For many years now, the Western practice of primitive art collecting has given rise to numerous studies, most of them concerning museographic collections. Departing from the current (literary, historical, sociological, or psychological) approaches, we have undertaken intensive ethnographical investigations among French private collectors. Our aim is to apprehend the intimate relationship they construct with their artefacts. In this paper we will focus on the complex ties between aesthetics and authenticity, on the assimilation of objects to persons, and on the imaginary at work in the collectors’ assessment of their "quality".