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A piece by Marlene Yu hangs at the Marlene Yu Museum housed in what once was the YWCA building in downtown Shreveport. The museum will hold a grand opening Dec. 21 with works by Yu and pieces associated with their Rainforest Art Foundation.

## Museum

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The foundation will host nature-related exhibitions featuring local artists, a young artist art gallery, biology and art exploration and the River Rocks Life program.

"People in our community are nostalgic about this building. They learned to swim at the pool," Lusk said.

The River Rocks Life program's goal to save the pool is part of the mission to increase appreciation through aquatic and alpine arts. There is space for a 15-foot traversing wall and the pool would be used as an indoor training facility for kayaking, paddle boarding and canoeing, Lusk said.

"People would no longer have to travel outside of town. There will be a facility right here in Shreveport," she said.

The Marlene Yu Museum also will be housed in the building.

The museum's mission is to preserve, exhibit, document and interpret the life and works of Marlene Tseng Yu, a professional artist and founder of the Rainforest Art Foundation and the

museum.

Born in Taiwan in 1937, Yu loved nature at an early age. She wanted to find a way to keep the mountains and water as she saw them forever. After an impromptu move to New York City and an interview with Barbara Walters in 1969, Yu said she has been busy since. She has over 4,000 works of art, has had over 70 solo exhibitions in the United States, Europe and Asia and has received several awards.

Yu said she fell in love with Shreveport when she came here to visit her daughter, Lusk, and family.

"Shreveport is an artist's paradise. I love it. It reminds me of my hometown of Taiwan," Yu said. "The people are friendly here. People smile and make eye contact and I think, 'do I know that person?' It's very different from New York."

Yu's Forces of Nature series will be on display in the museum's main exhibit hall. The series combines abstraction in nature and natural phenomena, Lusk said.

"I try to paint nature with life," Yu said. "The motion in nature and natural phenomena is emphasized."



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The main gallery at the Marlene Yu Museum, in what once was the YWCA building in downtown Shreveport, houses pieces by the artist that are inspired by nature. The museum will hold a grand opening Dec. 21 with works by Yu and pieces associated with their Rainforest Art Foundation.

### IF YOU GO

**What:** Preview party for the Marlene Yu Museum and the Rainforest Art Foundation.

**Features:** Dinner by Petroleum Club of Shreveport and Farmer's Seafood, cocktails, live entertainment, ribbon cutting.

**When:** 5:30-8:30 p.m. Thursday. Marlene Yu Museum, 710 Travis St., Shreveport.

**Tickets:** \$125 (\$75 tax-deductible), available online at <http://www.rainforestartfoundation.org/tickets/> or at the door by cash, credit card or check.

**What:** Grand opening.

**When:** 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday. Marlene Yu Museum, 710 Travis St., Shreveport.

**Features:** Food, wine, live entertainment, ribbon cutting.  
**Cost:** free; \$10 donation suggested to benefit the Rainforest Art Foundation's Young Artist Gallery and Biology & Art Exploration Program.

**Visual artists:** Shirlene Alexander, Theresa Annie Arbuckle, Christina Arnold, Joe Bluhm, Julie Burgin, Susan Duke, Don Edwards, Debbie Engle, Meg Fournier, Ellen Frautschi, Taffie Garsee, Talbot Hopkins, Curt Harville, Camille Hirsch and Louis Sicard, Bob Horne, Judy Horne, Jim Hudelson, Eva Hurskin, Talbot Hopkins, Dave Ivey, Lana Johnson, Casey Jones, Lynn Laird, Caitlin Lindsay, Rosalyn Liu, Katy Merriman, Jason Phipps, Henry Price, Jeanne Reed, Rachel Sangsura, Christopher Seaman, Robert Streeter, Robert Trudeau, Minor Vinck, Adam Volker, Marlene Yu.



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Marlene Yu and her daughter Stephanie Lusk look over pieces like the one at left by local artist Shirlene Alexander of Caddo Magnet High School before hanging them for a show for the Rainforest Art Foundation.

