4th Annual Cal Poly Pomona Student RSCA Conference
March 4, 2016
University Library,
Oral Presentations from 12:45 to 5 pm
Bronco Student Center (Ursa Major),
Poster Session, Performance Presentation, and Reception from 4 to 6:30 pm

Lead Author: Jennifer Gerry

Major: Mathematics

College: Science

Co-author(s): Brenda Reyes-Chavez, Gabriela Garza-Vazquez, Manuel Macias, Amber Hauss, Cylinda Joy Haynes

Faculty Mentor(s): Dr. Gayle Fekete

Presentation Type: Performance Presentation

Project Title: Research in Dance-making

Synopsis: Mechanism Dance Theatre, all current and former students of Cal Poly Pomona, will highlight their interest in research and scientific method in the dance-making process.

Abstract: Mechanism Dance Theatre is movement-centered project based in Pomona, CA. The collective consists of interdisciplinary members who are all current or former students of Cal Poly. Their interest is in the body's ability, regardless of its state of movement trajectory, to illuminate social issues and personal narratives. Mechanism's core values depend on the inclusion of non-traditional-dance forms and identities, cross discipline exploration and collaboration, and passing on the value of mentorship. In each of their works, attention is paid to research. Due to the interdisciplinarity nature of the members, the scope of this research covers a wide spectrum of topics including cultural and gender studies, mathematics, history and literature, physics and so on as well as the intersections between them. Their contribution to the RSCA conference highlights the value of interdisciplinary research in dance-making, their process as it follows the scientific method, and will provide concrete examples of these aspects in a culminating performance. One such example is a current project drawing upon a particular flow-theory (physics) called the Constructal law. The law states that in order for a living flow-system to persist, or to "survive", it must evolve in such a way that it provides better access for its currents (Bejan, 2007). In a pattern known as tree-flow, imperfection and branching behavior is the vehicle for such access; a steady negotiation between resistance and optimization. With issues of power and control, in unsupportive architectures, how might we create movement that portrays the navigation of change, and shift the balance of value toward the branches?