

# Live, intimate and online

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By Cliff Bellamy

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DURHAM – Since June, the Art of Cool Project has been presenting a live music concert once a month at LabourLove Gallery. Today's concert featuring saxophonist and flutist Marcus Anderson will be broadcast in high definition live stream, representing a first for Art of Cool and Gigstream, a local start-up company.

"This is kind of what I consider the ultimate living room concert," said Cicely Mitchell, who with trumpeter and bandleader Al Strong started AOC. "If you can't make it, [you] can log onto the Gigstream website at concert time," she said.

Art of Cool is "a music and arts advocacy project" that seeks to promote "the local, vibrant, varied, and surprisingly under-appreciated music and art scene," according to the group's website. Part of the organization's mission is to give local jazz artists (Mitchell said "jazz" at AOC has an eclectic definition) an intimate place to play, where the audience is focused on the music, Mitchell said.

She began thinking about how to draw audiences during the colder months, and thought about a live stream. The group explored the site [ustream.tv](http://ustream.tv), but the quality of sound and image were not what they wanted. She then saw some Twitter posts from Gigstream about plans for a high definition audio and video stream.

"I said, Well, shoot, I want to see Marcus Anderson," Mitchell said. Art of Cool Project teamed with Gigstream and sponsors Bull City Mobile, and today's live cast was born.

Todd Fitch, recording engineer for Gigstream (he also owns The Sound Shop Mobile Recording), said he got the idea for a local HD stream from his mobile recording and live webcast experiences with some major music festivals – among them Lollapalooza, Bonnaroo, and others. He and partner Ben Buchanan starting thinking about ways to translate the idea of livecasts from big festivals to smaller, local venues.

Anderson's concert will be the first live broadcast for Gigstream, Fitch said. He and Buchanan did some preliminary tests at a show at The Cave in Chapel Hill. "We did that to make sure that the idea was sound," he said. "All of our theories were correct and worked at The Cave."

He told Anderson that the live stream would give him an opportunity “to engage all of his fans worldwide in one single event.”

Pianist Stephen Anderson, cellist Shana Tucker, singer Carlitta Durand and Strong’s quintet are some of the artists who have performed at the monthly AOCF concerts. Gigstream wants to hook into that local music scene, Fitch said. He would like to do live streams of musicians with national reputations that play smaller local venues, and “as Gigstream becomes more know, we’re hoping we have local content on there as well.” Eventually, he wants Gigstream to have music for viewing and listening 24 hours a day.

If today’s broadcast is successful, AOCF will look at the numbers and decide if it wants to try a monthly stream, Mitchell said. The organization is booked for each month through May, she said, and in August 2012 AOCF plans to have a celebration with performances by all the artists who contributed during the first year.

The Durham area has a strong jazz audience and tradition, and The Art of Cool Project wants to forge connections between all those fans, Mitchell said. “We’re trying to link everybody to all these [music] places. ... People are just longing for a home. We’re trying to let Art of Cool be the glue that lets people know where they can check out live jazz.”

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Go&Do

WHAT: Saxophonist Marcus Anderson in a Live HD Webcast

WHEN: Friday, Dec. 16 at 9 p.m.

WHERE: LabourLove Gallery, Golden Belt, 807 E. Main St.

ADMISSION: Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door. To purchase, visit [www.labourlove.com](http://www.labourlove.com). To listen online, visit <http://Gigstre.am>. (Cost is \$3.99, \$5 for a download.)

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