

GALERIE LAMY
CHABOLLE



A Louis XIV-style marquetry cabinet by Charles Hunsinger

France

1859–1893

Carved and ebonised limewood, marquetry of ebony, walnut,
snakewood, beech, pear, rosewood, satinwood, mahogany,
hornbeam, sycamore, boxwood and engraved bone, on an oak
carcass

145 × 81 × 45 cm (57.1 × 31.9 × 17.7 in.)



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Au Musée d'Orsay est conservé l'un des plus importants meubles exécutés par Charles Hunsinger, en tilleul sculpté et noirci, comme le présent cabinet, et à marqueterie d'ébène, noyer et amourette, entre autres bois précieux. Le cabinet d'Orsay, comme le présent meuble, compte parmi les nombreux « meubles de luxe et de fantaisie » produits par Hunsinger à partir de 1859, souvent inspirés des cabinets de Pierre Gole ou des premières œuvres d'André-Charles Boulle.

The Musée d'Orsay holds one of the most significant pieces of furniture made by Charles Hunsinger, in carved and ebonised limewood, as is the present cabinet, with marquetry of ebony, walnut and snakewood, among other precious woods.¹ The Orsay cabinet belongs to the many “meubles de luxe et de fantaisie”² produced by Hunsinger from 1859 onwards—often inspired by the cabinets of Pierre Gole or the early works of André-Charles Boulle—a group to which the present cabinet likewise belongs.

A celebrated cabinet in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, attributed in turn to Gole and to Boulle,³ is thus part of a group of pieces that seems to have suggested to Hunsinger the use, for the stand, of columns with Ionic capitals sheathed in floral marquetry on a ground of ebonised wood, at a third of the height. The reverse of the doors of the Rijksmuseum cabinet also bears, as here, a *vaso di fiori* motif in which butterflies and dragonflies likewise appear. Hunsinger therefore appears to have taken as his model for the present cabinet the form and ornament of late seventeenth-century cabinets, which he imitates here with great virtuosity: abundant flowers in flawless marquetry, in a polychromy that draws on more than half a dozen woods and on delicate bone motifs, springing from a gadrooned baluster vase, with laurel wreaths, acanthus and oak foliage, fillets, ribbons, profiles and grotesque masks in engraved bone, *etc.*

NOTES

1. Bascou et al., 1988, p. 147
2. Ledoux-Lebard, 2000, p. 264
3. Van Duin et Dorscheid, 2020, p. 35

LITERATURE

See Marc Bascou et al., *Musée d'Orsay. Catalogue sommaire illustré des arts décoratifs*, Paris, 1988; Denise Ledoux-Lebard, *Le Mobilier français du XIXe siècle. Dictionnaire des ébénistes et des menuisiers*, Paris, 2000; and Paul van Duin and Jan Dorscheid, 'Floral wood marquetry cabinets attributed to André-Charles Boulle — A technical comparison', *Technè*, no. 49, 2020.

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