

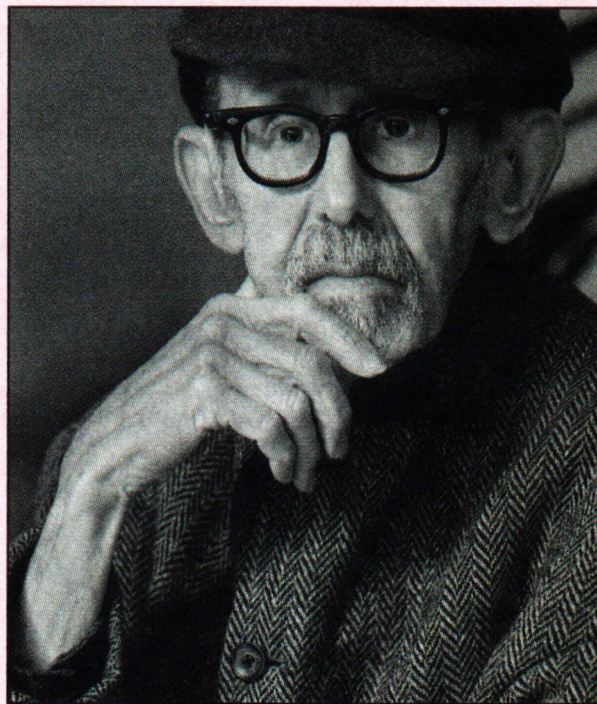
Cover artist: Ari Munzner

Aribert “Ari” Munzner, an accomplished artist and educator who lives in St. Louis Park, allowed the American Jewish World to use one of his artworks for the cover of the 2019 Community Guide. This is his third Guide cover, and we’re highly honored to reproduce a recent work, “Genesis, Summer 2018.” The original acrylic painting is 36 inches wide by 48 inches tall.

Munzner, 88, has always been fascinated by cosmology: “I look around and see the world.... Where’d it come from?... How did the universe come into being?” He began these artistic explorations in 1956 — paintings all with the word “Genesis” in the title. Munzner also has said that the “other part of the Genesis theme” was a “commitment... to celebrate life... And that’s what my job is, to celebrate life in my work.”

The cover artwork and other paintings by Munzner were featured in an exhibition for the Sage-ing International Conference, Oct. 25-28, 2018, in Chaska, Minn. The list of exhibitions by the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD) professor emeritus is too lengthy to detail here. In 2016, Vine Arts Gallery in Minneapolis mounted an extensive retrospective exhibit of Munzner’s artworks.

During a recent meeting to discuss artwork for this 13th edition of the



Oleg Volk

Ari Munzner has been painting his Genesis series for the past 62 years.

Community Guide, the conversation drifted to Munzner’s unusual early life. He was born in Mannheim, Germany, in 1930, and his family moved to Baghdad, Iraq, in 1937 — getting out of Hitler’s reach before emigrating to the United States.

Munzner earned his bachelor of fine arts degree from Syracuse University, then an MFA at Cranbrook Academy of Art. He served as a professor at MCAD from 1955-1993.

Regarding the vibrant painting on the Community Guide cover, Munzner prefers not to explain what the work is about. He comments that “painting is a process of questioning.”

And as he notes on his website (aribertmunzner.com), in reference to the “Genesis” series: “The work investigates the relationship of art, science and mythology through the mystery of the microcosm and the macrocosm.”

As he told the Jewish World previously, these paintings allow us to imagine “the infinite and minute simultaneously.” They evoke both “galaxies and the microscopic.”

We are pleased and grateful that Ari Munzner has allowed us to grace the cover of the Community Guide with one of his beautiful paintings.

— Mordecai Specktor