

Jill Mulleady  
PRESS



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Critic's Pick  
by Andrew Witt



Jill Mulleady, *This Connection is Not Private*, 2018, oil on linen, 66 x 58".

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### Jill Mulleady

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It is the twilight hour, a painter's hour in *Point Lobos* (all works 2018). Bioluminescence creeps in at high tide as two women crouch at the water's edge. What does the painter see then? A meeting place of strange currents. A body dries itself after skinny-dipping, another takes a long drag from a cigarette. Moments of respite glimpsed through a chain-link fence. In *This Connection is Not Private*, a man flips through his phone, while off in the distance the landscape burns, though Jill Mulleady's figures express no concern for the disaster pictured on

the horizon—they stare blankly, obstinately, out at the viewer.

The hour is one of prefiguration, a speculative moment, and in *Self portrait 2066 / Dementia*, the artist hazards a glance into the future. We sense the figure's affliction in her eyes: One has glossed over, and the other appears as if a dark cloud has colonized its pupil. Cradling what looks like a baby lamb, her hands in fingerless gloves, Mulleady's self-portrait echoes the gravity and grace of Leonardo da Vinci's *Lady with an Ermine* (1489–90). This is Mulleady's kin, but her animal has aged, no longer a cipher of purity.

The terrain in many of Mulleady's landscapes is soft and amorphous. For *Insomnia*, however, edges proliferate—we can imagine the painter waking in the middle of the night to paint each ruffle and crease of her bed. A sleepless night offers up a challenge to depiction: how to keep focus in the face of exhaustion? For now, the ruffled sheet is materially thick—eventually, it will be smoothed out, and the traces of her presence in every fold and indentation lost.

—Andrew Witt