interest. I had a design in mind as what the perfect knife would be for me (the UUK) during my first Riddle of Steel (James Keating’s training camp). I met Ernest Mayer of Black Cloud knives and showed him the design, he said “yes I can do it” when everybody else said “why?” I had six UUKs made by him thinking six would last me a lifetime. But when I opened the box I immediately sold three, so I thought: “Mmmm, maybe I could make a business out of this.” The rest happened quickly – I now have more than 100 different designs, six patents and I have been in business since December 1993.

What are your major sources of inspiration for weapon design?



HELL'S CANYON
SURVIVAL KNIFE



OMANI

Either ergonomics or inspiration from historically-proven weapons. All UUKs and hybrids are designed for performance only, screw the aesthetics. Some are pure devastation (Battle Sickle, Ogre, Dueling Knife, Express, Narcs, etc). Some are inspired by proven designs and reshaped for modern use (Kabri Kabrong, Omani, Atomic Kerambits). Mostly I try to design a tool with better attributes for a specific purpose, or I redesign a historical weapon for our times or I see something cool in a movie and redesign it to be practical. Some knives like the UUK I designed entirely from ground zero as a concept.



FIXED BLADE
DOUK DOUK

SZABOFLY





PAYBACK

QO



You come out with a wide range of new designs on a regular basis. What is the main purpose of continually creating new weapons?

I try to adapt to the needs of an ever changing society. There is no such a thing as THE perfect tool. But the best tool you can buy for self defense is training.



CUSTOM KITCHEN KNIFE SET

What is your general philosophy toward self defense and its role in the average civilian lifestyle?

In regards to self defense, there are several kinds of people: from one extreme to another:

First: people who have been sheltered all their lives. They live in privileged neighborhoods and were never exposed to any kind of violence. They might see it in the news but have absolutely no reason to believe something bad could happen to them. They walk around absolutely unaware of their surroundings. Not their fault, just a product of their environment. If ever something bad happens to them, they take years to recover from the trauma.

Second: people who choose to ignore the problem, even when it happens in front of them. They usually say something like “it is not my karma, so it can’t happen to me” or “violence begets violence” or my favorite “I can talk my way out of any situation.”



FELONY STOP



FELONY STOP SWAT



NARC UNDERCOVER

ATOMIC KERAMBIT



KERUUK



LA UUK

Third: the victims of a crime now living in fear and not knowing what to do.

Fourth: the victims of a crime who now had their eyes opened and are doing something about it by training or working out.

Fifth: people who revolve their lives around martial arts, weapons and all things related.

Sixth: the pros – cops, military, contractors, etc.

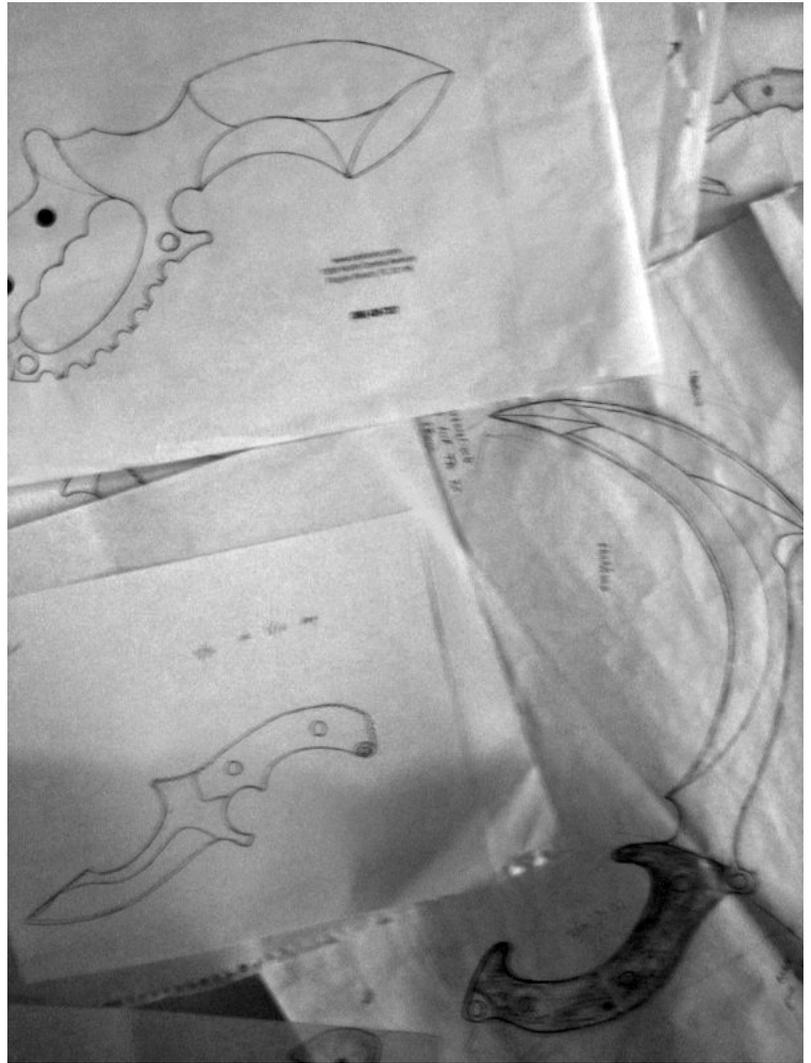
Seventh: criminals who are the lifestyle the most aware and ready of all groups.

I believe the truth lies in the middle, a healthy daily habit like taking a shower... should not take longer.

Laci Szabo's collaborations with knifemakers and co-designers include a wide range of people and companies, including:

John Greco
James Keating
Ernest Mayer (Black Cloud)
David Mosier
Bud Nealy
Robert Newton
Fred Perrin
DJ Urbanovsky (American Kami)
Spyderco
Strider Knives
and others...

His range of products can be purchased at www.szaboinc.com.



Interview conducted on December 28, 2009.

All images copyright © Laci Szabo 2010. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Ebook introduction and design copyright © Dan Bergevin (Capitalized Living) 2010. All rights reserved.



www.capitalizedliving.com