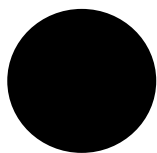


Ryan Adams has produced albums by Willie Nelson, as well as recorded seven albums of his own, including three with his band, the Cardinals. This alt-country/rock singer-songwriter has performed around the globe and is finishing his first book, *Infinity Blues* (Akashic Books, 2009). As a voice of his generation, the editors of World Policy Journal asked him to reflect on his world 25 years from now. Following a lengthy e-mail exchange, Adams delivered, with an explanation, this piece which follows.



How to Save the World from Doom Where You and It Are Headed *Ryan Adams*

What I am about to suggest as my final piece is highly conceptual and will piss off (probably) you and everyone else. But it has haunted me. I have written and re-written it so many times. I am currently in Boston, and last night, sitting outside the *Harvard Lampoon*, by accident actually, as I was just following the smell of pizza (I am endlessly looking for pizza, all kinds—especially awful pizza—it tickles me pink, it’s my “go-to-zen-thing,” which is nice, because incense is disgusting) I had the revelation.

I found myself unable to provide anything beyond even a rigid skeletal form of a piece, burdened by what seems to be an ever-looming sense of existentialism which I am inheriting, not by choice, but by the wear of time vs. my undying and ever-unrequited foolish attachment to sentimentality and romanticism—which is another way of saying, simply, that I am over-sensitive and that this will allow me nothing but a greater will to make art and probably buy me a just single plot and a lonesome, old-age passing. (And if there are free donuts there it will be fine by me—as coffee always works, no matter how bad it is, really.)

The best advice I could think of, and its repetition, in my mind, would be art. Gertrude Stein would be smiling someplace. Also I firmly believe that projecting into the future is anti-abstract and, in principle, is just as bad as Descartes, or worse, Cardinal Bellarmine. I am totally sure of one thing, however. Nobody has any clue what will happen in 25 years, let alone tomorrow and the reason I know is because I am still here.

Stay in the Moment

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