



# THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND

*Julia S. Powell's dreamy, nature-inspired works exist in a place only the viewer knows.*

BY MADELINE BILIS

*Hillsong*, oil on canvas, \$12,000, [juliaspowell.com](http://juliaspowell.com).

## WHEN CAMBRIDGE ATTORNEY

Julia S. Powell started painting seriously, she was surprised to find that her biggest fan had a wet nose and a tail. Powell's golden retriever, Ella, would often sit in front of her bold, colorful landscapes for up to a minute at a time, "like she was meditating," the artist says. Powell shared a few videos of the pup admiring her work on Instagram in 2017, and the Internet fell in love, with each post garnering upward of 10,000 likes. Ella had become a viral sensation. And so had Powell's art.

Creating her works on canvas gradually took up more of Powell's time until she decided to stop practicing law entirely. Now a full-time painter, Powell continues to

depict the ethereal scenes that captivated Ella—each purposely ambiguous, recalling a sense of place rather than a specific location. "I love that 10 different people from 10 different parts of the world will say, 'Oh my gosh, is that X? Is that a lake in Wisconsin? Is that this place I went to in Italy?'" Powell notes. "And it's none of those places." Rather, the hills, trees, or bodies of water are plucked from Powell's mind. "They're supposed to evoke a memory in the viewer," she says, explaining how she aims to use color and texture to help observers relax and think of their own peaceful moments. If Ella is any indicator, that intention shines through loud and clear.