Indian visual culture, which proliferates in city centres, is remarkable for its vivid colour and diverse imagery. Small shopfronts, just a few metres in width and jammed together, line downtown streets in Indian cities, and at night shop-owners pull down steel shutters to protect their stores from theft — and sometimes from rampaging mobs.

For Indian artist Atul Dodiya these shutters are ideal canvases, offering a two-dimensional space that is familiar to everyone. In the shutters Dodiya installs the painted shutters as part of the gallery wall, the images he paints disappearing when the shutter is rolled up, but revealing another picture painted on the wall behind it. By combining two paintings in this way, Dodiya gives complex depth to two-dimensional artworks.

In one work Dodiya has painted images of the traditional Indian goddess Lakshmi on the surface of a shutter, while the picture underneath, exposed when the shutter is rolled up, is a copy of a news photograph of three women who died by hanging themselves because they could not afford a divorce. This work is one of the images of the traditional goddess, suggesting peace and tranquility, are contrasted with a real problem in contemporary Indian society.

Dodiya has created a rich, kaleidoscopic world of imagery, including portraits of the major protagonists in contemporary Indian history, as well as traditional culture and myths, and social problems in contemporary India. More recently, and in watercolours, Dodiya has painted images of a naked man floating in air as an allegory for his nation. Dodiya is an artist with one of the sharpest critical sensibilities in India today.