# VOLUNTEER PICK

## PACHINKO

### NOVEL BY MIN JIN LEE

*Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee, set against one of most turbulent moments in the history of Japan and Korea, follows four generations of a Korean family who move to Japan and their consequent lives as "zainichi" citizens. Divided into three sections, the story begins in the early 1900s during the Japanese occupation of Korea. Sunja falls for a wealthy lover, Hansu, and becomes pregnant. After discovering Hansu already married, Sunja instead accepts a marriage offer from a sympathetic but sickly minister who promises to bring her to Osaka to start a new life. After giving birth to two sons, Noa and Mozasu, the family struggles to survive in poverty, facing legal and social discrimination as immigrants. Her two sons then take on different paths in life, struggling with their own identities as ethnic Koreans in Japan, a predicament that is then passed onto their successive generations.

*Pachinko* touches upon many complex subjects: discrimination and conflicted identity as immigrants, poverty, the relation between power, survival and dignity, and women and their roles in the family. It is an ambitious novel on resilience with a comprehensive view on how people make decisions and behave in reflection to their past, present and place they currently live.
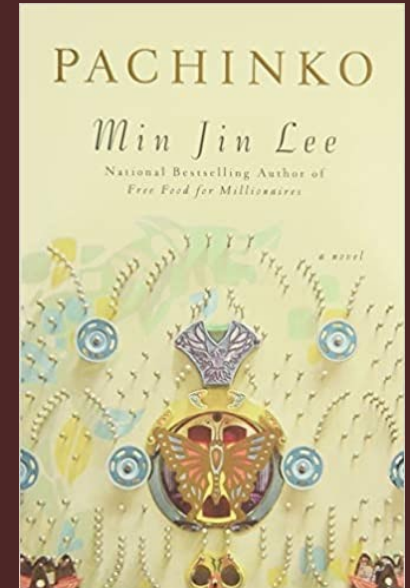
— Kristy, Volunteer
January, 2021

## ABOUT AUTHOR

**Min Jin Lee** is a recipient of fellowships in Fiction from the Guggenheim Foundation (2018) and the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard (2018-2019). Her novel *Pachinko* (2017) was a finalist for the National Book Award for Fiction, a runner-up for the Dayton Literary Peace Prize, winner of the Medici Book Club Prize, and one of the New York Times' "Ten Best Books of 2017."

— from Publisher

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" History has failed us, but no matter. "