

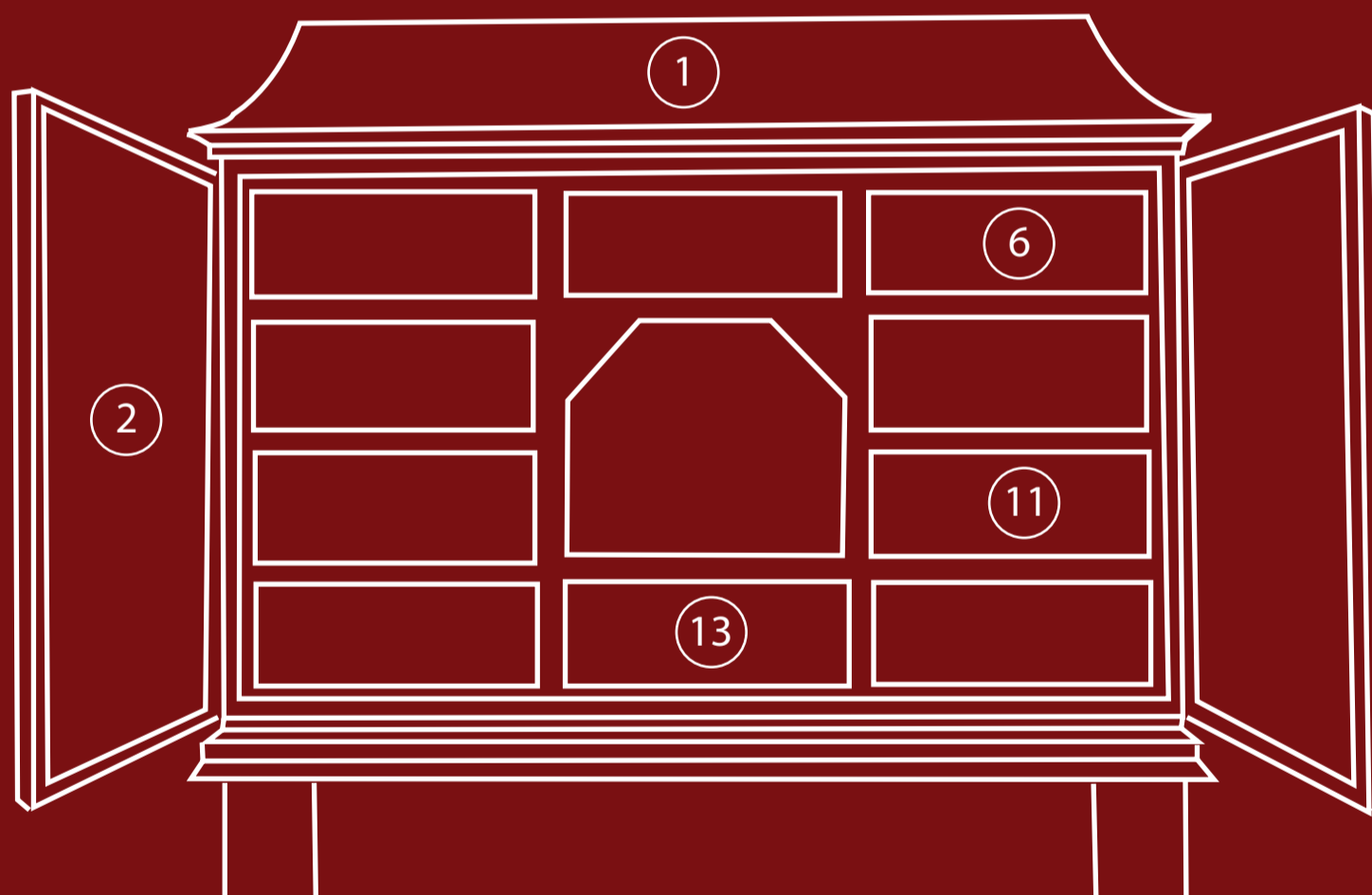


**Cabinet**  
Walnut, ebony, copper, tin  
17<sup>th</sup> century, Flanders

## A flemish cabinet

Cabinets are precious pieces of furniture, with drawers and storage compartments that are sometimes hidden. They were very fashionable in Europe during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Those chests, fitted with handles and garnished with drawers, became art furniture in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. They were lavishly adorned with variously coloured wood marquetrys, inlays of precious materials (silver, ivory...), ornaments (garlands, masks, flowers, animals ...) or paintings representing biblical or mythological scenes. Cabinets from the South Netherlands benefited from an international renown: Antwerp, the « capitol of arts » welcomed many artists and its harbour received tropical products such as ebony, ivory or tortoiseshell. They competed with their German, French, Italian and Spanish counterparts.

This 17<sup>th</sup> century walnut cabinet with ebony veneer, seemingly austere, reveals, once open, fourteen mythological subjects that were painted in oil on wood, and all framed with very thin mouldings. Those paintings, which were inspired by Rubens' style, illustrate Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Homer's *Iliad*.



### Scenes from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, 1<sup>st</sup> century

1. Pegasus, the winged horse, emerging from Medusa's wound, one of the three Gorgones beheaded by brave Perseus
2. Pomona, the female-gardener is receiving Vertumnus' visit. We have the same scene at number 11
6. Apollo is looking at Daphne being transformed into a laurel: her head is already covered by leaves

### Scene from Homer's *Iliad*, 8<sup>th</sup> century BC

13. Aeneas is fleeing from burning Troy: he is carrying his father Anchises on his back and is running behind his son Ascanius