

Lucky Charms is the kind of mix where balance is key—and where one finds balance, one gets what Salt Lake City-based hip hop duo Nostalgic90s call lucky. In their work together, confidence in each other breeds compliments of one another's skills. "If he's coming with the crunchy part I make sure I come with the marshmallow," states APaullo. Together they also find inspiration in nostalgia, hence the name, but more for nostalgia-as-style, the kind perfected by acts like The Cool Kids, whose old school, puffy jacket hip hop is in tribute to just that kind of music, made well before their own time. But more than that, Nostalgic90s resonates with the way their predecessors bounced off of one another endlessly. And on EPs like Carolina Blues, they show that they just might be the new cool kids of the 2020s.

The duo also draws on influences like a Tribe Called Quest, in particular the boom bap of Q-Tip that doesn't really sound like boom bap, and to the mix there's also an appreciation for Lil Wayne, the melodic R&B of Janet Jackson, and Andre 3000's eccentricities. But besides other artists, one of their biggest influences is their North Carolina roots. Though they call SLC home now, Carolina Blues is deeply influenced by the place that the cousins grew up. In their video for "Corolla," they capture everyday life there. "You don't have sidewalks in North Carolina. So we spent all our time just driving around playing music, going to different groups and getting them hooked up with our vibe, who we are," says Lane. The end of the video turns into a turned-up function, the kind of "everybody's welcome" attitude that they identify as their music's particular motif.

Carolina Blues also shows the product of Lane and APaullo finding inspiration in one another. APaullo has inspired Lane to let his rhyme game explode, and APaullo says of Lane, "Watching him rap, rap, rap, rap ... he broke me out of my shell." Recalling the ambitious sentiments on mixtapes like Lil Wayne's No Ceilings, the two are taking off towards the sky together. "Just take off like a rocket and keep going, keep the ball rolling," says Lane. And whether that means pulling samples from Talladega Nights for some comic relief or cruising in an imagined DeLorean on trance-like tracks like "1982," they've got each other's back with each new idea.