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Two Galleries Share Yoko Ono Show, and a Hometown Return to New York

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Inside Art

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Why does a particular gallery decide to focus on a particular artist at a particular time? A look behind the scenes at three coming exhibitions offers some of the reasons — to showcase a recent body of work, to rediscover a war horse, to introduce an underrecognized talent.

Mary Sabbatino, Galerie Lelong's vice president and partner, decided to team up for the first time with the dealer Andrea Rosen on a Yoko Ono exhibition that explores the artist's latest thinking (Ms. Ono's one-woman show at the Museum of Modern Art of work from 1960 to 1971 closed last month).

This show, "The Riverbed" — to be installed in both galleries simultaneously — will involve large stones inscribed by Ms. Ono with instructive words like "remember," "wish" and "dream."

Visitors are meant to pick up the stones, releasing fury or fear into them before putting them down again. "We just tell our anger to the stone, which will understand and take it from us," said Ms. Ono, who has worked with stones before.

"I have no separation from animate and inanimate objects," she said. "It's life and it's pulsating. They're not dead, they're whispering some power that we can use."

The show — which runs from Dec. 11 until late January — is particularly suited to the winter, Ms. Sabbatino said. "A lot of people are carrying a lot of psychological weight because of the end of the year, the darkness," she added.

Ms. Sabbatino's and Ms. Rosen's galleries will house another recurring Ono installation, "Mending Cup," in which visitors repair broken cups with twine, tape and glue. Each cup is then displayed on a shelf. "While you're mending it," Ms. Ono said, "you're mending the world as well."

The exhibition will also include "The Line," in which visitors continue drawing a line started in pencil on paper by Ms. Ono. "I'm saying, 'This is a line I've created,'" Ms. Ono said. "'Will you please follow it and make a line all the way to the end of the planet? Let's go there together.'"



Yoko Ono working on "The Riverbed," which will be installed at Galerie Lelong and the Andrea Rosen Gallery simultaneously. Credit Yoko Ono and Miguel Angel Valero