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## HYPERALLERGIC

### The Tyler School of Art's Class of 2019 Earns Stunning "Diplomas" by Edgar Heap of Birds

A new initiative offers graduating students from Temple University's Tyler School of Art a unique gift of art created by a different alum each year.

Tyler School of Art

May 30, 2019



(Photo Credit – Sam Fritch)

The Class of 2019 at the Tyler School of Art at Temple University received a surprise gift when they graduated on May 10: a limited-edition print by Edgar Heap of Birds, MFA '79, one of Tyler's most distinguished alumni.

The "diploma" is the first product of a Tyler initiative inviting a different member of Tyler's alumni community each year to create a work of art as a gift to graduates to supplement their official diploma.

Heap of Birds, a multimedia artist, educator, activist and member of the Cheyenne tribe, was selected as the project's inaugural artist. Best known for bold paintings with short, sharp

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messages, he partnered with Tyler's Printmaking Program to produce silkscreen prints of an original work with the words "Learn, Share, Lead."

"If you participate in your community then maybe you have the ability to represent it," said Heap of Birds, whose work is on exhibit at MoMA PS1. "I look at these three words like that—you've got this privilege to know, then the issue is to share it and maybe provide leadership if you have something to offer. What are you going to do to help?"

Tyler Dean Susan E. Cahan (above, left) wanted students "to receive something concrete to celebrate the conclusion of their studies at Tyler, something they would keep and enjoy for the rest of their lives."

"As they embark on the next phase of their lives," she said, "we hope they remain curious, become increasingly generous as they mature and become the leaders they were meant to be."

**For more information, visit [tyler.temple.edu/tyler-grads-earn-unique-diplomas](http://tyler.temple.edu/tyler-grads-earn-unique-diplomas).**