

# Jessica Hernandez draws on her heritage to spark creativity

## Concert preview »

She and her band, The Deltas, are back with new music recorded in English and Spanish.

By **AUTUMN THATCHER**  
Special to The Tribune

In 2015, singer-songwriter Jessica Hernandez traveled through Salt Lake on a small, self-funded tour that saw her and her band of Deltas performing at the Urban Lounge. Before that show, Hernandez talked to The Tribune about dropping out of college to chase a musical dream and overcoming her shyness to perform on-stage.

She was promoting her debut album and mentioned her goal of making a splash in the Latin music scene. A punk-infused Mexican-American singer from Michigan, Hernandez said that in America, a Latin presence was lacking across different genres, and she hoped to change that.

Two years later, Jessica Hernandez & The Deltas are again preparing to perform in Salt Lake. The soulful punk rockers play The State Room this coming Wednesday. This time around, Hernandez sports blond locks, a wedding ring and a new album — recorded in English and Spanish.

“Ever since I started playing music, it’s something that I really wanted to do,” Hernandez said in a phone interview with The Tribune. “I wanted to tap into this other side of who I am and bring that out through something creatively.”

Her sophomore album, “Telephone/Teléfono,” represents not only her Mexican-American heritage, but also alludes to her personal life in songs like the title track, which examines the tolls of keeping a relationship alive from the road.

“I always write from a really personal point of view and try to add in bits and pieces of what’s going on in the world,” Hernandez said. “A lot of [the



Jessica Hernandez & The Deltas will perform Wednesday at The State Room.

Courtesy photo

album] was written right before I got married, so a lot of it was a transitional period for me of going through being a young 20-something-year-old to getting married.”

The album was completed one week before her wedding. Post-wedding, she and her husband — Kyle Straka of the California-based psychedelic rock band The Growlers — spent a little time together before getting back to work.

“We didn’t really get a break from work, but we did get a honeymoon,” Hernandez said. “After the wedding, we had a week together and then we both went back on tour.”

Hernandez is no stranger to long hours. She and her band have spent years on the road, relentlessly touring in an effort to get her music out to the masses. Somewhere in between, she found the time to write “Telephone” and then translate every song into Spanish. The process was a grueling one that Hernandez said, in some ways, felt like starting from the beginning.

“It was super-challenging because I had never sung in Spanish before,” she said. “It was almost learning how to sing again from scratch, because the Spanish language is a totally different beast. My Spanish is good when I am speaking to my grandmother, but as far

## Jessica Hernandez & The Deltas

**When »** Wednesday; doors at 7 p.m., show at 8 p.m.

**Where »** The State Room, 638 S State St., Salt Lake City

**Tickets »** \$15; Ticketfly

as trying to sing these soulful rock songs in Spanish, it was pretty hard.”

To create an authentic listening experience, Hernandez spent a month in Mexico City practicing her Spanish. She spoke the language every day, and when she sang, she would record her vocals and play them back to herself and some friends she was staying with.

“We were just sitting there reading over lyrics from a sheet of paper. I would record myself after I would sing it,” she said. “I would listen back and try and figure out what word sounded incorrect to me, what word I was giving an improper accent to or the timing was off. I spent two weeks doing that and that was the most frustrating part. It felt like, ‘S---, am I going to get this?’ I didn’t want to do it and have it not sound legit.”

Hernandez said the hard work paid off. After two weeks of obsessively practicing on her friend’s couch in Mexico City,

she took her music to the studio.

“Somewhere along the way of being in the studio, it just clicked,” she said. “I ended up recutting all the vocals at the end. We redid all of them in one day after I had already been trying to sing them for weeks.”

“Telephone/Teléfono” is slated for release June 23. Hernandez hopes the album will not only lead to an international tour in Mexico and South America, but also provide a place where others within the Latin community can find familiarity.

“In the spaces we play, a lot of our fans are Mexican-American. That is another reason I wanted to record something in Spanish,” Hernandez said. “I remember being younger and not really having an appreciation for the Spanish language and teetering on the edge of, ‘Am I Mexican? Am I American?’ and figuring out where do I fit in. I thought it was a cool thing to do this rock-inspired album that is in Spanish. It’s making a statement that you can be all of these things and be proud of all of it.”

## HOT TICKETS

Compiled by Ana Daraban

### MUSIC

‘Don Giovanni’ » Utah Opera; tonight, 7:30; Sunday, 2 p.m.; Capitol Theatre, 50 W. 200 South, Salt Lake City; \$21-\$92; utahopera.org  
Sally Bytheway Chorale » Tonight, 7:30; LDS Assembly Hall, 50 W. North Temple, Salt Lake City; free

### DANCE

National Choreographic Festival » Tonight and Saturday, 7:30; Saturday, 2 p.m.; continues May 26-27; George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Theater, 131 Main, Salt Lake City; \$49.50; artsaltlake.org

### STAGE

‘Hairspray’ » Tonight and Saturday, 7:30; Saturday, 2 p.m.; plays through June 3; Salt Lake Community College Grand Theatre, 1575 S. State, Salt Lake City; \$22; grandtheatrecompany.com  
‘The Mountaintop’ » Tonight, 8; Saturday and Sunday, 4 p.m.; Good Company Theatre, 260 Historic 25th St., Ogden; \$17; goodcotheatre.com

‘The Will Rogers Follies: A Life in Revue’ » Tonight and Saturday, 7:30; Saturday, 2 p.m.; Pioneer Theatre Company, 300 S. 1400 East, Salt Lake City; \$40-\$62 in ad-

## Top ticket retailers in Salt Lake City

Here’s a rundown of the most common ticket services:  
**ArtTix** » 801-355-ARTS or arttix.org; kingsbury-hall.org  
**SmithsTix** » 801-467-TIXX, 800-888-TIXX or www.smithstix.com  
**Ticketmaster** » 800-745-3000 or ticketmaster.com  
**Two Four Tix** » 24tix.com  
**KingTix** » www.kingsburyhall.utah.edu.

vance, \$5 more at the door; pioneertheatre.org

‘Betty Blue Eyes’ » Tonight and Saturday, 7:30; Saturday, 3 p.m.; plays through May 27; Hale Center Theater, 25 W. 400 North, Orem; \$22-\$24 (\$6 less for children); haletheater.org

‘To Kill a Mockingbird’ » Hale Centre Theatre; tonight and Saturday, 7:30; Saturday, 12:30 and 4 p.m.; Hale Centre Theatre, 3333 S. Decker Lake Drive, West Valley City; \$18-\$24; hct.org

### ETC.

Living Traditions » Today, 5-9 p.m.; Saturday, noon-10 p.m.; Sunday, noon-7 p.m.; Salt Lake City and County Building, 451 S. State St.; free; livingtraditionsfestival.com

### Today’s Crossword

C	O	O	P		T	I	C	S	
E	M	A	I	L	A	C	H	E	D
L	E	T	G	O	M	O	O	R	E
E	L	M	S	T	E	N	C	I	L
B	E	E	P	E	R	S	O	F	T
T	A	R	R	I	E	L	S	A	
L	A	S	C	I	A				
P	E	R	M	T	A	N	T	E	
E	R	A	S	U	N	S	E	T	S
A	R	I	G	A	T	O	C	H	I
L	A	S	E	R	E	T	H	A	N
S	T	I	N	G	S	W	I	N	G
A	N	T	E		A	P	E	S	

### Today’s Sudoku

3	4	8	6	1	9	2	5	7
5	6	9	8	2	7	4	1	3
7	2	1	5	4	3	6	8	9
9	3	2	4	7	8	1	6	5
6	7	5	2	9	1	3	4	8
8	1	4	3	5	6	9	7	2
4	8	6	7	3	2	5	9	1
1	5	3	9	8	4	7	2	6
2	9	7	1	6	5	8	3	4

LOOKING FOR THE PUZZLES? » D11

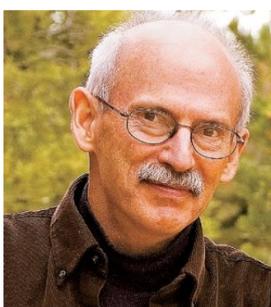
## Reading to launch ‘Red Rock Stories’

**Books »** Utah publisher launches “art-as-advocacy” book with Salt Lake City, Moab readings.

### The SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

Torrey House Press is launching “Red Rock Stories: Three Generations of Writers Speak on Behalf of Utah’s Public Lands” at readings tonight in Salt Lake City and Moab.

The nonfiction collection, edited by Stephen Trimble, is an “art-as-advocacy” book, collecting stories from a variety of noted writers at a time when Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, at the direction



Courtesy photo

Stephen Trimble lives in Torrey.

of President Donald Trump, is reconsidering the size and scale of national monuments, including Utah’s Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and Bears Ears National Monument. Readers from the Salt Lake City event

## ‘Red Rock Stories’

Torrey House Press is launching its art-as-advocacy collection, edited by Stephen Trimble, with readings in Salt Lake City and Moab.

**When »** Tonight at 7  
**Where »** Weller Book Works, 607 Trolley Square, Salt Lake City

**Where »** Back of Beyond, 83 N. Main St., Moab

include Trimble, David Lee, a former state poet laureate, novelist Jana Richman and former Rep. Karen Shepherd.

An earlier edition of the book was delivered to federal legislators last year.

## Perry bringing ‘Witness’ tour to The Viv

By **SEAN P. MEANS**  
The Salt Lake Tribune

She is a champion, and you’re going to hear her roar — because Katy Perry is going on tour, with a stop in Salt Lake City.

The mega pop star announced this week she will launch the North American leg of “Witness: The Tour” on Sept. 7 in Columbus, Ohio. The tour will arrive in Salt Lake City on Friday, Nov. 24, at Vivint Smart Home Arena.

Along with the tour, Perry announced her new album, “Witness,” will be released June 9. The album includes the singles “Chained to the Rhythm” and the



CHRIS PIZZELLO | The Associated Press

just-released “Bon Appétit” (whose sexy food-themed video dropped last week).

Over the past decade, Perry has been a colossal presence

in the music and pop-culture world. Her string of No. 1 singles includes “I Kissed a Girl,” “California Gurls,” “Teenage Dream,” “Firework,” “E.T.,” “Last Friday Night (T.G.I.F.),” “Part of Me,” “Roar” and “Dark Horse.” She was the voice of Smurfette in two “Smurfs” movies, performed the half-time show at Super Bowl XLIX in 2015 and set off the “Left Shark” meme, and campaigned for LGBT equality and for Hillary Clinton’s presidential campaign.

Tickets for Perry’s show at The Viv go on sale Monday at 10 a.m. at Smith’s Tix. The presale begins Wednesday, and fans can register on Perry’s website.



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Peppermill  
JUNE 9-11, 2017

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1 in 10 chance of winning Free Play

**FREE CAKE AND CHAMPAGNE**



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Drawing at 7pm Sunday!

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RAINBOW Peppermill MONTEGO BAY