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Marcelo Aguiar* (maguiar@math.tamu.edu), **Swapneel Mahajan** and **Jacob White**. *Rings and near rings in algebraic combinatorics*.

After motivating examples of a combinatorial nature, we discuss the notion of (near) ring in a 2-monoidal category. We explain in what sense the space of symmetric functions behaves just like the ring of integers. The faces of the braid arrangement give rise to a near ring intimately related to noncommutative symmetric functions.

This talk draws from joint work with Swapneel Mahajan and Jacob White. (Received February 17, 2013)