

Faith Icecold

Cassandra

Sept 19–Oct 31, 2026

Throughout their work, Faith Icecold takes familiar images and artistic languages apart and rebuilds them through ornament and accumulation. Silky encaustic and glass beads pooled over inkjet prints, paper clay and silver leaf, plastic and sewing pins, bells and miniature toy pianos, sequins stitched into quilted silk taffeta and canvas—Faith Icecold’s “new relics,” as the artist refers to their sculptures and paintings, are assembled to be touched by sight. Encaustic, the ancient technique of heated beeswax and damar resin fused with pigment, gives their surfaces warmth and luminosity: a skin you want to run your hand over, as if it might reveal their complex modes of making.

Minimalist forms are seduced out of their coolness, while their Haitian heritage and engagement with other African visual culture bring another lineage of ritual, adornment, spirituality, and image-making into the work. A history of African assemblage globally. A phantasmagoric Carnival. Camp is understood, rather than through irony or bad taste, as an African-coded aesthetic invention, offering another mode of transformation as exuberance and cute appearances act as stealth vessels for subverting power. Zora Neale Hurston’s “will to adorn” is an adjacent visual lineage, where decoration is considered essential to African life.

In their hands, aesthetic registers of refuse, mess, decor, and excess become forms of material seduction and serious sculptural inquiry, densely collaged into encrusted surfaces covered in milky encaustic. The sky’s naturally occurring auroras. The light effects of a flatbed scanner. In the series *Event Horizon*, a comet is a moving celestial sculpture that is also a work of light, and black holes become collaborators. *Chorus Chanting* (2026) is a gridded mosaic built up in thick grout and inlaid with porcelain bells and imagery drawn from European Old Masters. Elsewhere, animal figurines, vernacular craft, dollar-store humor, and lo-fi internet imagery receive the same lavish treatment, with “low” materials made precious, strange.

Iceland’s references stretch from the Gee’s Bend quiltmakers and Color Field abstraction, NeoGeo fetish finish, and Pattern & Decoration. Greco-Roman grottos and mosaics meet Haitian devotional traditions, textiles, toys, and a contemporary image culture that moves at warp speed. Relics of our time happen in real time. Across overlapping histories, the artist makes relics for a culture in constant motion through dense, glinting objects that reward getting close.

Cassandra, the title of Icecold’s solo exhibition, refers to the Greek myth of the Trojan priestess of Apollo, blessed with the gift of prophecy and cursed by the god never to be believed. The artist’s mandate as a sculptor is not to represent the present or the past, but to hold their instability in tactile relief, to refuse the fantasy that everything can be contained, resolved. Or made okay. If prophecy cannot protect the role of the artist, they, too, will become a relic. Perhaps this is what forewarning feels like: effigies that encase a vulnerable stuffed elephant, bunny, or self in luminous, archival wax, preserving something sacred in the possibility that the soft can harden, while the hard can remain soft.

Faith Icecold (b. 1989, New York) lives and works in Queens, NY. Icecold’s work has been included in group exhibitions at Adams and Ollman, Portland (2026); Below Grand, New York (2025); Foreign & Domestic, New York (2025); Bibeau Krueger (2024); Et. al., San Francisco, CA (2023); and Bridget Donahue, New York (2022). They have had solo shows at Smart Objects, Los Angeles (2020) and HOUSING, New York, NY (2023) as well as a two-person show with Caleb Jamel Brown at take it easy, Atlanta, GA (2023). Icecold was a 2018 recipient of the Studio Immersion Project (SIP) Fellowship at the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop.