

# Her Journeyings

Gallery Beat, Melbourne

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<https://heathcoteartcritic.substack.com/p/her-journeyings>

**Tina Douglas**

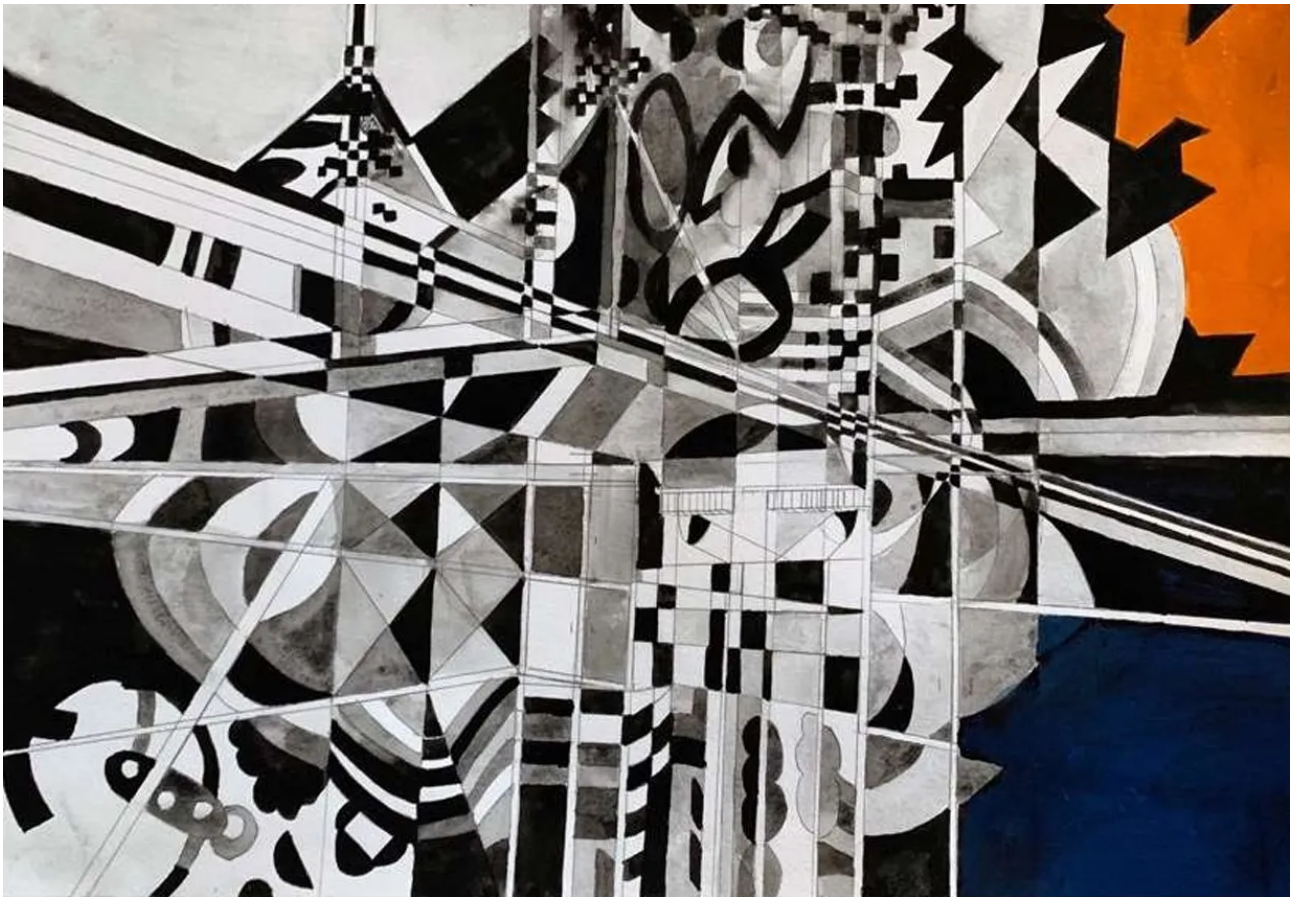
**Trying to Touch the Grass**

.....Tina Douglas's jam-packed show in the rear 'Project Space'. If anything, her exceptionally energetic works are a challenge to take in because Douglas has so many exhibits. The quirky Cyber-Dada-style videos are visually stimulating, but most demanding are her Cells, that is, 127 energetic abstractions in gouache, ink and pencil on paper (each is 29.7 x 42 cm) which are pinned up and completely fill two entire walls (illus. below).

These fastidiously crafted Cells (each is numbered in sequence) are astonishing to behold en masse. It's not just the amount of work Douglas has completed, but she is not a mere decorator, she doesn't repeat herself, and the work stays so fresh. Make no mistake, within the terms of programmatic abstraction this artist is every bit as versatile and visually inventive as Robert Rauschenberg or Alun Leach-Jones. The earlier gouaches in Douglas's overall sequence suggest fantastic architectural spaces and civic settings; then, moving along, they become more like an electronic or mechanical realm processing data; then, transforming again, they suggest living organisms; until they cycle back to architectural structures. There are surprising depths to these imaginings. Am I alone in spotting a shifting between three creative metaphors, between three ways of understanding what a work of art essentially is—what the Russian Formalists termed the 'three master tropes'—a system, or a machine, or an organism. Is this deliberate, or serendipity?



Tina Douglas Cell 27 (2024-26)



Tina Douglas Cell 126  
(2026)