

'Lots and Lots of Blue' documents student life through photography

Annie Ham

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Capturing an event through pictures is easy — embodying a memory through pictures is another feat.

Alessandro Uribe-Rheinbolt, an alumnus of UNC and The Daily Tar Heel, has used his unique artistic style — alongside his personal creative outlook — to encapsulate an introspective experience in his archival film book, 'Lots and Lots of Blue.'

The book tells the story of the student experience at UNC, capturing the essence of Chapel Hill through photos Uribe-Rheinbolt took during his time in the town from 2016 to 2022.

“In this book there's this big nostalgia and this simmering on the past,” he said. “College is in this warm, cloudy memory.”

Uribe-Rheinbolt, originally from Colombia, came to UNC knowing very little about the school. To his surprise, he found not only a great school, but a home. With encouragement from professors, mentors and friends, his exploration and love for film photography grew.

“When people say that someone thinks outside of the box as a way to describe their creativity or something, it feels like he does that but then times a hundred,” Klaus Mayr, a close friend of Uribe-Rheinbolt, said. “He is just able to see beauty and meaning in kind of everything he looks at.”

Uribe-Rheinbolt was partially inspired by vintage issues of old UNC "Yackety Yack" yearbooks he used to study in the Undergraduate Library during his time as a student. Seeing old pictures of the same classrooms and parties he knew as a student inspired him to document time similarly to the generations of photographers that came before him.

“It was like I'm taking these images in the same way with similar cameras that they would've shot back then and capturing this parallel imagery,” he said.

After putting off the project for a few years post-graduation, one of Uribe-Rheinbolt's college friends, Sally Sasz, passed away. Soon after her death, he began to work on the book more seriously, having a sudden deeper understanding of how powerful his work could be, not only in telling the story of a unique college experience, but also keeping Sally's memory alive.

“I realized how important images are, and videos, and any tangible memory of people,” Uribe-Rheinbolt said.

Along with people like Mayr and Sasz in his corner, Southeastern Camera in Carrboro was one of his many supporters in the community. He often looked to the people working at the shop for advice and direction.

Dillon Ingold, an employee at Southeastern, spoke on behalf of his coworkers, explaining the company's goal of not only producing quality work but fostering a community where art through photography is appreciated no matter one's level of expertise.

“There's no air of pretentiousness,” Ingold said. “It's only connection of this real kind of base-level, human care for one another.”

When asked about the process of taking and developing film, Uribe-Rheinbolt explained it as an investment worthwhile. After shooting a roll of photos, sending it off to get developed, and waiting a few days, he described the result like opening a Christmas gift.

“A lot of times I would pick it up, put it in my backpack and go to Weaver Street, get a cup of coffee and just open them and look through all my photos,” he said. “That was a really beautiful process.”

Uribe-Rheinbolt self-published "Lots and Lots of Blue" and released it in August on his birthday. To the artist, the book serves as a memory of his perceived beauty of Chapel Hill and the people that made it such a special school and college town.

To buy 'Lots and Lots of Blue,' visit Uribe-Rheinbolt's [website](#) or local bookstores like Epilogue Books Chocolate Brews in Chapel Hill and Letters Bookshop in Durham.