



[INTRO AUDIO TRANSCRIPT]

Unsung

—for the *Unsung Founders Memorial* (UNC Chapel Hill), 2005 (black granite, bronze sculpture)
by *Do Ho Suh*

BY NICOLE MIYASHIRO

Late night near the University of Carolina (or UNC) - Chapel Hill, my friend and I left a restaurant after spirited discussions of our lives, social issues, and other topics. It was a warm August night in 2017—just 6 days before the Charlottesville protest in Virginia—and as we cut through campus, rain began tapping the landscape and we came across a Civil War monument. “Silent Sam,” my friend said. We paused and tilted our heads back to see the looming figure holding a rifle. She pointed out the large inscriptions, as we circled the massive base and discussed the monument’s controversial symbolism.

A short distance away, almost diagonal to where we stood, I spotted another structure and hurried over to it. Here I discovered the *Unsung Founders Memorial*, created by sculptor Do Ho Suh in 2005. Its inscription reads: THE CLASS OF 2002 HONORS THE UNIVERSITY’S UNSUNG FOUNDERS — THE PEOPLE OF COLOR BOUND AND FREE — WHO HELPED BUILD THE CAROLINA THAT WE CHERISH TODAY.

As we stood in darkness and rain, our heads tipped downward toward this memorial, I was struck and angered by the disparity between this sculpture and its towering neighbor. My friend affirmed that this observation was commonly debated. Follow-up research coupled with the events in Charlottesville days later, compelled me to capture this encounter with a poem.