# Concave symplectic embeddings and relations in mapping class groups of surfaces

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Laura Starkston (University of Texas at Austin) Concave symplectic embeddings and relations in map

















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surfaces in a 4-manifold intersecting positively transversely



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Idea: Use concave caps to find convex fillings.

#### Theorem [McDuff]

A closed symplectic manifold containing a symplectic positive  $S^2$  is symplectomorphic to  $\mathbb{C}P^2 \# N \overline{\mathbb{C}P^2}$ .



For a Seifert fibered space Y over  $S^2$  with k singular fibers and  $e_0 \leq -k-1$ , with its canonical contact structure  $\xi_{can}$ :

Every convex filling of (Y, ξ<sub>can</sub>) is the complement of a symplectic embedding of a concave star-shaped plumbing of spheres into CP<sup>2</sup> #N CP<sup>2</sup>.

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  - blow-up at N points, including proper transforms of the CP<sup>1</sup>'s and exceptional spheres into the concave plumbing
- For many such (Y, ξ<sub>can</sub>) the isotopy class of the embedding is determined by combinatorial/homological data (sufficient conditions: k ≤ 5 or e<sub>0</sub> ≤ −k − 3).



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### Monodromy factorization approach

**[Gay-Mark]** For these Seifert fibered spaces,  $(Y, \xi_{can})$ , there are open book decompositions with

- Planar pages
- Monodromy  $\phi = D_{c_1}D_{c_2}\cdots D_{c_n}$ ,  $c_1, \cdots, c_n$  disjoint



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#### Theorem (Wendl)

Because these contact structures are planar, each (minimal) convex filling of  $(Y, \xi_{can})$  corresponds to a different positive factorization of  $\phi$ .

## Comparing and translating the two methods

#### Monodromy substitution approach

- Easy to write down
- Good for applications for cut and paste operations

#### Concave embedding approach

- Easy to find interesting examples
- Easy (in many cases) to classify *all* fillings of certain contact manifolds (combinatorial reduction)

**Translating between the two approaches:** Handlebody decompositions for embedded surfaces and Lefschetz fibrations

#### How to draw an embedding of spheres in a 4-manifold

Unknotted circles in S<sup>3</sup> Framing Linking

- Unknotted circles in  $S^3 \leftrightarrow$  equators of spheres

  - $\mathsf{Linking} \hspace{.1in} \leftrightarrow \hspace{.1in} \mathsf{Pairwise} \hspace{.1in} \mathsf{intersections}$



#### Blowing up and down



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## How to draw a planar Lefchetz fibration



#### Dotted circle notation: Attaching

- a 1-handle is equivalent to carving out a 2-handle
- $-\ensuremath{\,\text{a}}$  dotted circle denotes the boundary of this core disk.











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cancelling 3-handles



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Cut out concave cap from  $\mathbb{CP}^2 \# 3 \overline{\mathbb{CP}^2}$ . Turn upsidedown. Simplify









The lantern relation concave embedding came from blowing up:

By blowing up more interesting configurations of lines, we get new relations:

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 $D_{1}^{2}D_{2}^{2}D_{3}D_{4}^{2}D_{5}^{2}D_{1,2,3,4,5} = D_{1,2,3}D_{1,4}D_{1,5}D_{2,4}D_{2,5}D_{3,4,5}$ 

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 $D_1^2 D_2^2 D_3 D_4^2 D_5^2 D_{1,2,3,4,5} = D_{1,2,3} D_{1,4} D_{1,5} D_{2,4} D_{2,5} D_{3,4,5}$ 

Concave embedding strategy shows: no other fillings  $\Rightarrow$  no other + factorizations.

Such *indecomposable* relations are essential relators for elements in Dehn<sup>+</sup>.

There is an infinite family of indecomposable relations generalizing this example.

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## Longer Arms



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#### Moving towards a complete dictionary: other moves

- What is a complete list of embedding moves, and how do they each translate to moves on mapping class group relations?
- How does a sequence of embedding moves translate to a sequence of mapping class group relations?

