

Getting lost with Tina

Anarchy hits Five Walls Gallery

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Most artists are romantics who take quiet pleasure in colour harmonies, artistic lines and ironic shapes.

Tina Douglas is no exception, but her latest exhibition should come with a warning sign.

It presents hundreds of small abstracts in a disturbing tribute to disorientation.

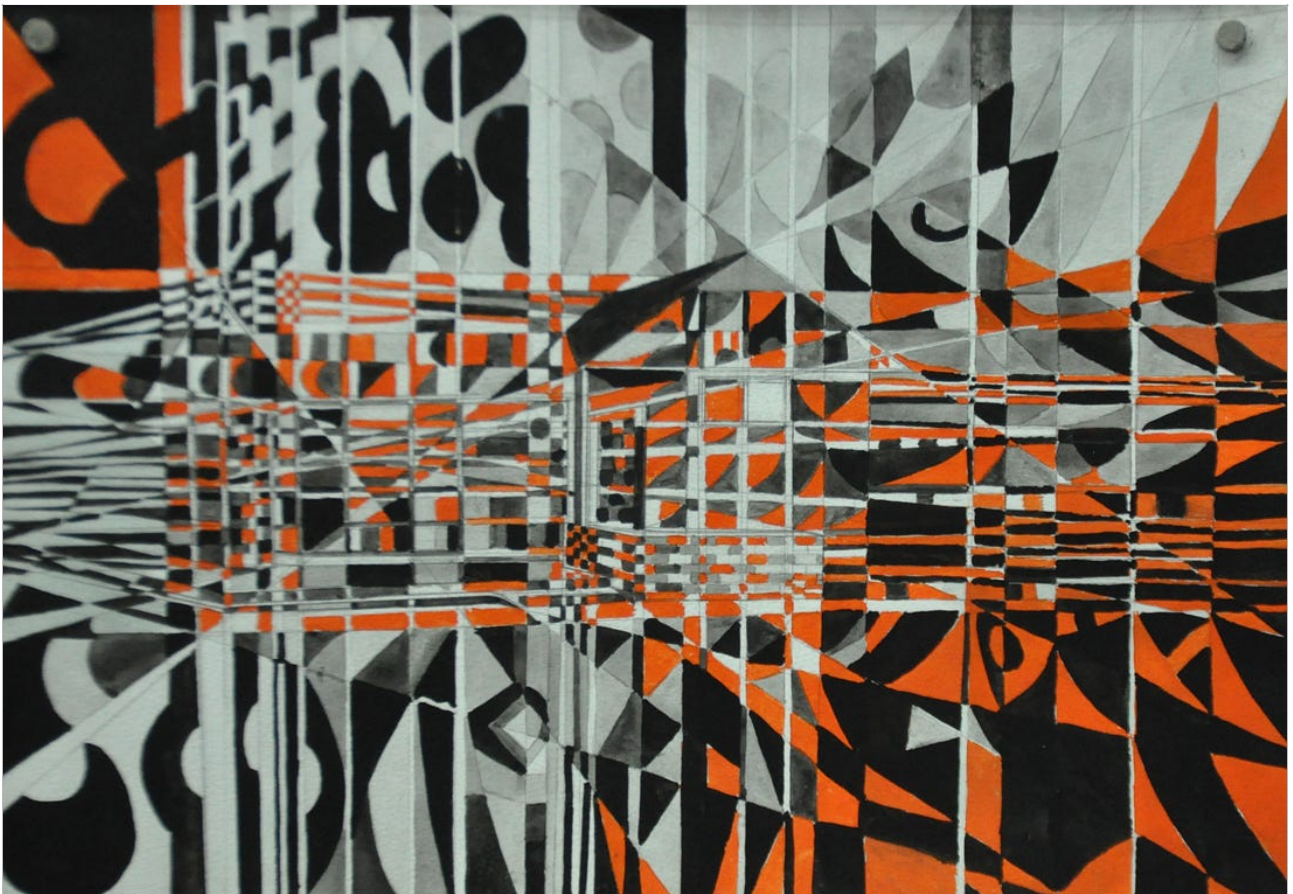


Some gallerists don't get her, Douglas says, but she's found a place at Five Walls in Footscray.

A few of her dynamic geometries fell off the wall before the opening. Aaron Martin, director of Five Walls, happily pinned them back up.

"It's maximalist," he said of the show, which includes tributes to fragmentation, cut-up, counter culture and algorithmic feeds.

You had to be at the opening last Friday to get the full impact of Douglas's work in a gallery known for its minimalist tendencies.



The anarchy that bubbled away beneath the installation was like a soothing beat, creating the kind of background noise that can be so relaxing to a city dweller.

Douglas calls this beat the "slow erosion of the ground beneath perception".

Viewers entered the installation tentatively as she assaulted the senses with geometric drawings, a mirrored column and a subliminal soundtrack.



Life is not linear but full of surround sound so why treat art as if it is a polite piece to hang on the wall?

The drawings are done on plastic grids and *Scientific American* pages with a mirrored column, *Mirror Cell 2026*, acting like a mysterious sink hole. It comes in an edition of five.

Viewers, who were getting visually lost in the installation, were keen to find their bearings. What better way than to take a picture?

Is this what art is about, the willingness to step out of your own literal space for a while?

Douglas's work is as convincing as wandering around Melbourne Central looking for an exit.

There is the big picture of contemporary disorientation and the small picture of struggling to reconnect with reality.

Douglas calls this the “absurdity of the ambient register of life” and Five Walls is helping artists articulate what that might be.

Trying to Touch the Grass, Tina Douglas, Five Walls Gallery, Until 25 July.