Baudelaire was a French poet, born 1821, died 1867. He invented the term modernity, and captured that spirit here:

Who among us has not dreamt, in moments of ambition, of the miracle of a poetic prose, musical without rhythm and rhyme, supple and staccato enough to adapt to the lyrical stirrings of the soul, the undulations of dreams, and sudden leaps of consciousness. This obsessive idea is above all a child of giant cities, of the intersecting of their myriad relations.

"What is Romanticism?"

[1] Few people today will want to give a real and positive meaning to this word; and yet will they dare assert that a whole generation would agree to join a battle lasting several years for the sake of a flag which was not also a symbol?

[2] If you think back to the disturbances of those recent times you will see that if but few romantics have survived, it is because few of them discovered romanticism, though all of them sought it sincerely and honestly.

[3] Some applied themselves only to the choice of subjects- but they had not the temperament for their subjects. Others, still believing in a Catholic society, sought to reflect Catholicism in their works. But to call oneself a romantic and to look systematically at the past is to contradict oneself. Some blasphemed the Greeks and the Romans in the name of romanticism: but you can only make Romans and Greeks into romantics if you are one yourself. Many others have been misled by the idea of truth in art, and local colour. Realism had already existed for a long time when that great battle took place.

[4] Romanticism is precisely situated neither in choice of subjects nor in exact truth, but in a mode of feeling.

[5] They looked for it outside themselves, but it was only to be found within.

[6] For me, Romanticism is the most recent, the latest expression of the beautiful.

[7] There are as many kinds of beauty as there are habitual ways of seeking happiness.

[8] This is clearly explained by the philosophy of progress; thus, as there have been as many ideals as there have been ways in which the peoples of the earth have understood ethics, love, religion, etc., so romanticism will not consist in a perfect execution, but in a conception analogous to the ethical disposition of the age.

[9] It is because some have located it in a perfection of technique that we have had the rococo of romanticism, without question the most intolerable of all forms.

[10] Thus it is necessary, first and foremost, to get to know those aspects of nature and those human situations which the artists of the past have disdained or have not known.

[11] To say the word Romanticism is to say modern art--that is, intimacy, spirituality, colour, aspiration towards the infinite, expressed by every means available to the arts.