



The lights are dim. Cables are everywhere. And [Matthew Perryman Jones](#) is on the stage. It is standing room only at [The Red Cat](#), a coffee house located in Birmingham's Pepper Place – as long as you are not standing in front of any of the cameras.

The audience, obviously familiar with Jones's work, is enthusiastic, singing along and providing appreciative feedback. There is a young woman near the front of the space celebrating her birthday and the singer eventually leads the crowd in a chorus of "Happy Birthday."

The Nashville-based musician drove down to Birmingham specifically for the taping, and would be heading back immediately after the show. However, the intimate venue provided many of his fans access for photos, handshakes, and autographs after his two-part set.

This weekend kicks off a new music series on the University of Alabama's [WVUA/WUOA-TV](#). *AFTERHOURS: Live at The Red Cat Birmingham* features performances and interviews with singer-songwriters. The show will air on Sundays, beginning February 10, at 5 p.m. Jones's performance, filmed Friday, January 18, will be the third act featured. They began filming the series at the coffeehouse in December.

The show's producers came across The Red Cat while conducting research for the series. It was recently voted "Best Coffeehouse" in the 2012 al.com "Best of Birmingham" poll. Perusing the old promotional posters on the venue's walls, they decided to see if the coffeehouse's owners were interested in their concept.

[Charlie Mars](#) is the next act scheduled to be filmed at the coffeehouse on February 23. [Garrison Starr](#) (March 14), [Amber Rubarth](#) (April 4), and [Sandra McCracken](#) (April 12) round out the spring sessions – with three more acts already scheduled. There are currently plans for a total of 12 original shows for this season.

The live performances featured on *AFTERHOURS* will be along the lines of [Sessions at The Cactus](#), filmed in Austin by the University of Texas. The series is part of an effort to upgrade the station's content. It currently reaches 800,000+ households throughout the state, and is easily accessible in Birmingham on cable and over the air (on Channel 23).

[vimeo 55397765 w=625]

Although somewhat similar to [We've Got Signal](#), the producers believe the *AFTERHOURS* concept is different as it specifically features singer-songwriters.