



Paul Elie Ranson, *Tigre dans le jungle* (Tiger in the Jungle),
from *L'Estampe originale*, Album I, 1893





Paul Elie Ranson
(French, 1862–1909)

Tigre dans le jungle (Tiger in the Jungle), from *L'Estampe originale, Album I*, 1893
color lithograph

14 1/2 x 11 3/16 inches

Museum Purchase: Funds provided by the Jean Y. Roth Memorial Fund,
the Graphic Arts Council, and Pamela Berg
2014.156.1

French painter, printmaker, and designer Paul Elie Ranson was a vital member of the Nabis (the Prophets), a group formed by a handful of young art students at the Académie Julian in Paris in 1889. Although they did not adopt a single artistic style, the Nabis shared a common language that emphasized areas of unmodulated color, simplified drawing, and compositions inspired by Japanese prints. Ranson, who was trained in both the decorative arts and painting, was known for the elegant, sinuous line that characterizes his paintings, prints, and tapestry designs. In *Tigre dans le jungle (Tiger in the Jungle)*, he renders the fierce tiger in sweeping calligraphic lines that evoke Asian ink drawings. Stylized irises and foliage animate the background and further reference Japanese motifs.

This print was published as part of *L'Estampe originale (The Original Print)*, a print portfolio produced from 1893 to 1895. Each quarter, subscribers would receive ten original prints by some of the best artists of the decade. Pierre Bonnard, Paul Gauguin, Auguste Renoir, and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec were all contributors. *L'Estampe originale* was part of a wider boom in printmaking in fin-de-siècle France. Color lithography flourished as never before, earning this moment the nickname “the color revolution.”

Lithography

A printing process that works on the principle that oil and water repel each other. The artist first draws on a stone with a greasy material, such as a lithographic pencil or crayon. The stone is then treated to chemically fix the drawn image into the stone. The artist next covers the stone with a thin film of water, then rolls ink over the stone. The oily ink will stick to the image in greasy crayon but not to the water-covered areas. Once inked, the artist lays paper over the stone and runs the stone and paper through a press under pressure. The artist then carefully removes the paper to reveal the mirror-image of the drawing on the stone. The artist repeats the water and ink process to print additional copies.

Discussion and Activities

1. Draw this image on your own paper. What did you notice about the work when you drew it?
2. Describe the lines in this image. Where are they fluid or choppy? Long or short? Curved or linear? Thick or thin? Do the lines suggest movement or rest?
3. In what ways is this image realistic and in what ways is it not? Identify details in the image that support your response. How does the artist play with perspective and depth?
4. Imagine that this print is the first page of a graphic novel. Create the story that follows.

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This project was made possible by a grant from the

