

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Art League of Ocean City announces new annual
Cheryl M. Taustin Fellowship for Creative Leadership**

OCEAN CITY, MD — *May 19, 2025* — The Art League of Ocean City announces a new annual fellowship in honor of the late Cheryl Miller Taustin, a prominent figure in Ocean City and Berlin who passed suddenly in 2024.

The Cheryl M. Taustin Fellowship for Creative Leadership will recognize artists, educators, and mentors of any arts medium who demonstrate a synchronicity with Taustin's commitment to causes of social justice, uplifting the unheard voice, and valuing community and thought-provoking artistry. Exemplified through daring leadership, innovative viewpoints, and generative progress, fellows will carry forward Taustin's legacy of cultivating a more beautiful and more empathetic community through the arts.

"Cheryl knew that we are not the sum of our productivity or our job but the strength of our integrity, creativity, and our voice, and she graced so many with hers," Rina Thaler, executive director of the Art League and personal friend of Taustin, said. "She advocated for the arts, the environment, equal rights, animal protection, and love for everyone. She made her opinions known and served as an inspiration and fierce advocate for causes that celebrate living. Cheryl advocated for graciously and peacefully living life and was an active player in life who made resounding entrances and profound exits."

In her early life, Taustin toured as a cabaret singer, singing the standards, Broadway classics, and popular hits of the era at nightclubs and restaurants. It was on her stop at the Embers Restaurant in Ocean City where she met her husband, Jay Taustin, stayed and grew roots, and raised three children. She built community as a founding member of Temple Bat Yam, where she served as a cantorial soloist for more than 30 years.

"It is in the spirit of my mother's leadership in the arts that we celebrate, uplift, and invigorate creatives making bold impact in the community," said her son, Kyler Taustin DePasquale. "There is no better way to honor my mother than to enliven the world with more art."

Daughter Khari Taustin added, "My mom demonstrated, to me as well as her students of all ages and all classrooms, that a combination of purpose and passion are key ingredients to a life fully lived. It is my hope that this sentiment is pivotal to her legacy and that this award and its recipients can play a part in continuing to share in that message."

A committee of local artists and leaders including descendants of Taustin's will select the fellow who will receive a one-year appointment and a \$1,500 stipend. The fellow will also create a piece of artwork to be presented to their successor. Any artist working in any medium will be considered eligible as long as that work directly impacts the Delmarva region and demonstrates a commitment to the values and priorities Taustin championed: art, arts education, leadership and community mindedness, environmental consciousness, and social justice.

Applicants may apply at OCart.org with a rolling deadline.

The Art League of Ocean City is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing the visual arts to the community through education, exhibits, scholarship, programs and community art projects.

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