



ARTIST AT THE PODIUM: Ross Bleckner will discuss issues related to his art.

Exuberance of '80s art will crackle at MoCA

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Halley, who this year will receive an award for art criticism from the College Art Association, often spoke for his generation in articles he wrote for the art press.

"I think 1980s art was about a desire to bring together what was important about Pop Art and Abstract Expressionism," he says. "It used pop-derived imagery, and at the same time, the paintings had a very muscular physicality."

Halley will be joined at the MoCA opening by Donald Baechler, Ross Bleckner, Sandro Chia, George Condo, David Salle and Kenny Scharf — all prominent 1980s artists. Halley, Bleckner and Salle will also deliver a series of public talks on issues related to their art over the next eight days.

Salle, who created a buzz by appropriating soft-porn figures into his abstract paintings and who was featured in a traveling retrospective last year at the Stedelijk Museum in

Amsterdam, will speak at the North Miami City Hall Council Chambers on Saturday. Bleckner, known for luminous canvases inspired by biological tissues but also offering reflections on losses to AIDS, will speak at the Beach House Bal Harbour on Wednesday as part of an informal series of conversations launched by the Beach House last month.

MoCA has also organized opportunities for local art students to meet with these established artists.

Bleckner says he has no intention of launching into a severe critique of aspiring artists' work, staying clear of the kind of criticism his generation received in the years after their bubble of fame burst.

"I just think it's important for art students to consider what effect they want their work to have on people who see it and what they want out of being an artist," he says. "Not only is making art about putting yourself in your work, but about situating your world in your work."

"Every generation has to use the conventions and tools of art to express themselves in their own way. You just try to help people see more clearly what they're trying to do — or if they are trying to do anything."

Elisa Turner is The Herald's art critic.