

# KEVIN

Nancy Lupo  
*Disko*  
September 13 – November 15, 2025

On a Monday in August 2025 at 6:50 PM,  
Tosia Leniarska <[REDACTED]@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Nancy,

I hope this finds you safe and calm, and maybe curious?

I write to you from the fifth floor above the ground where my grandmother's apartment is, packed with crystals – mainly vases, bowls. Flasks. I told you before how cherished crystal tableware was in Eastern Europe, how my mother smuggled it. Are you also surrounded by it now? In Greenland?

I am reading Joy Williams's *The Changelling*, which you kindly recommended, and I'm excited by how it was shunned by critics in the 70s but was eventually reevaluated. I love vindication and being on the right side. And I think of her *Breaking and Entering*, which is about breaking into rich people's villas and putting on their lives for a little bit, and is also maybe not as famous a novel as it could be. Where are you staying now? Have you ever broken into anywhere? The word 'trespassing', when I first learned it, felt uniquely American. Like 'loitering'. You write about property often, selling and buying, getting rid. Are you exchanging ownership over anything now? Are things coming in and coming out?

I look forward to hearing from you, from your travels. Please send me a picture. Do you hear the whales?

My best,  
Tosia

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On a Tuesday in August 2025 at 9:50 PM,  
Nancy Lupo <[REDACTED]@pm.me> wrote:

Hi Tosia,

If ice is glass then yes, I'm surrounded. As far as crystal goes in my daily life here in Greenland, there really isn't any. Although completely unexpectedly, I was running around the island trying to track this small iceberg that was near the shore, and in the garbage was a small chandelier. I scavenged the crystal pieces. The frame was rusty and looked like it might have been outside for a while. It was inside a tire.

There is an ongoing treasure hunt Michał and Gina and I are involved in for these crystal chandelier pieces. This is happening in Vienna, although there is a separate but related hunt taking place in Torino. Why do you think crystal was such a prized thing in Eastern Europe? Just the obvious? Pretty... nice... valuable... kind of magical? There is something optically or almost metaphysically hypnotizing and psychedelic about glass, right? There is the thing people say that it's also always liquid, right? I never quite got how that was but even that supposed fact hypnotizes me. There is a beautiful slim Nabokov book called *Transparent Things*, do you know it? The first chapter is only like a page and I have it always on the wall in my studio.

So yeah I've been chasing icebergs around the edges of this small island called Aasiaat. I've been here for almost a month now. I'm mostly trying to write a novel whose current working title is *Meow Meow Real Estate*. It's about a woman looking for an apartment. I'm also making watercolors with water from a small iceberg I fished out of the water and carried home. I'm not sure if this is art or where it will end up. I'm also collecting bog cotton which I had never seen before coming here. This, I think is already art. And then on Sunday I got on

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the Arctic Umiaq and went to Ilulissat. It's in the northern part of Disko Bay and it's really the reason I came here. Ever since I found out that there was this intense concentration of icebergs in a bay called Disko, I was entranced. I just started telling people that I was going and then eventually I figured out a way. It seemed very, very far away when I saw it on the globe and started talking about it.

But on Sunday I went and honestly I have no idea how to tell you. I went in the morning and came back in the evening. It never gets dark-dark here but the light becomes more and less. That's not what I'm trying to describe right now but I really don't know what to say. I feel like I was on some drug bender. I definitely feel like it was the most magical and beautiful thing I have ever seen. It was totally enchanting. But in a very intense way. Like where you are pulled into another wrinkle of reality. Something like this. The past two days have been strange. Wet and then when I went for my hike on the back part of the island I started crying. I don't know why. Well I do sort of, I saw this clip of Aubrey Plaza talking about the suicide of her husband. I don't know. I'm just speaking freely. I don't know the boundaries right now between what's relevant to say or not but I figure we can decide later.

On the subject of property and territory and trespassing, here in Greenland, no one can own land. So you can walk wherever. It's not like people own yards or something like that. It's an interesting concept. I think the closest thing I'm familiar with in that regard is that you can't own the beach. I never liked the thing in Italy where they have all of these chairs you have to pay for. Even though somehow you can't own it, it seems like a slimy move. Surprisingly, I don't think the chairs concept is such a thing in America. But honestly, maybe it is and I don't know. I grew up in Arizona and didn't really go to many beaches.

I have definitely broken in and also have been broken into. My breaking in wasn't about stealing anything and I didn't break anything. I just went to a place I knew wasn't open to the public and that no one would be there because it was Christmas Day. It was Roden Crater which is this James Turrell land artwork that's just outside of my hometown. It's probably the first thing I understood to be somehow contemporary art. Or something that was art that wasn't also a historical artifact. Even though saying that, I don't know what any of these things mean, anyway, it also has a reorienting relationship to nature and probably some consciousness too. It's totally psychedelic. Whatever one thinks of it as art, it's just a fact.

I've been thinking a lot about the Arizona nature here. Sometimes the icebergs look like some of the rocks we have there (Monument Valley, Grand Canyon, Sedona). But the icebergs are disappearing, so it's much more intense... and moving (and they are also moving)... I don't quite get how it works. What moves the glacier to push out the ice sheet to make the icebergs. It's called "calving" I'm pretty sure...

Am I exchanging anything? That's an interesting question. I used to feel like everything was this big liquidation chess swapping game. Right now I'm more floating. I'm liquidated, kind of untethered. I don't really have an apartment. Everything in my life is moving around. I think that's why I'm trying to write or finish this novel so much. It's not totally biographical but there are some similar things... the basic idea at least. I guess that way I could feel like I have some handle on the narrative.

You know?

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I read *Breaking and Entering* on the airplane also, amazing. I also read JG Ballard's *The Crystal World* and I'm listening to Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain* on audiobook. The *Magic Mountain* is amazing, it's blowing my mind. Like the iceberg almost.

Okay I'll stop, this is very long.

xxNancy

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On a Thursday in August 2025 at 8:10 PM,  
Tosia Leniarska <[REDACTED]@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Nancy,

Heartbreaking how beautiful, the icebergs.

I wrote this while staying by a lake; there was this incredible sunset. I don't generally love experiencing nature, which I feel is a character flaw – I am usually embarrassed to admit it, like it makes me appear suspicious to people, as with disliking dogs or babies. But I find nature sort of morally exciting. So I seek out other ways of loving it. In this case, of a sunset, I love a 0.5 phone lens on it. One gets a sense of the sublime this way, the Kant stuff.

I think an iceberg would make me cry too, its heaving.

Today I trespassed on somebody's farm and was bitten by a dog. I look up images of Disko Bay and it's hard to believe how bright it is, and how strange. Liquid light and stone light. These little houses perched like birds, temporary-seeming. It somehow makes sense not to own this land; I hope they manage to protect that from the US.

I believe crystal became precious in the Eastern Bloc because they could manufacture it, and there was not much else. And the seductive quality. It was a similar case with amber – you can harvest it from the Baltic Sea, and there was not much else, so it got social-engineered into a precious stone, for jewellery and ornament. Here I think the seductive part is its ancientness. It is quite easy to remember that value is only set inside the pond one swims in, except, of course, for when there is no outside.

In your novel, where is she looking for an apartment?

You must be familiar with the iceberg meme template, for representing niche knowledge. On YouTube, there are series of ASMR videos about facts from these iceberg memes in various fields, like, the 'Astronomy Iceberg ASMR' or the 'Evolution Iceberg', but then also the 'Unexplained Disappearances Iceberg' and 'Mandela effect Iceberg'. A woman reads out hundreds of facts in a whispery soft voice, and the facts get more niche the longer into the video. These can be two, three, six hours long. In that sense it's a little counter-motivational as you fall asleep before you get to the interesting facts, really. The boring stuff is at the start when you are still awake, but that's life I suppose. The facts listed are taken from Reddit threads where people build these lists communally. This makes sense to me as a hobby.

Do the icebergs submit to being chased?

Incredible that icebergs breeding would be referred to as 'calving'. Very life-like, swelling sea cows that they are, gentle severity. I'm sending you a scene from Sergei Eisenstein's film about the worship of cows and farm machinery. A wom-

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an is so enamoured with her new creamer machine that she falls asleep on it and dreams of a bull that emerges into the sky. Eisenstein figured out how to collage the bull, half-transparent, to become a cloud, like a god. Like the father lion cloud in *The Lion King*, perhaps a reference. Eisenstein wrote a book on Disney.

I did read Nabokov's *Transparent Things* in Polish once, then I forgot about it for years and thought I'd dreamt it. It ends with a fire in a ski resort – I thought it was my fever dream while it was Nabokov's. Do you dream well in Greenland?

xx  
Tosia

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On a Sunday in August 2025 at 8:57 PM,  
Nancy Lupo <[REDACTED]@pm.me> wrote:

Dear Tosia,

The icebergs are moving, yes, they are floating. That's what distinguishes them, that they are untethered to the glacier, that they've been calved. The movement is almost undetectable until you attune to the slowness and then sometimes it seems like they are moving very fast.

I don't know the Iceberg ASMR but there are a lot of things that use icebergs as a metaphor or device in some way. I guess the ones I know about are the Hemingway Iceberg Theory and Freud's conscious, preconscious and unconscious iceberg. Michał reminded me about Graham Harman's thing about icebergs as hyperobjects that I was going to re-read but I haven't yet. I don't know... somehow I want to turn away from all of this and focus on something physical / metaphysical.

I'm writing to you now from the airport at Ilulissaat. The icebergs in all of Disko Bay and all of Greenland come from the icefjord here. It's the mother that calves the most. Even though Antarctica has more ice, the fjord here is the most productive. They can tell the age of icebergs in a similar way to trees. There are layers of snow that compact, and in this are particles that tell time. For example, some of the icebergs contain ash from Vesuvius. The iceberg that sank the Titanic probably came from here. They play up the epicness. It's breathtaking but also there are a lot of tourists. And it's not that I'm not a tourist but so many mirrors I guess can be exhausting.

Did Houellebecq ever write a book about tourists? I guess kind of yes.

I was thinking while I was here that I lived in Paris for a year, my first time in Europe and my first time in Paris, and I never went to the Louvre.

There was another thing I used to think of in relation to my work: A hallucination is where you see something that's not there and then an anti-hallucination is where you don't see something that is there.

The guy whose house I was renting told me he was really into Cormack McCarthy when I told him I was writing. In my novel the search for an apartment is a kind of stand in. That is happening but really it's existential. What she's looking for isn't an apartment.

I saw this burnt down kayak club... Made me think of you and Nabokov...

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On a Tuesday in September 2025 at 3:22 PM,  
Tosia Leniarska <[REDACTED]@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Nancy,

How did the kayak club burn down?

I like this exercise of collecting what an iceberg has been used as a metaphor for: the unconscious for Freud, the underlying narrative for Hemingway, the untold knowledge for YouTube. For Graham Harman or Timothy Morton, the iceberg is a metaphor for the hyperobject, a thing too vast to grasp in full, like climate change. In each case, it portrays only accessing one part of something. Ancient Indian philosophers made up the parable of blind men touching an elephant, which is sort of the same idea but has more to do with the limitations of human perception. The iceberg is partly hidden not because our senses are inadequate for perceiving it but because of gravity, or water tension, or weight, so something supremely outside of our control, a part of the world, the immanent way of things.

So the business of metaphors misses the iceberg entirely. The iceberg that you saw, moving slowly and quickly, made of particles, and some of them from Vesuvius. I like that a fjord can be most productive. Such a long shift.

Sometimes when I find an object – like your chandeliers in Vienna – I think it is not alone but the tip of an iceberg, or like the surface of Hemingway's story. That when you pick the crystal up, the seductive thing, you are tugging on a deep string of the world, things being all networked underneath, the iceberg now like the mycelium, also an overused metaphor. The whole networked thing overthought, too, when one would rather have this object unconnected, stand-alone, physical or metaphysical, as you say. One would rather anti-hallucinate the network, let the objects travel independently.

A tourist is a perfect character for Houellebecq. I haven't read these books but I'm sure the tourist would carry the burden of all our sins in his telling. It's okay not to go to the Louvre. Going and not going both imply their own pleasure, as with owning and not owning.

I feel sad that this might be our last letter before I have to cut and stitch them up. Are you in Vienna soon, installing? Have you been able to settle into the daylight of mainland?

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Tosia

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On a Monday much later in September 2025 at 5:44 PM,  
Nancy Lupo <[REDACTED]@pm.me> wrote:

Dear Tosia,

I was moving a lot and thinking. To Berlin mostly in interiors with my tellers that are now also icebergs. Then I put them all in the car and drove them through Prague to Vienna. It's mostly all Autobahn but not all and I didn't really stop but for coffee. The new glue that I'm using in Europe has different properties. Last winter it would freeze up totally rigid almost like fiberglass but now it's much more skin like. It sags and slumps. I found this Joy Williams quote that I liked that I feel like sort of applies. "God's in the room with you," and he says, "I know God's here but I want somebody with skin on." I packed everything in the car at night and I couldn't really see out of the rearview and then as the heat increased, really

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within the first hour or two, the tellers slumped down. It was good for me on the drive. This was my first long drive by myself in Europe. When I left LA I was happy to never drive again, but here I am.

So the tellers are always about being many things and they repeat. Maybe almost every exhibition since the first which was *The Square at Noon*. I always say some version of the same thing but one thing I don't think that I've said yet is that their repetition has kind of two specific references. The first was sort of about the way that in photographs of ancient artifacts or even images of jewelry or stuff on eBay there will be a penny in the photograph. It's there to give you a sense of scale I guess. It locates you somehow. And then there is the second reference, the Kong dog toy that Haim Steinbach uses a lot. In almost all of his shelf works. It's like black tire rubber and there are a few different sizes. It looks like a snowman or a butt plug or something. And I guess I thought the tellers could operate somehow like this. A piece in the frame that locates you somehow because it recurs. But instead of being stable it's also always slipping, and kind of literally too in terms of form. And then the other way it operates, is like bookcovers or bookends that frame another kind of activity closer to the void. It's like the edge of the swimming pool, you can be assured it's a semi-contained space.

In this show they want to be icebergs. It's not really meant as a humorous proposition and it's not also about failure. It's never going to get there also though I know. So in the end I think it must be more about eyeshadow. Like I remember this Chanel palette I bought a couple of years ago. One of the years when a certain shade of blue was the color of the season. I never used it but it was going to do something for me anyway.

From Vienna I quickly flew to Greece to install a miniature of this whole idea in a group show. The flight was very shaky and then I forgot my computer on the airplane and that accounts somewhat for the delay in writing. The opening got postponed so I couldn't install in a final way but I sketched out a basic possibility. The floor in the space is terrazo. In Greece I've noticed lots of nice floors. On my last day in Illulisaat I climbed to this helicopter pad and there was all of this white granite on the ground that was sparking in the sun and I felt like it was gold and put as much of it as I could into my pockets. I wanted to think of this new work as a kind of "summary" or what do they call that in academia, when you write a thesis? I thought by doing this as a preamble to installing and opening *Disko* it could help me to understand again what the thing is at the end. Even though I know it's how it's actually about how it's always already slipped away.

The sculptures are supposed to be like perfume but also this is not Fluxism and I don't believe in ephemerality. Do you know about fascia? It's like an internal spider web in the body that maybe wasn't really seen or considered until the 90's. There is this amazing movie on YouTube called *Scrolling under the Skin* this is what I want it to be and yeah in this way I think the networked tip of the iceberg thing applies. And out of here, this room I mean and what I know about also. That's obviously too limited.

It was also interesting to toggle from Greenland "winter" to Greece summer. At some point I had this idea that Greenland could be to the 21st century what Greece was to the 20th. Like this paradise. Maybe just because it's the only place that's not on fire by midcentury. Let's see. I think that's what the upper echelon MAGA bros are speculating... Greenland

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seemed very vulnerable to me but also I don't know. And of course it can never just be about nature. Which is why nature is maybe somewhat annoying. It's also the apparatus and the synthetic fabrics and whatever.

I don't know why the kayak club burned but it wasn't recent.

Okay! Hopefully we get a chance to meet one day not too far in the future.

xxNancy

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This text by Tosia Leniarska and Nancy Lupo was commissioned for the solo exhibition *Disko* by Nancy Lupo at Kunstverein Kevin. Their correspondence was held between Warsaw, Greenland and Vienna in the summer of 2025.

Nancy Lupo is an artist currently based in Berlin. Her sculptures engage with material culture and language, exploring how collective fantasies and emotions become embedded in form. She tests ambiguity and confusion as conditions that are both unsettling and full of potential. Lupo holds degrees from The Cooper Union and Yale University. Since 2024, she has been appointed as a professor at Kunsthochschule Mainz. Recent exhibitions include *Our Villas* at Apollo, Mainz, Germany (2025); *Princessletthewind* at Kunstverein Schwerin, Schwerin, Germany (2025), and *Hallelujah Electricity* at Good Weather, Little Rock, Arkansas (2025).

Tosia Leniarska is a writer and curator based between London and Warsaw. Her writing has appeared in artist books and publications such as *The Serpentine Reader*, *Flash Art*, *Real Review*, *Elephant Magazine*, *Apartamento* or *Buffalo Zine*. She has given talks and workshops at Tate Modern, ICA London, Sadie Coles HQ, or Kem School. She was Assistant Director at Emalin in London until 2025. In 2020–2023, Leniarska contributed to developing Kem School, an alternative artist educational program in Warsaw focused on critical practice and expanded choreography. In London, you can currently see a permanent exhibition curated by her at La Camionera, the lesbian bar in Hackney. An exhibition she co-curated with Lauren Auder opens at the 15th Kaunas Biennial in September 2025.

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Opening hours:  
Friday 3:00 – 6:00 PM  
Saturday 3:00 – 6:00 PM  
and by appointment

Team:  
Michał Leszuk and Gina Merz (Directors)  
Clara Mannott (Curatorial Intern)

Graphic Design:  
Fred Heinsohn

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## Floorplan:

1 Untitled, 2025

Paper towels, glue, balsa wood, pigments  
98×88×29 cm

2 Untitled, 2025

Paper towels, glue, balsa wood, pigments  
95×85×22 cm

3 Untitled, 2025

Paper towels, glue, balsa wood, pigments  
108×93×19 cm

4 Untitled, 2025

Paper towels, glue, balsa wood, pigments  
126×85×16 cm

5 Untitled, 2025

Paper towels, glue, balsa wood, pigments  
92×90×31 cm

6 Untitled, 2025

Paper towels, glue, balsa wood, pigments  
108×81×18 cm

7 Untitled, 2025

Paper towels, glue, balsa wood, pigments  
118×88×32 cm

8 Untitled, 2025

Paper towels, glue, balsa wood, pigments  
135×96×31 cm

9 Untitled, 2025

Paper towels, glue, balsa wood, pigments  
124×89×22 cm

10 Untitled, 2025

Chandelier glass  
Dimensions variable

11 Untitled, 2025

Fabric, breathing motors, batteries  
350×160×6 cm

12 Untitled, 2025

Night lights  
Dimensions variable

