DADA

What is art?
In the 1915s a group of artists highly inspired by the Romanian poet ‘Tristan Tzara’ gathered in Zurich. This poet was the one who published the manifesto of Dadaism in 1918.

The Dada artists experienced the 1st world war as meaningless, they also didn’t agree with the current standards and aesthetic view on art at that time. The dadaist basically wanted to protest against the existing forms of art.
The dadaist aimed for a new way of doing and thinking about art, a new form of art for the new freedom. They could only achieve this freedom by attacking existing art movements and attempting to break these down.

These artist asked themselves the same question over and over:

”What is Art?”

Art forms and media like ‘ready-mades, collage, assemblage, nonsense texts, and environmental were forms that were mainly used by these DADA artists.
Dadaism was proclaimed to be ‘Anti-Art’, the dada artists opened a path for 20th century artist to use art as a medium for critical review on different topics next to the aesthetic value art always has had.

In the upcoming slides you’ll see some examples of what the dadaist did in order to break down existing forms of art.

In an attempt to destroy existing forms of art:
Dadaist made ‘old’ art an object of ridicule

Duchamp, Marcel
*L.H.O.O.Q.*, 1919-1940
Collotypie, 194 x 122 mm
Dadaist tried to make childish and accidental art

Sophie Taeuber-Arp
Composition with diagonals and circle
1916, Gouache
Dadaist used everyday objects as art

Marcel Duchamp
Fontaine
1917

Marcel Duchamp
Bicycle wheel
1913

Ready-mades

Everyday objects which are used to serve the purpose of art, simply because the artist claims it is a artwork.

This was used as a sign of total rejection and protest against all existing art forms and their aesthetic values.
Dadaist tried to shock their audience

Kurt Switters
The-and picture
1919
Effects on art

As you have probably already noticed the definition of art has expanded immensely.

- Everything can be art, not only objects but also the process or performances.
- Not only the visual characteristics of an object or process decided whether something is art or not in 20th century art, but the context in which it is placed.
- The freedom of the artist expanded, everything can be used in order to make art, not only materials but also techniques and media.