A work of art is "abstract" provided it does not depict a particular kind of object, person or scene. When a viewer looks at the work, he/she is not immediately forced or even encouraged to interpret it in terms of something that has a name, e.g., a chair, tree, person, rabbit, kitchen or forest. Evocation and metaphor can certainly be part of your idea but not depiction. An abstract work like other kinds of visual endeavors is open to different interpretations and layered meanings; this does not preclude specific intent.

In this project, you will develop an abstract animation dealing with form and movement. You may address issues of geometric versus organic form; weight, rigidity and malleability; rhythm and pattern; smooth versus jerky movement; relationships among forms; and relationships between forms, their direction of movement and the space and frame in which they are located as well as abstract narrative.

Your animation must be abstract in the sense described above. Forms should not be shaped, shaded or textured in a way that immediately suggests particular kinds of objects. Nor should they move in a way that forces or encourages the viewer to interpret them in terms of nameable objects. Your challenge is to create something that provokes the viewer's imagination in a variety of ways.

You should begin this project with drawing explorations. You should get a sketchbook or notebook with unlined pages to have with you over break. This will be your portable laboratory. In it you are to do drawings, doodles, notations, research, thinking and possibly collages. Please do at least ten sketches. They are part of the assignment. We will look at these sketches right after break. In this way you will be in a position to start your computer animation work with some ideas already in place.

Strategies and Hints:

This project is an arena in which to explore ideas and visual strategies. If your head is blank, do some drawings from life to get you started. You might try drawing actual things that are abstract in appearance. You can get ideas from experience or observation. An experience can be thought about visually without having to be described. For example, you may be taking a trip over break. There will be sights and sounds and emotions washing over and around you, there will be frenetic, tense periods or quite interludes. These can be the material for a work that evokes all of them without actually describing them pictorially. You could be home for break in familiar surroundings that seem less familiar as your times away get longer. That can be the start of an idea. You might go to a concert or a club or be in any particular space and be struck by the light, the space, the forms, the scale of the architecture, the way one or others or cars, move through spaces and places, etc. Also, don't underestimate doodles. The trick here is to become a cognitive audience for your doodles, to be able to mine them for ideas.