

## Connecting art and faith

By Joanna Reiling Lindell

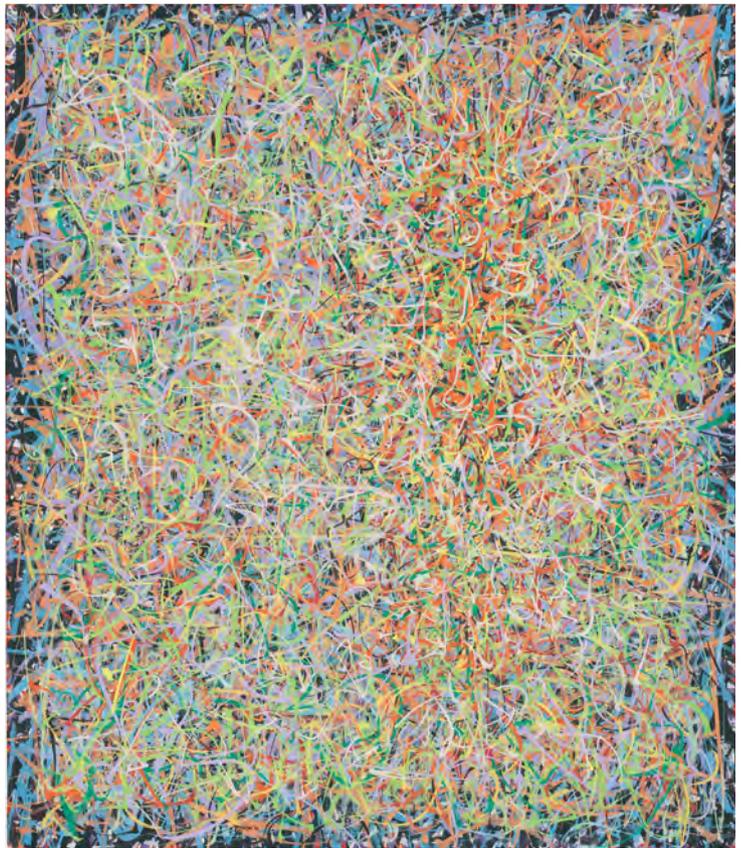
This vibrant painting whirrs with lively chaos. Swirling and free-flowing lines twist and curl, creating an explosion of color.

Abstract art has a way of freeing up one's mind, allowing us to focus on lines, colors and feelings—rather than a specific image or scene. Sometimes, in abstract art, forms and subjects seem to emerge from within a composition. On the right side of this painting, there is a vertical column of subtly concentrated color, which forms a nexus of lines, perhaps suggesting a central, emergent point of activity or presence.

Inspired by faith traditions from across the world, artist Aribert Munzner creates artistic explorations of the macrocosm and microcosm of the universe. The vast majority of Munzner's works bear the same title, *Genesis*. For many, this word signals both the first book of the Hebrew Bible and Christian Old Testament, and the concepts of origin, creation and generation.

Artists have seldom attempted to capture the Genesis creation story throughout the history of Western art—likely because of the inherent challenge of representing such an unfathomable miraculous process. The scriptural account of the creation of the world and humanity has been thoughtfully and inspirationally described in words and translated into innumerable languages. A visual representation is another way of expressing the creation story.

Munzner's *Genesis* bursts with undulating spirit, elegantly evoking



new beginnings. This past year and a half has felt immensely challenging to so many people. As we embrace the reality of togetherness once again, the concept of creation with its fundamental beginnings may feel like a profound renewal for many individuals and communities.

Born in Germany, Munzner's family fled Hitler's Nazi regime to Baghdad and eventually immigrated to New York City in 1939. Munzner began

teaching at Minneapolis College of Art and Design in 1955. Today, at the age of 91, he continues to mentor students while also investigating the Genesis theme in his Minneapolis studio.

Aribert Munzner (German American, b. 1930)  
*Genesis, 90 - C #1, 1990*  
Casein

13 ¾ inches x 11 ¾ inches  
©1990 Aribert Munzner. Courtesy of the artist.

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