Amie Wilkinson
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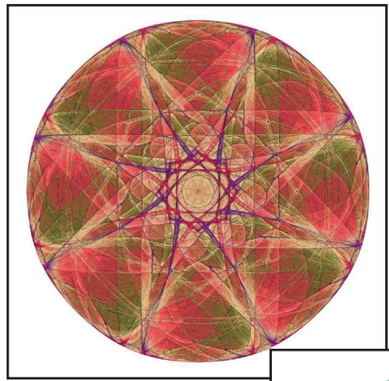
Levi L. Conant 2021 LECTURE SERIES

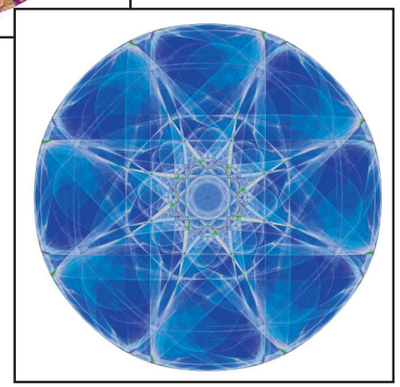
WPI Department of Mathematical Sciences

Dynamical Symmetry

Friday, Oct. 29, 2021
4pm Zoom: 919 4739 9142

In classical mechanics, symmetry occurs for a reason: there is a conserved quantity such as angular momentum. This is Noether's theorem, and it points to a broader theme in dynamics that symmetry is rare and meaningful. I will discuss, in the context of modern dynamics, how this theme recurs in beautiful ways: on the one hand, a typical dynamical system has the minimum amount of symmetry possible, and on the other hand, a little extra symmetry implies a lot of symmetry, a phenomenon known as rigidity.





Images: Mike Field

Levi Leonard Conant, 1857–1916, was a mathematician and educator who spent most of his career as a faculty member at Worcester Polytechnic Institute; he served as head of the Mathematics Department and as acting president from 1911 to 1913. An outstanding teacher, and an active scholar, published many articles in scientific journals and wrote four textbooks. His large bequest to the American Mathematical Society established the Levi L. Conant Prize, awarded annually to recognize the best expository paper published in either *Notices of the AMS* or *Bulletin of the AMS* in the previous five years.

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