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Sesquicuspidal curves

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A classic question in algebraic geometry asks what are the possible singularities for a plane curve of a given degree and genus. This turns out to be closely connected with the theory of (stabilized) symplectic embeddings of ellipsoids. In this talk I will describe a construction (joint with D. McDuff) of new families of rational plane curves with desirable singularities. Key ingredients include a generalization of Orevkov's birational transformation and scattering diagrams for tropical curves.

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