During the 1890s and early 1900s, new approaches to color lithography and etching, as well as creative collaborations between artists, printers, and publishers fueled an explosion of avant-garde printmaking in Paris. *L'estampe originale: Painters, Printers, Paris* features a selection of works on paper from the Art Center’s Permanent Collections that were produced in and near Paris between 1890 and 1905. Several important new acquisitions are exhibited: Vincent van Gogh’s *Portrait of Dr. Gachet*, 1890; Paul Cézanne’s *Bathers (small plate)*, 1893; and Jacques Villon’s *Les cartes (The Cards)*, 1903.

The term, “l’estampe originale” (original print), became popular during the second half of the nineteenth century when print publishers used it to distinguish artists’ prints from “reproductive” prints. An “original print” is an original work of printed art. To make an “original print,” the artist cuts, etches, or draws an *original* image on one or more printing matrices such as woodblock, etching plate, or lithograph stone. The printer (who may or may not be the designer of the image) takes impressions from the matrix. “Original prints” are multiple original works of art.

An “original print” is the opposite of a “reproductive” print. To make a *reproductive* print, the printmaker carves, draws, or etches a printing matrix in order to reproduce or interpret a work of art that already exists in another medium (for example, an oil painting). Until around 1840, there was no way to reproduce and publish copies of oil paintings, drawings, watercolors, and sculpture other than by means of engraving, etching, wood engraving, or lithography. Skillful reproductive printmakers translated all of a painting’s color, texture, richness, and subtlety into black-and-white line and dot patterns. Thanks to the invention of photography, printmakers no longer had to exercise what had long been one of their principal jobs—making printed reproductions. Consequently, printmaking became a creative medium. Late nineteenth-century *peintres-graveurs* (painter-printmakers) became freer stylistically. They were less bound to naturalistic representation and more experimental in their use of print media. They became makers of their own art.

During the 1890s in Paris, art magazines and posters provided new venues for artists to publish prints. Both Henri Rousseau and Paul Gauguin, for example, made original lithographs and etchings that were bound into deluxe art magazines. Pierre Bonnard and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec designed the lithographic posters that we now recognize as iconic images of nineteenth-century France. The prints of many of the painter-printmakers active in Paris in the 1890s reveal the influence of the styles, techniques, and subject matter of Japanese woodblock prints that had been flooding into France since the 1870s. The flowing, liquid line, flat areas of transparent color, spatter, pattern, compositional asymmetry, and subject matter of the “floating world” of entertainers and courtesans typical of Japanese prints, were reflected in the works of Bonnard, Mary Cassatt, Edgar Degas, and Toulouse-Lautrec.

During the first phase of the print revival in France (from the 1870s until the late 1880s), etching was the preferred medium for artists’ prints. In Paris, Cassatt, Degas, and Berthe Morisot published their own experimental etchings and aquatints. The physician Dr. Paul Gachet, an amateur etcher and art collector who lived in Auvers-sur-Oise near Paris, made etchings with his friends Camille Pissarro, Cézanne, and van Gogh. The latter, whose only etching was his *Portrait of Dr. Gachet*, dreamed of achieving fame through printmaking, since he was unable to sell his paintings. Villon produced delicious color aquatint and drypoint etchings that evoke the demi-monde of the *Belle Époque*.

During the 1890s, more artists began to use black-and-white and color lithography—once scorned as too commercial—to make original prints. Beginning in March 1893, André Marty brought out his groundbreaking series of portfolios of artists’ prints. Titled “L’estampe originale,” the portfolios were issued quarterly until early 1895, for a total of nine installments. In all, Marty’s publication presented 95 prints: etchings as well as black-and-white and color lithographs. Stylistically, many of the prints published by Marty reflect the vogue for *japonisme* and Art Nouveau. A commercial and critical success, “L’estampe originale” gave an important boost to the stature of artistic lithography. (In the present exhibition, the lithographs by Henri-Gabriel Ibels and Toulouse-Lautrec were published by Marty under the imprint of “L’estampe originale”). His project served as the model for several other contemporary...
print publication ventures in Paris.

The gallerist Ambroise Vollard (1866–1939) followed Marty’s example in publishing prints. A native of the French colony La Réunion in the Indian Ocean, and trained as a lawyer, Vollard opened a gallery in Paris in 1893. He became a passionate advocate for Post-Impressionist and Symbolist art. He selected, coaxed, and cajoled painters into making etchings and lithographs; he hired the printers; financed the collaborative projects; stimulated demand through marketing; and probably more than anyone, deserves the credit for creating the market for modern prints.

Vollard’s first album, “Les peintres-graveurs” (The Painter-Printmakers) (illustrated above), which appeared in July 1896, included prints by twenty-two artists, twelve of whom had also published prints with Marty. Vollard’s second collection, “L’album d’estampes originales de la Galerie Vollard” (Album of Original Prints from the Gallery Vollard), appeared in December 1897. Of the thirty-one artists, nineteen had been represented in “Les peintres-graveurs.” Twenty-four of the prints in the second Vollard album were color lithographs. Rather than the artists themselves, Vollard was probably responsible for this emphasis on lithography, thanks to the involvement of Auguste Clot (1858–1936), a master color lithographer and printer. Clot helped the inexperienced painters Vollard enlisted—including Cézanne—to realize their visions in print. In the master printer’s hands, they were able to take pictorial risks and extend themselves. For example, to make the Bathers (illustrated above right), Cézanne drew the image for the black lines defining the figure and landscape directly on a lithography stone with grease-based litho crayon. Clot processed the stone and printed trial proofs. Cézanne painted watercolor on the proofs. Then, Clot followed the colored brushstrokes on the artist’s maquette to create the color separations. He transferred these elements to other stones, prepared them, and printed the one hundred impressions of this ravishing five-color lithograph.

After publishing his second album, Vollard began accumulating print editions for a third album, including two new images by Cézanne: the Large Bathers color lithograph and a black-and-white Self Portrait. This third album, however, was never completed or published.

In addition to Cézanne, artists in the present exhibition who created prints for portfolios and editions that were published by Vollard include: Bonnard (his poster advertising the first Vollard album, “Les peintres-graveurs”); Degas (Actresses in their Dressing Rooms); and Odilon Redon (“The Apocalypse de Saint-Jean”). Vollard also published or planned to publish prints by Ker-Xavier Roussel, Pierre-Henri Renoir, Paul Signac, and Edouard Vuillard. Furthermore, Vollard published Pablo Picasso’s early etchings and he planned a project, never realized, of publishing counterproofs from Cassatt’s pastels. He also published many deluxe books illustrated with original prints.

These collaborations between painters, printers, and publishers in Paris during the 1890s and subsequent decades inspired the founders of collaborative printmaking workshops in the United States during the 1950s and 60s. In bringing new life to American printmaking, post-war print publishers such as June Wayne (Tamarind), Tatyana Grossman (Universal Limited Art Editions), and Ken Tyler (Gemini GEL) looked back to Ambroise Vollard’s dreams and achievements, and saw the remarkable artworks that painters, printers, and publishers were able to create when they worked together.

3. Pierre Bonnard
Les Peintres Graveurs (The Painter-Printmakers), 1896

7. Paul Cézanne
Les baigneurs, petit planche (Bathers [small plate]), 1897

Exhibition Checklist
Red numbers correspond to illustration

1. Pierre Bonnard (French, 1867–1947)
   *Les chiens* (Dogs), 1893
   Lithograph on paper
   John C. Huseby Print Collection of the
   Des Moines Art Center through Gift, 1992.15

2. Pierre Bonnard (French, 1867–1947)
   *Poster* for “La Revue Blanche,” 1894
   Lithograph on paper
   John Huseby Print Collection of the
   Des Moines Art Center through Gift, 1992.14

   *Les Peintres Graveurs (The Painter-Printmakers)*, 1896
   Lithograph on paper
   Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
   Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth E. Hartman, 1968.37

   *Boulevard*, from the portfolio “Quelques Aspects de la vie de Paris” (Some Aspects of Life in Paris), 1899
   Lithograph on paper
   Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
   Gift of Kenneth E. Hartman, Elise Bloom Hartman Memorial, 1966.8

5. Mary Cassatt (American, active France, 1844–1926)
   *Gathering Fruit*, 1893
   Drypoint, soft-ground etching and color aquatint on paper
   Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
   Purchased with funds from the Mildred M. Bohan Deaccessioning Fund, 1999.6

6. Paul Cézanne (French, 1839–1906)
   *Portrait du peintre Armand Guillaumin avec Drawing of a Hanged Man*, 1873
   Etching on paper
   Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
   Gift of Keith Shaver in honor of Mary and Roy Shaver, 2012.56

7. Paul Cézanne (French, 1839–1906)
   *Les baigneurs, petit planche (Bathers [small plate]),* 1897
   Lithograph in green, yellow, pink, blue, and black on chine volant
   Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
   Purchased with funds from Harry Bookey and Pamela Bass-Bookey, 2012.77

8. Henri-Edmond Cross (French, 1856–1910)
   *Lithograph in green, yellow, pink, blue, and black on chine volant*
   Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;

9. Edgar Degas (French, 1834–1917)
   *Actresses in their Dressing Rooms*, 1879-80 (Plate cancelled by Degas; published by Vollard in 1910)
   Etching and aquatint on paper
   John C. Huseby Print Collection of the
   Des Moines Art Center through Gift, 1992.18

10. Maurice Denis (French, 1870–1947)
    *La Visitation*, 1894
    Lithograph on paper
    John C. Huseby Print Collection of the
    Des Moines Art Center through Purchase, 1995.25

11. Paul Gauguin (French, 1848–1903)
    *Portrait of Stéphane Mallarmé*, 1891
    Etching and aquatint on paper
    Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
    Purchased with funds from the Edmundson Art Foundation, Inc., 1950.35

12. Paul César Helleu (French, 1859–1927)
    *Femme lisant (Alice Helleu Reading)*, ca. 1897
    Drypoint on paper
    John C. Huseby Print Collection of the
    Des Moines Art Center through Gift, 1994.201

13. Henri-Gabriel Ibels (French, 1867–1936)
    *Libert*, from the portfolio “Le Café-Concert,” 1893
    Lithograph on paper
    John C. Huseby Print Collection of the
    Des Moines Art Center through Gift, 1991.50

14. Berthe Morisot (French, 1841–1895)
    *La leçon de dessin (The Drawing Lesson, or Berthe Morisot and Julie Manet)*, ca. 1888–1890
    Drypoint on paper
    Des Moines Art Center’s Louise Noun Collection of Art by Women, 1998.22

15. Pablo Picasso (Spanish, 1881–1973)
    *Saltimbanché au repos (Acrobat at Rest)*, 1905
    Drypoint on paper
    Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
    Purchased by the Benjamin A. Yonker Purchase Fund, 1943.28

16. Pablo Picasso (Spanish, 1881–1973)
    *Au cirque (At the Circus)*, 1905
    Etching on paper
    Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
    Gift of Louise R. Noun, 1948.130

17. Camille Pissarro (French, 1830–1903)
    *Portrait of Cézanne (Portrait of Paul Cézanne)*, 1874
    Etching on paper
    Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
    Gift of Mr. Keith Shaver to the Elise Bloom Hartman Memorial Collection, 1967.47

18. Camille Pissarro (French, 1830–1903)
    *Market Place Scene*, 1887
    Gouache on silk
    Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
    Gift of Louise R. Noun, 1984.24

19. Camille Pissarro (French, 1830–1903)
    *Les faneuses (The Todders, or Hay-todders)*, 1890
    Etching on paper
    Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
    Gift of Keith Shaver in honor of Mary and Roy Shaver, 2012.68

20. Camille Pissarro (French, 1830–1903)
    *Marché aux legumes à Pontoise (Vegetable Market at Pontoise)*, 1881
    Etching and soft ground on paper
    John C. Huseby Print Collection of the
    Des Moines Art Center through Bequest, 1994.275

    Title page from the portfolio “Apocalypse de Saint-Jean” (The Apocalypse of Saint John), 1899
    Transfer lithograph on paper
    Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
    Purchased with funds from the Helen K. Fairall Estate, 2000.5.1

22. Odilon Redon (French, 1840–1916)
    “... et le lisa pour mille ans (And he bound him for a thousand years)” from the portfolio “Apocalypse de Saint Jean” (The Apocalypse of Saint John), 1899
    Transfer lithograph on paper
    Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
    Purchased with funds from the Helen K. Fairall Estate, 2000.5.10

23. Pierre-Auguste Renoir (French, 1841–1919)
    *La danse à la campagne, 2e planche (Dance in the Country, 2nd plate)*, ca. 1890
    Soft ground etching on paper
    John C. Huseby Print Collection of the
    Des Moines Art Center through Gift, 1981.56

    *Sur la plage, a Berneval (On the Beach, at Berneval)*, ca. 1892
    Etching on paper
    Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
    Gift of Louise R. Noun, 1948.131

25. Henri Rivière (French, 1864–1951)
    *Le bourg de Perros-Guirec (The Village of Perros-Guirec)*, 1896
    Color lithograph on paper
    John C. Huseby Print Collection of the
    Des Moines Art Center through Purchase, 1995.58

26. Auguste Rodin (French, 1840–1917)
    *Le printemps (Spring)*, 1883
    Drypoint on paper
    Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
    Purchased with funds from the Edmundson Art Foundation, Inc., 1950.148

27. Henri Rousseau (French, 1844–1910)
    *La guerre (War)*, 1895
    Pen lithograph on orange paper
    Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
    Purchased with funds from the Melva Bucksbaum Fund for Print Acquisitions, 2000.3

28. Ker-Xavier Roussel (French, 1867–1944)
    *Femme en rouge dans un paysage (Woman in Red in a Landscape)*, from “L’Album de paysage,” 1898
    Lithograph on paper
    Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections;
    Purchased with General Memorial Funds and partial gift of Gustave and Frances von Groschwitz, 1975.31

29. Paul Signac (French, 1863–1935)
    *Abend (Fliessingue) (Evening [Fliessingue]),* from “Pan,” 1898
    Lithograph on paper
    John C. Huseby Print Collection of the
    Des Moines Art Center through Bequest, 1994.304
30. Théophile Alexandre Steinlen
(French, 1859–1923)
*Un chat couché, allongé de gauche à droite (A Cat Lying Down, Elongated from Left to Right)*, 1903
Soft ground etching and aquatint on paper
John C. Huseby Print Collection of the Des Moines Art Center through Gift, 1992.22

31. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec
(French, 1864–1901)
*Une spectatrice pendant la chanson de Polin (A Spectator Watching the Singer Polin)* from the portfolio “Le Café-Concert,” 1893
Lithograph on paper
John C. Huseby Print Collection of the Des Moines Art Center through Gift, 1991.49

32. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec
(French, 1864–1901)
*Anna Held*, from “Treize Lithographies” (Thirteen Lithographs), 1898
Lithograph on paper
John C. Huseby Print Collection of the Des Moines Art Center through Gift, 1994.311

33. Suzanne Valadon
(French, 1865–1938)
*Louise nue sur le canapé (Louise Nude on the Couch)*, 1895
Soft ground etching on paper
Des Moines Art Center’s Louise Noun Collection of Art by Women through Bequest, 2003.355

34. Vincent van Gogh
(Dutch, 1853–1890)
*Portrait of Dr. Gachet*, 1890
Etching on paper
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Purchased with funds from the Mildred M. Bohen Deaccession Fund and funds given by Harriet S. Macomber in memory of J. Locke Macomber, 2011.4

35. and cover detail
Jacques Villon
(French, 1875–1963)
*Les cartes (The Cards)*, 1903
Etching, drypoint, and color aquatint on paper
Des Moines Art Center Permanent Collections; Gift of David Kruidenier, Jr. Estate and Elizabeth S. Kruidenier 2002 Revocable Trust, 2012.20

36. Edouard Vuillard
(French, 1868–1940)
*Une galerie au Théâtre du Gymnase (A Balcony at the Théâtre du Gymnase)*, 1900
Color lithograph on paper
John C. Huseby Print Collection of the Des Moines Art Center through Bequest, 1994.324

This gallery guide is published in conjunction with *L’Estampe Originale: Painters, Printers, Paris*. The exhibition is on view in the Print Gallery of the Des Moines Art Center from May 17–September 8, 2013.

The exhibition is organized by Amy N. Worthen, curator of prints and drawings.

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