

Toward Macroscopic Quantum Superpositions of Levitated Superconducting Microspheres

Oriol Romero-Isart and Hernan Pino

*IQOQI - Institute of Quantum Optics and Quantum Information
ITP - Institute of Theoretical Physics, University of Innsbruck
Innsbruck, Austria*



Plan of the talk

- Motivation: quantum superposition of massive objects
- Decoherence
- Protocol
- Results
- Experimental proposal
- Conclusions

Motivation

Quantum Superposition of a Massive Object

Quantum Superposition of Massive Objects

- Spatial superposition of a massive object

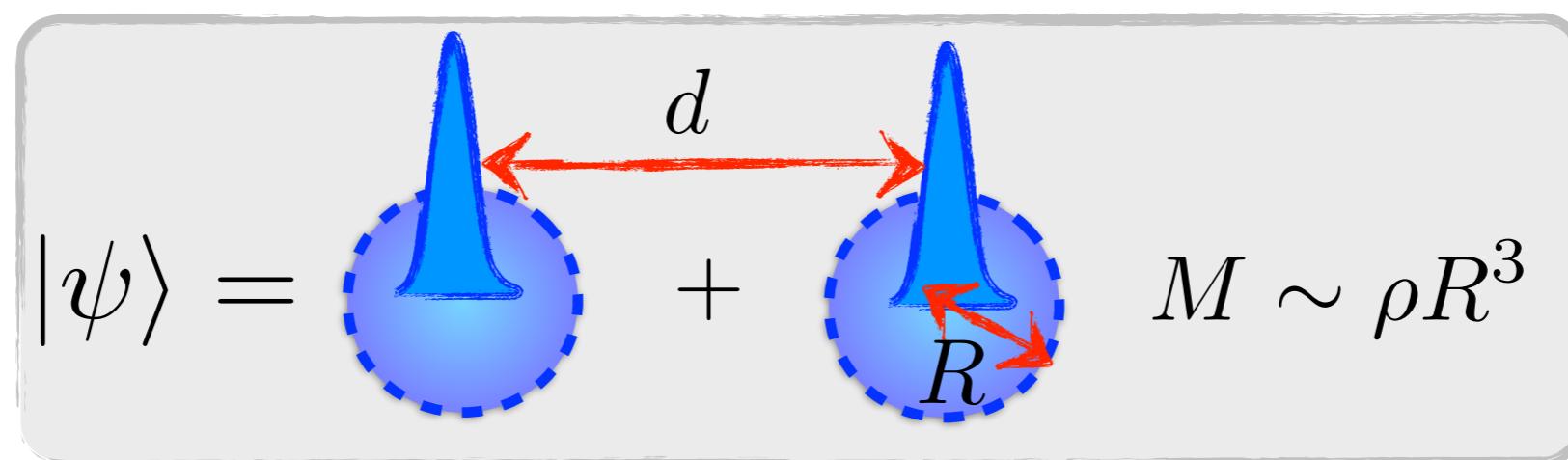
$$|\psi\rangle = \text{Diagram} + M \sim \rho R^3$$

The diagram shows two blue spheres representing massive objects. Each sphere has a central peak and a dashed circular base. A red double-headed arrow labeled d indicates the distance between the centers of the two spheres. A red arrow labeled R points from the center of the right sphere to its surface, representing the radius.

- How large can we make \mathbf{d} and \mathbf{M} ?

Quantum Superposition of Massive Objects

- Spatial superposition of a massive object

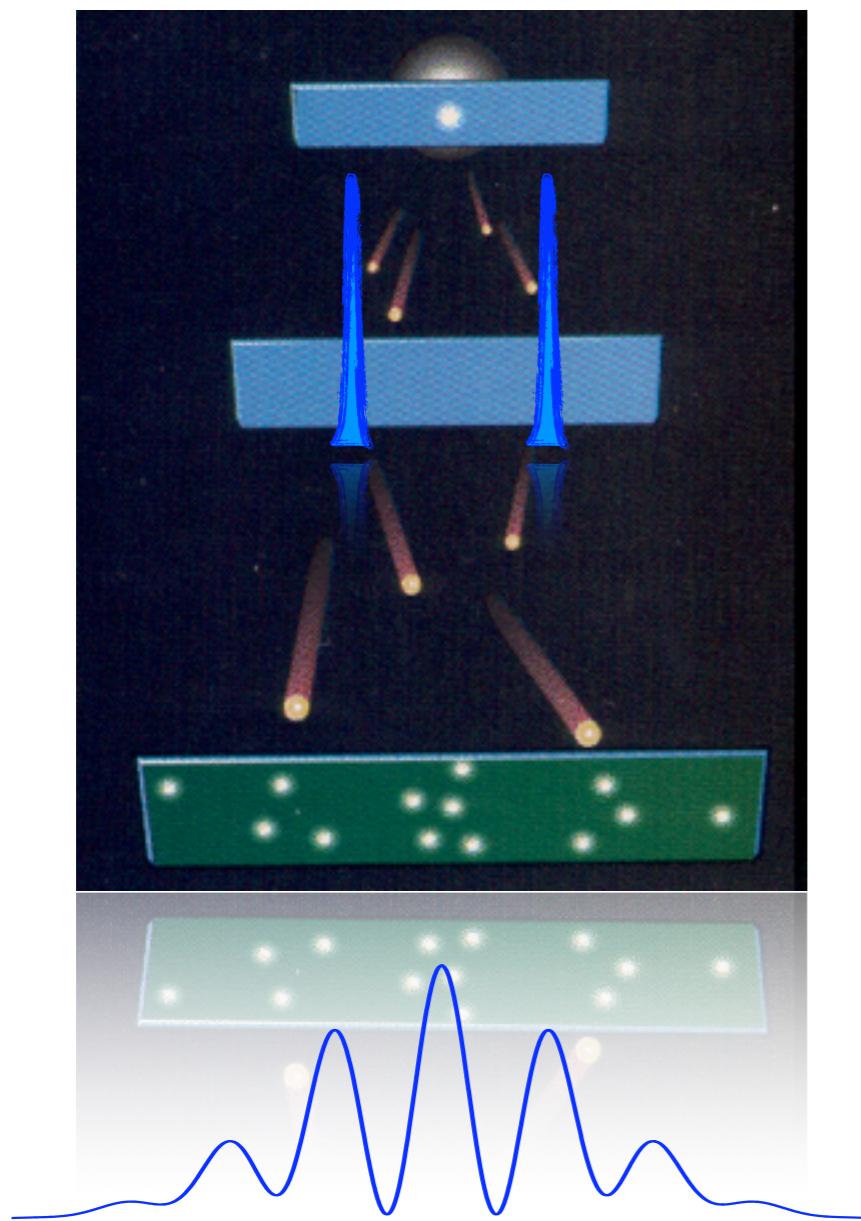


- How large can we make **d** and **M**?
- Why?
 - Fundamental interest: exploring/testing QM in new regimes
 - Extremely sensitive to environment: very good sensor!
 - Measuring gravity?
 - New techniques in quantum control
 - Mesoscopic physics
 - ...

Two strategies

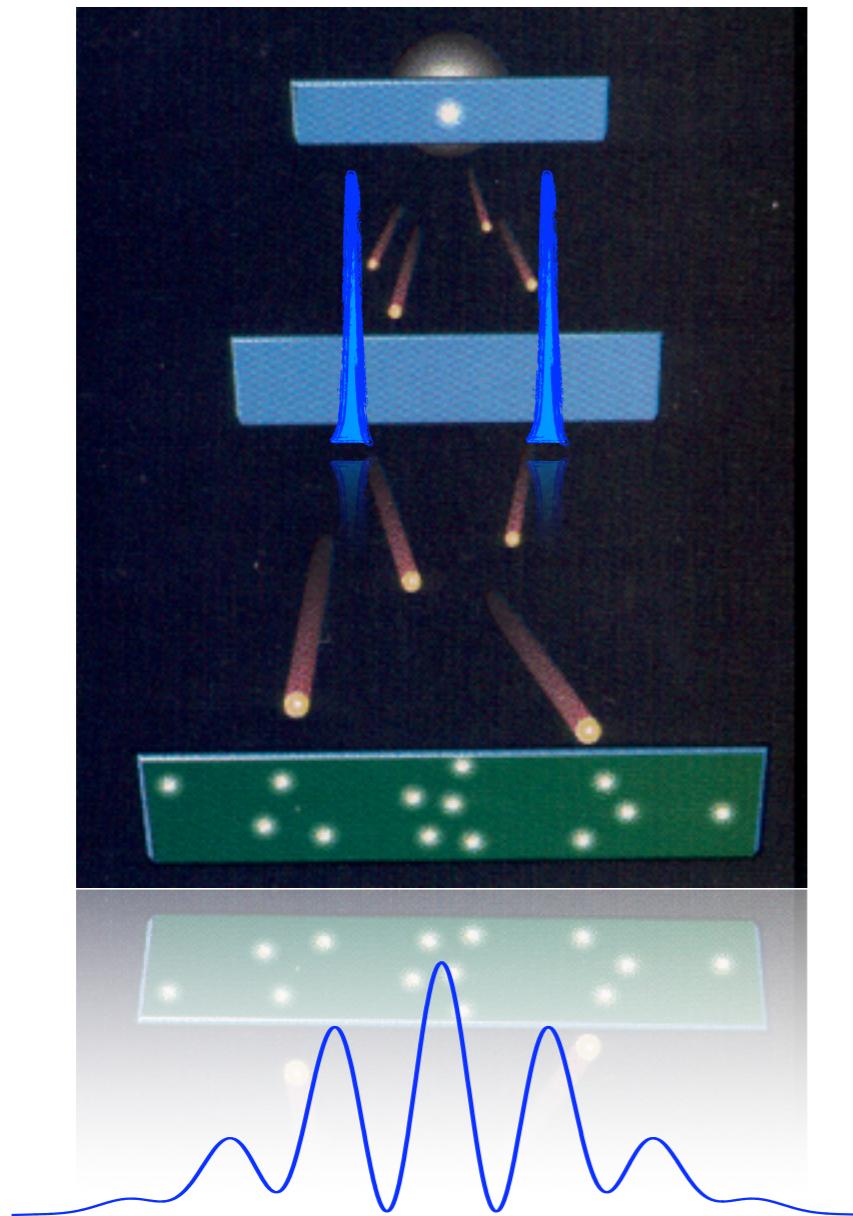
Two strategies

- Matter-wave interferometry



Two strategies

- Matter-wave interferometry

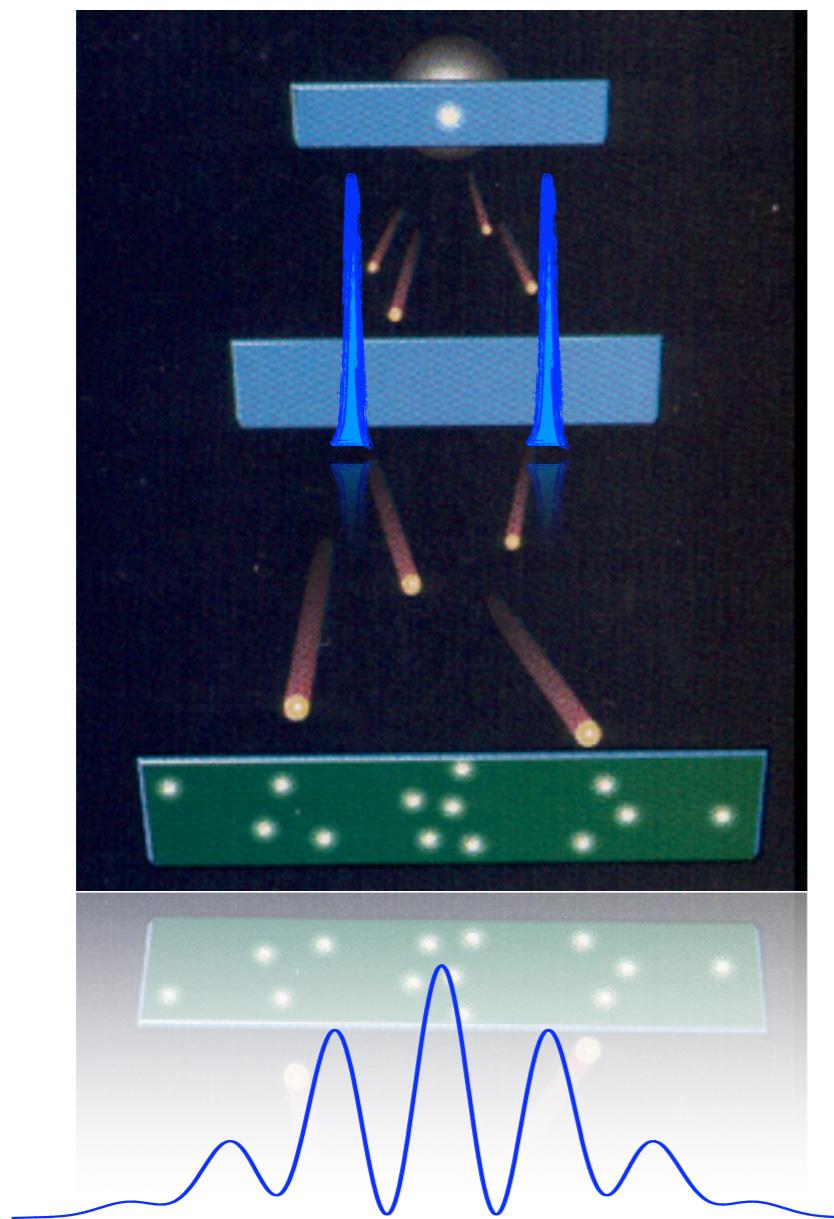


$$|\psi\rangle = \text{blue circle} + \text{blue circle}$$

- Large superpositions
- Easily probed by the interference pattern
- Challenge in increasing the mass:

Two strategies

- Matter-wave interferometry



- Large superpositions
- Easily probed by the interference pattern
- Challenge in increasing the mass:

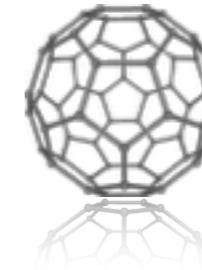
@ 1930's



Mass (AMU):

~ 1

@ 1999



$\sim 10^2$

@ 2013

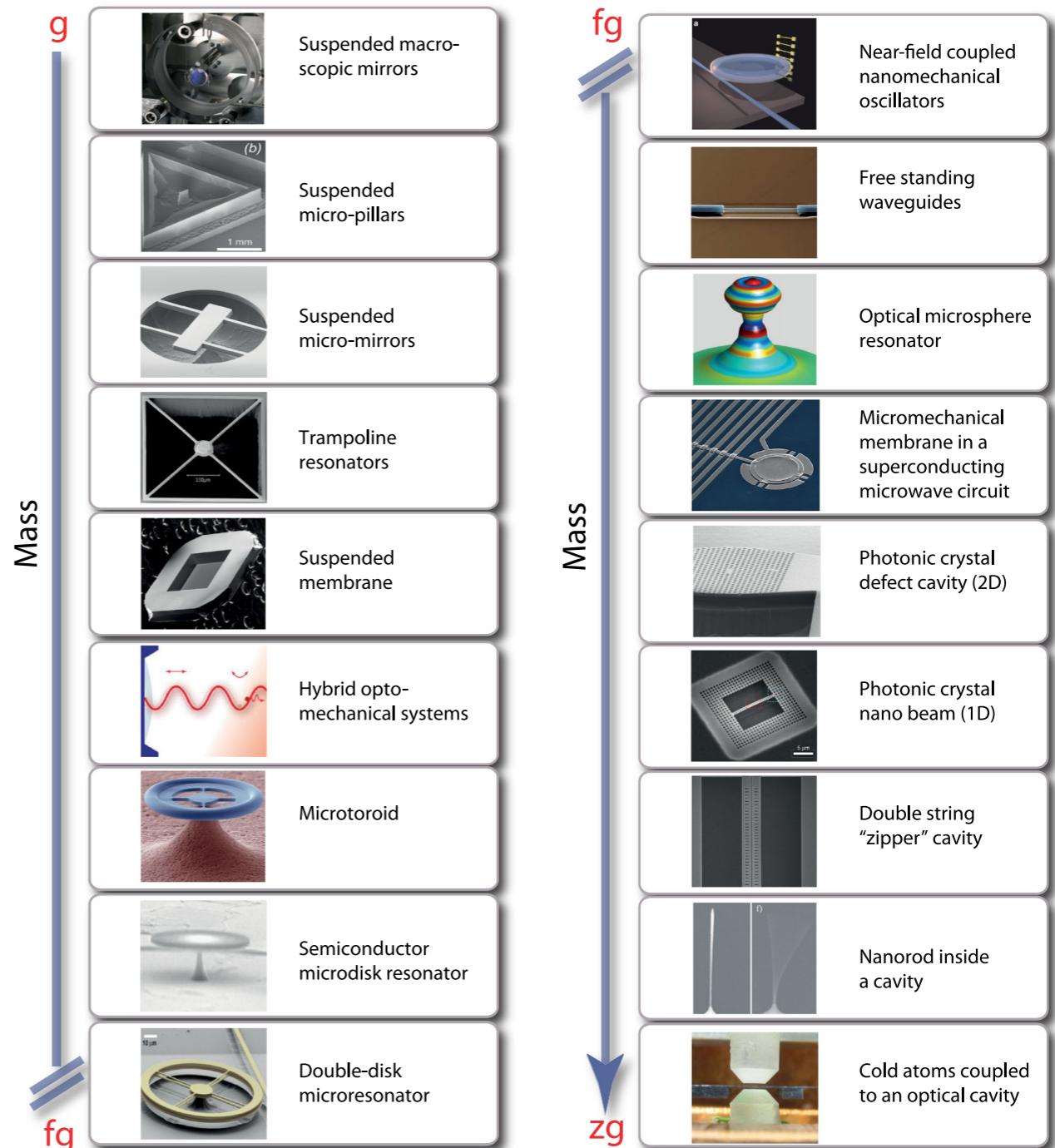
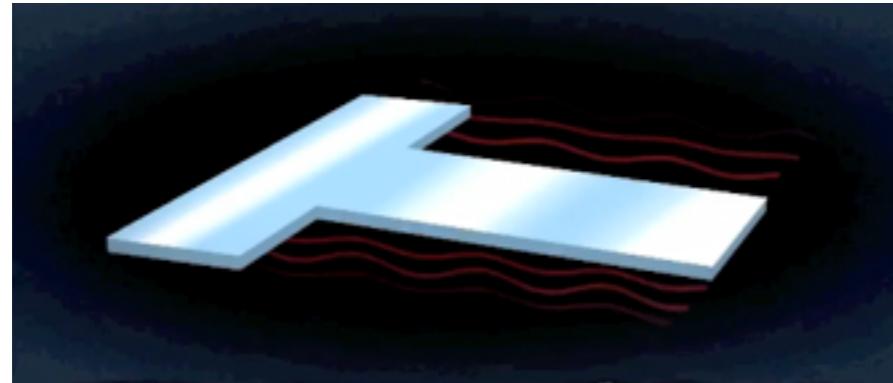


$\sim 10^4$

$$|\psi\rangle = \text{blue wavefunction} + \text{blue wavefunction}$$

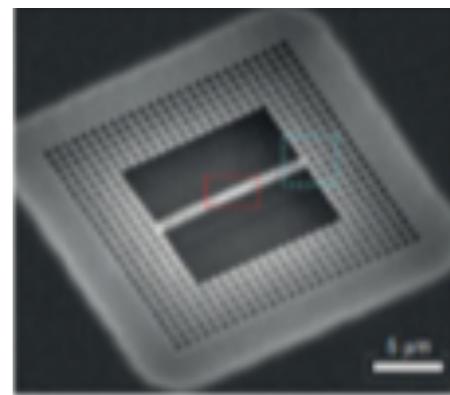
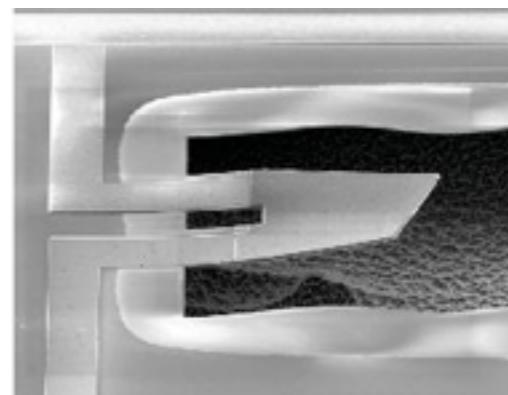
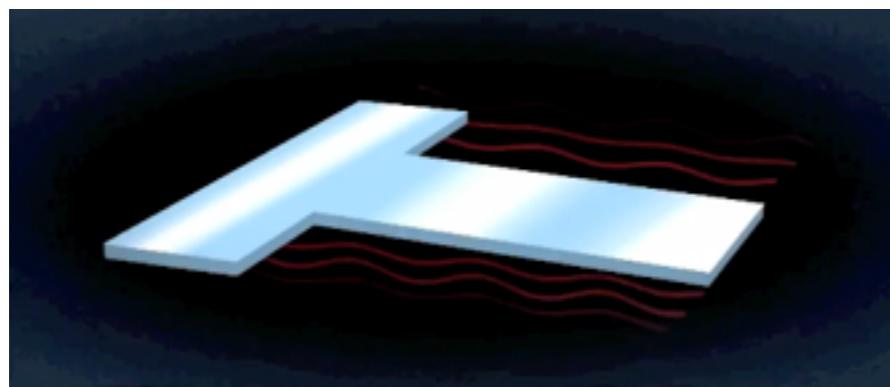
Two strategies

Quantum mechanical resonators



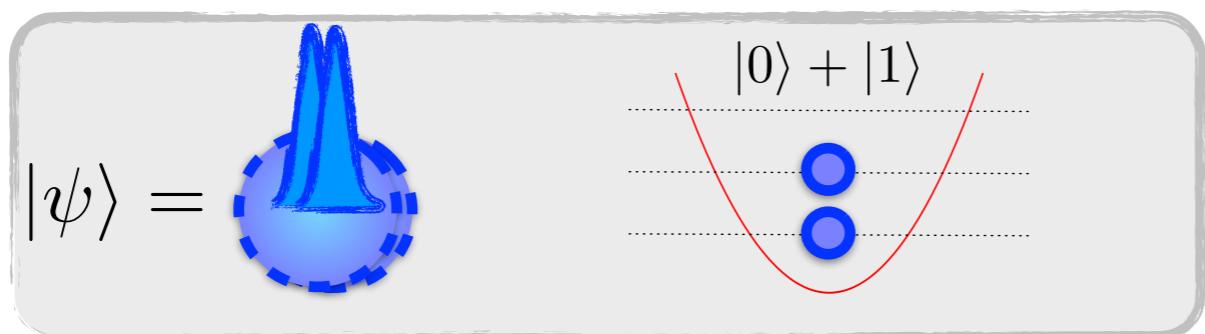
Two strategies

- Quantum mechanical resonators
 - Large mass



Mass (AMU):	$\sim 10^{13}$	$\sim 10^{11}$	$\sim 10^{13}$
	2010	2011	2011

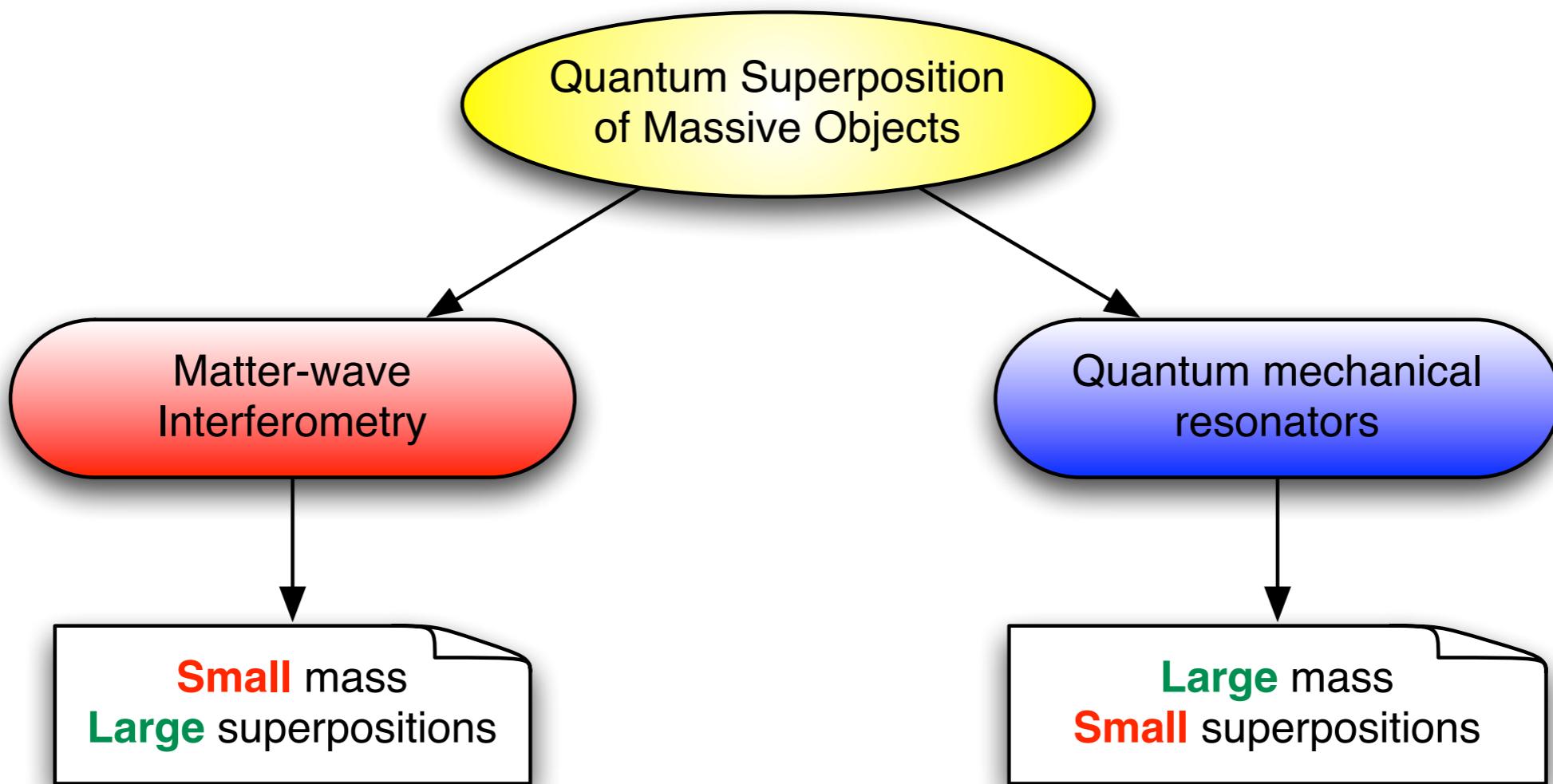
- Small superpositions:



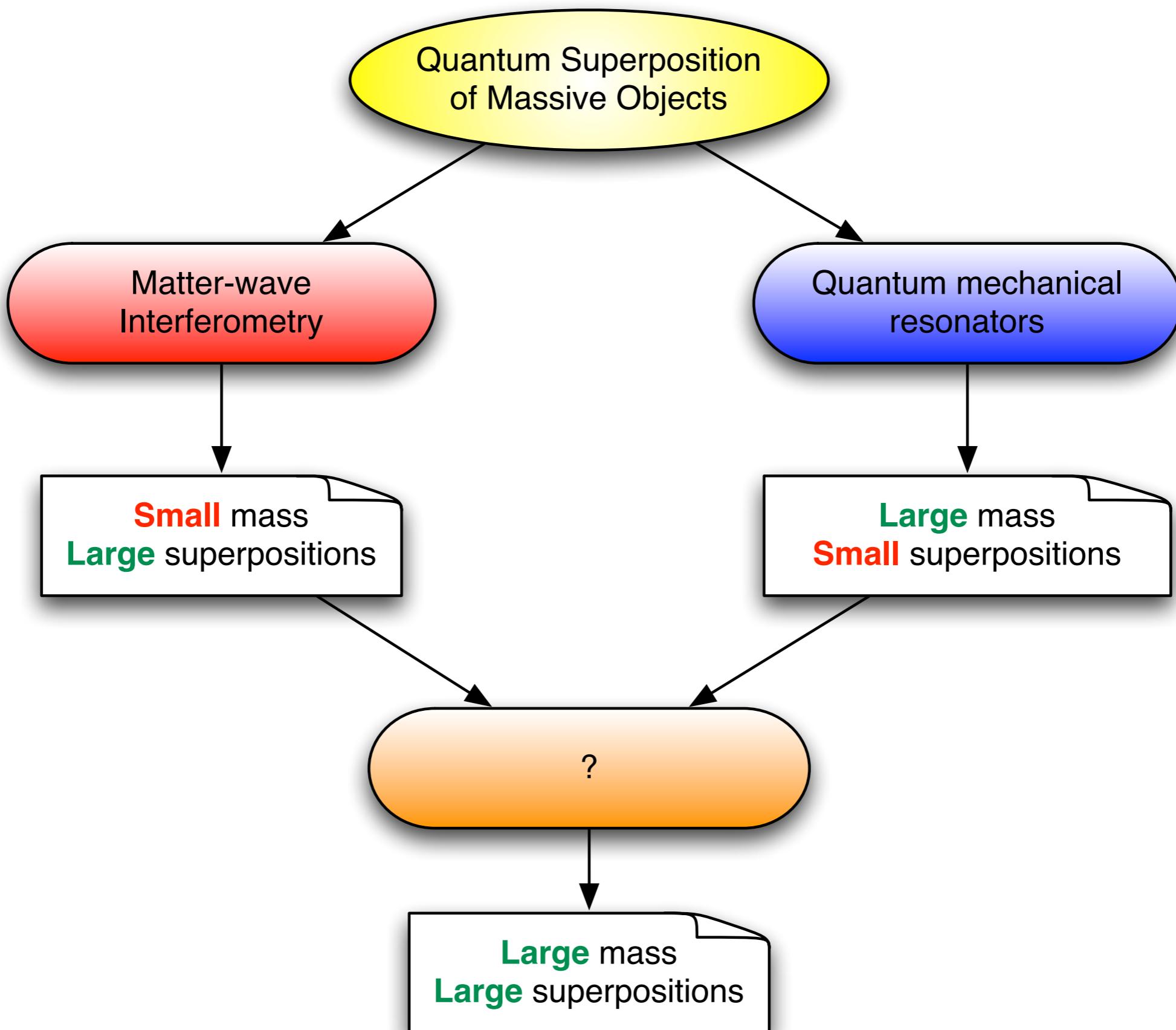
$$x_0 = \sqrt{\frac{\hbar}{2m\omega}} \sim \frac{10^{-7}}{\sqrt{N}} \text{ m}$$



Two strategies



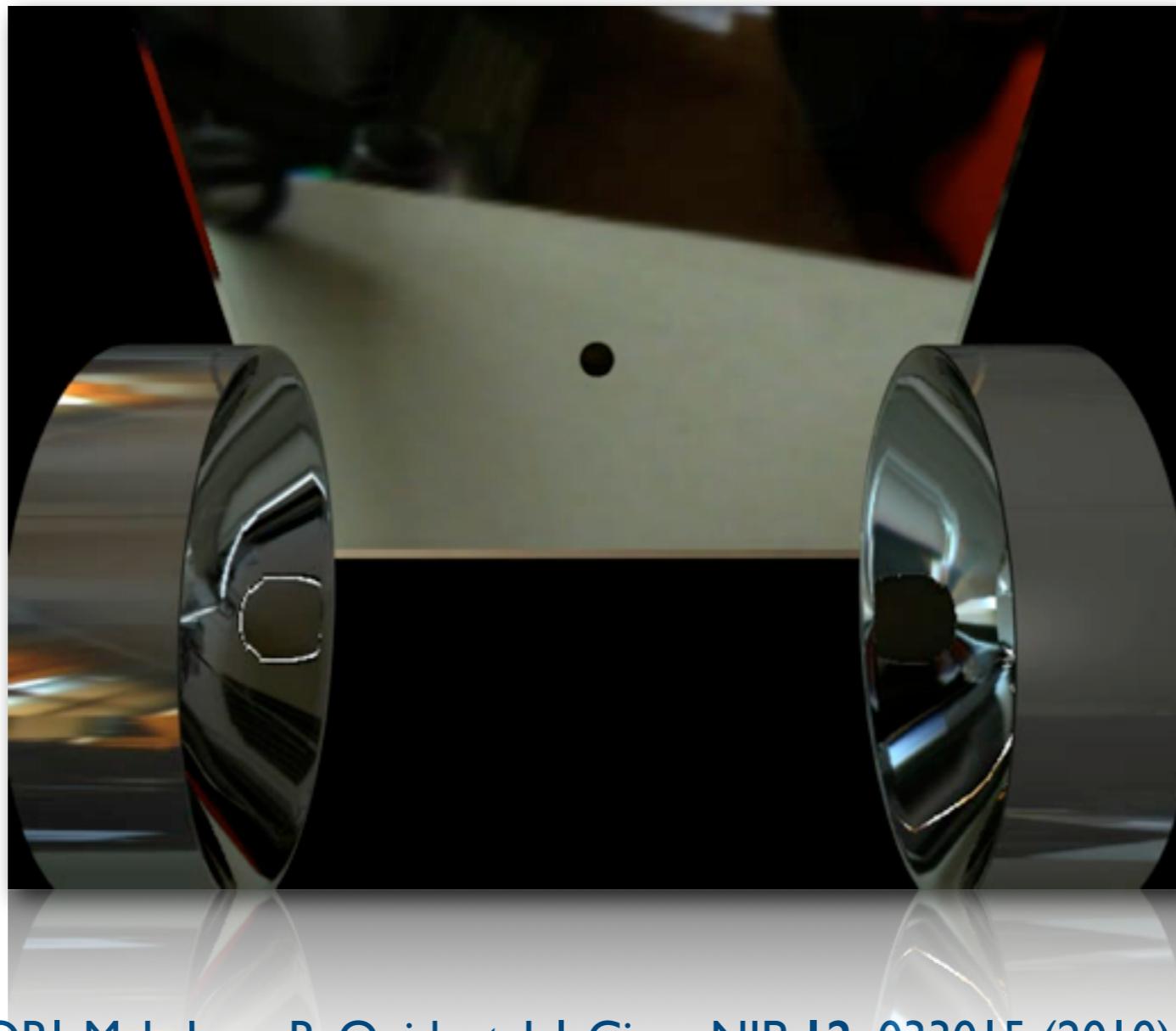
Two strategies



Levitation of nano/micro-spheres

Optical Levitation

- Diameter $\ll \lambda \sim 1 \mu\text{m}$
- N $\sim 10^6 \sim 10^9$



- ORI, M. L. Juan, R. Quidant, J. I. Cirac NJP 12, 033015 (2010)
- D. E. Chang, et al. (Kimble and Zoller) PNAS 107, 1005 (2010)

Optical levitation of dielectric nanospheres

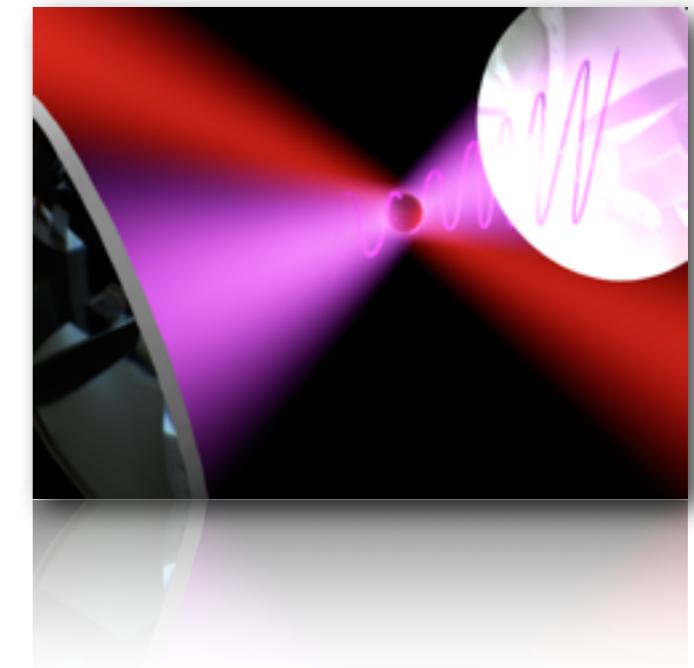
● Theory:

- Master equation for arbitrary sized dielectrics (all orders in perturbation theory)

$$\dot{\rho}(t) = i[\rho(t), H] + \dots$$

- Sources of decoherence (gas, black-body, elasticity, ...)

- 👤 ORI, A. C. Pflanzer, et al. *PRA* **83**, 013803 (2011)
- 👤 A. C. Pflanzer, ORI, and J. I. Cirac *PRA* **86**, 013802 (2012)



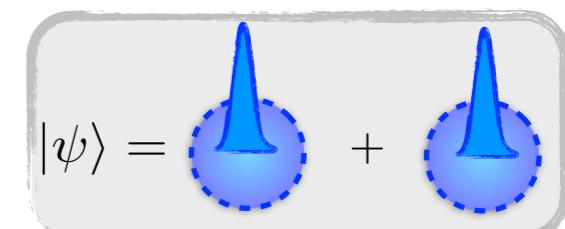
● Protocols:

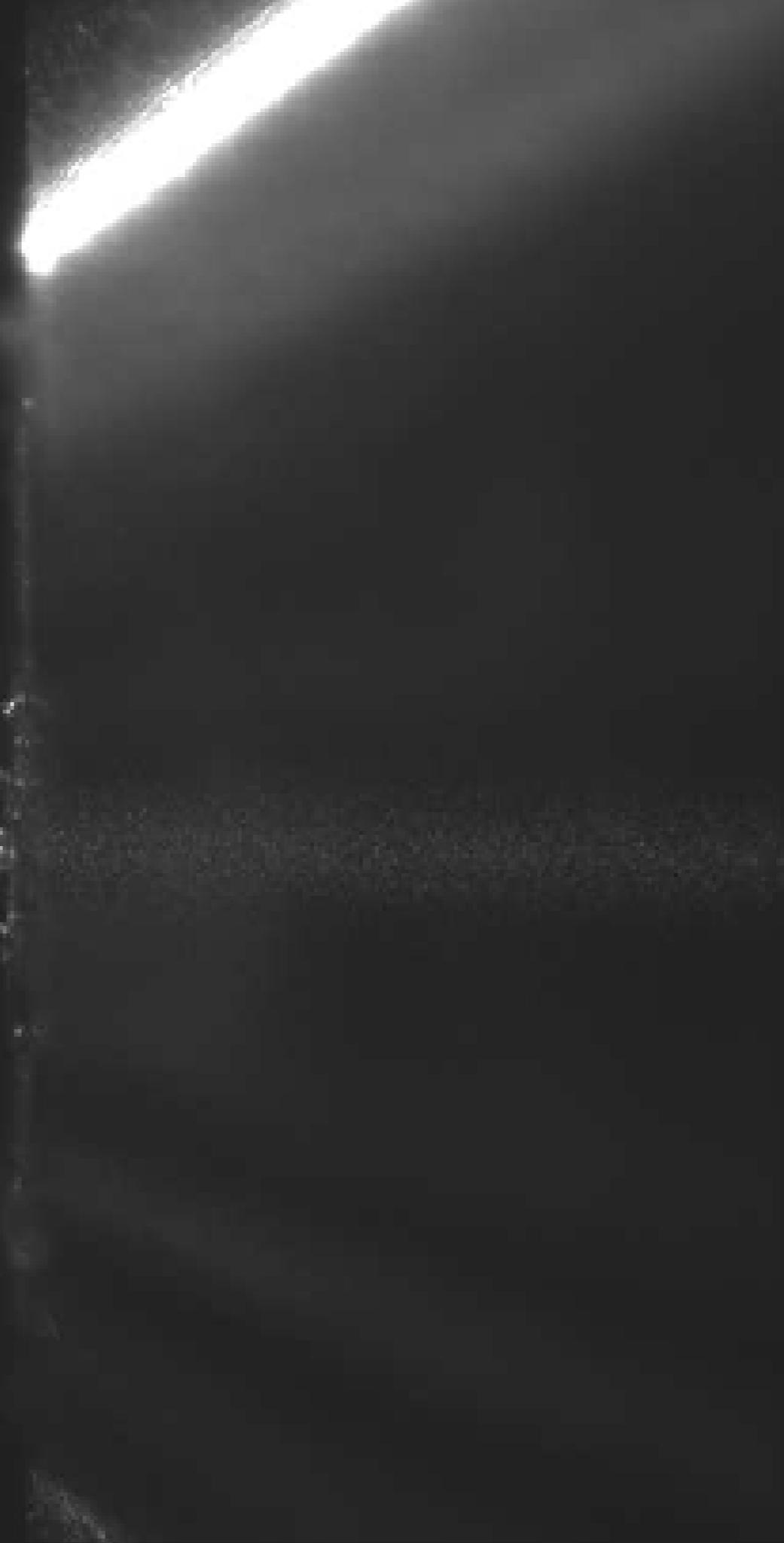
- Preparation of “small” quantum superpositions

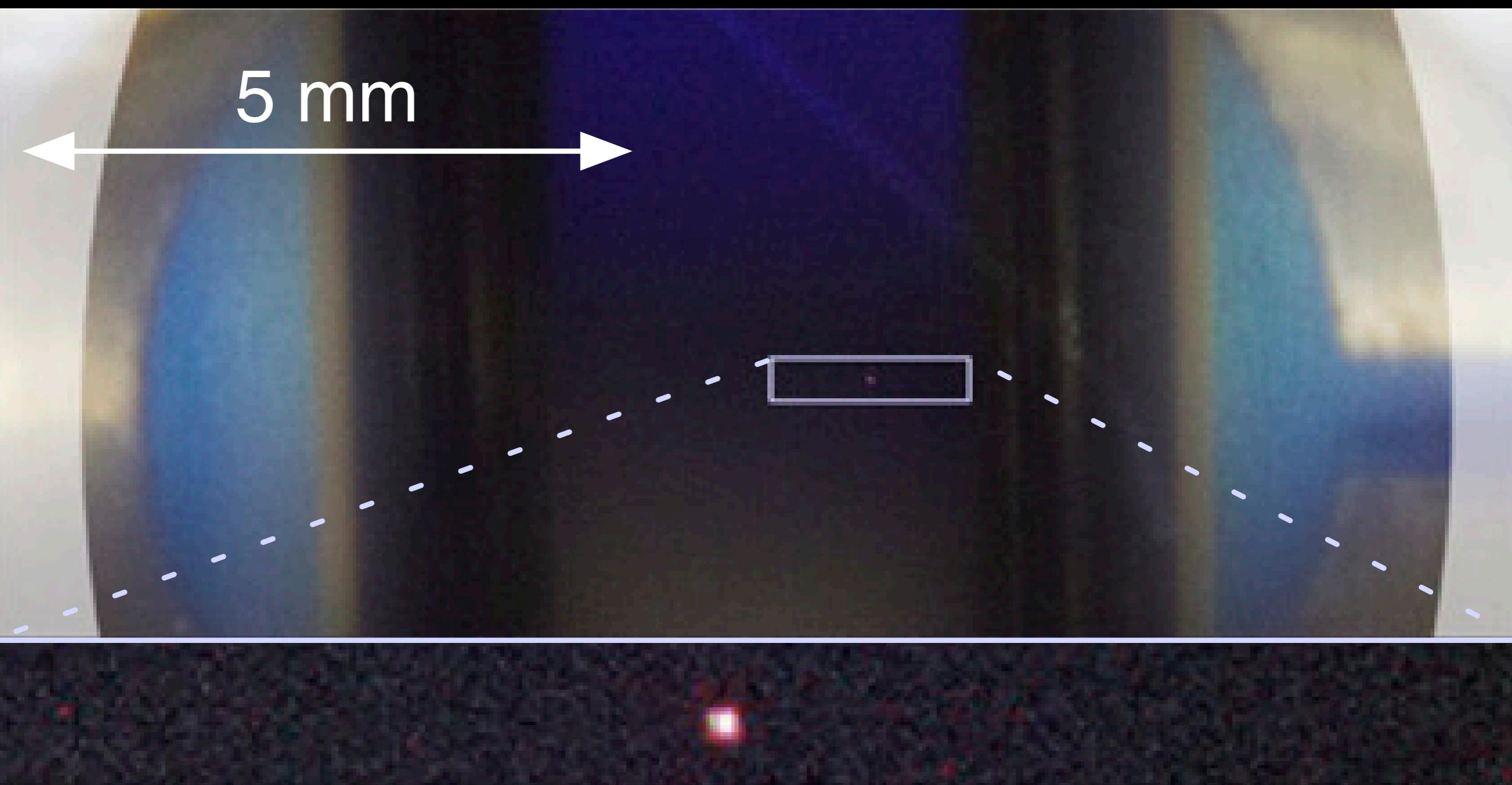
- 👤 ORI, M. L. Juan, R. Quidant, J. I. Cirac *NJP* **12**, 033015 (2010)
- 👤 ORI, A. C. Pflanzer, et al. *PRA* **83**, 013803 (2011)
- 👤 A. C. Pflanzer, ORI, and J. I. Cirac *PRA* **88**, 033804 (2013)

- Preparation of large quantum superpositions

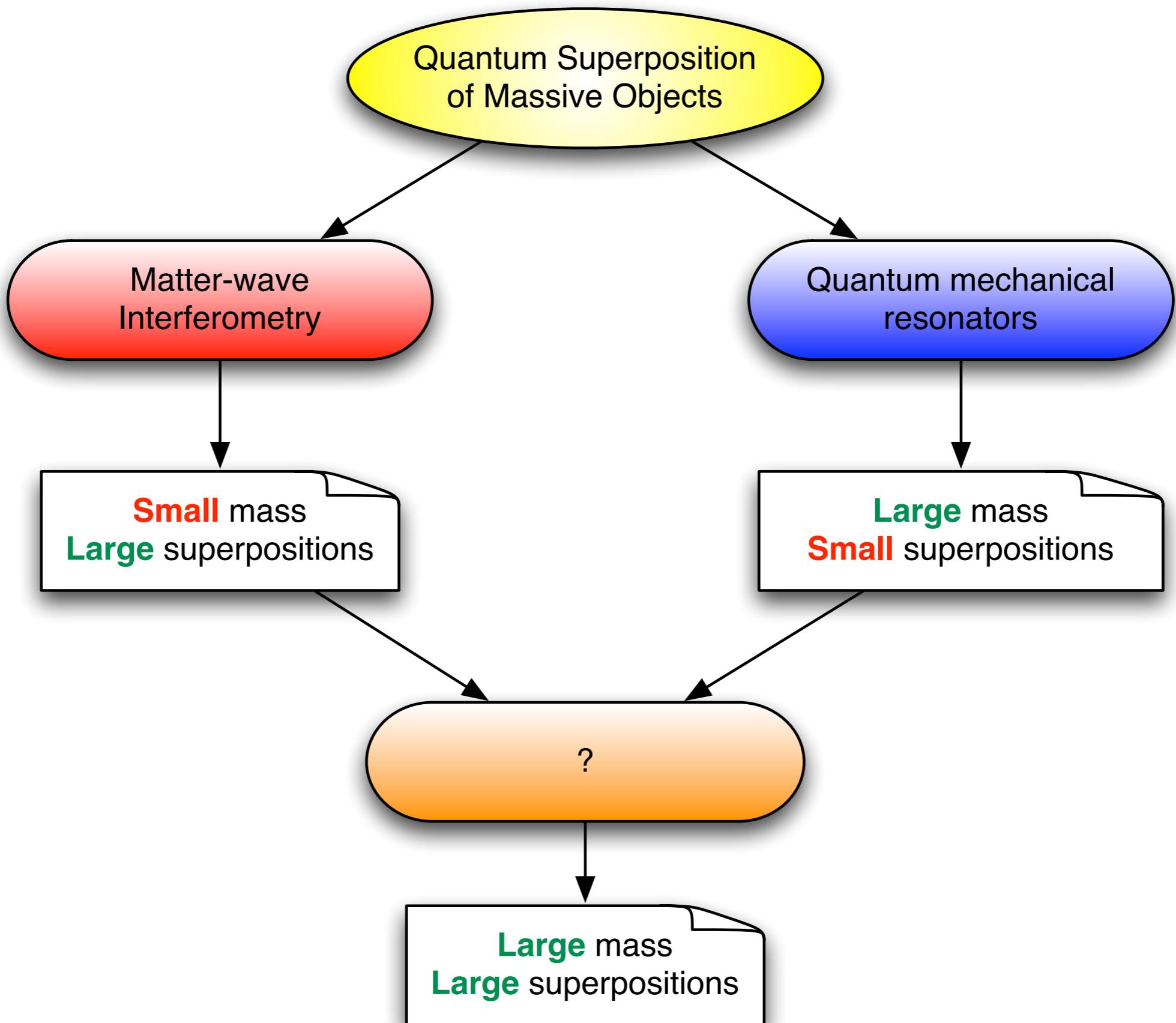
- 👤 ORI, et al. *PRL* **107**, 020405 (2011)
- 👤 ORI *PRA* **84**, 052121 (2011)







Two strategies



Matter-Wave Interference with Levitated Nanospheres

PRL 107, 020405 (2011)

PHYSICAL REVIEW LETTERS

week ending
8 JULY 2011



Large Quantum Superpositions and Interference of Massive Nanometer-Sized Objects

O. Romero-Isart,¹ A. C. Pflanzer,¹ F. Blaser,² R. Kaltenbaek,² N. Kiesel,² M. Aspelmeyer,² and J. I. Cirac¹

¹*Max-Planck-Institut für Quantenoptik, Hans-Kopfermann-Strasse 1, D-85748, Garching, Germany*

²*Vienna Center for Quantum Science and Technology, Faculty of Physics, University of Vienna,
Boltzmanngasse 5, A-1090 Vienna, Austria*

PHYSICAL REVIEW A 84, 052121 (2011)

Quantum superposition of massive objects and collapse models

Oriol Romero-Isart

Max-Planck-Institut für Quantenoptik, Hans-Kopfermann-Str. 1, D-85748 Garching, Germany

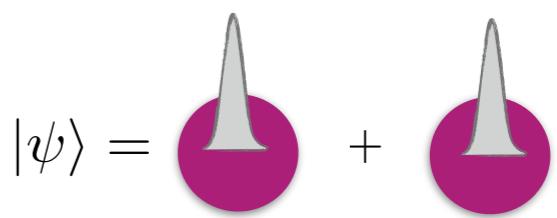
(Received 19 October 2011; published 28 November 2011)

Are they big enough?

“Gravitational Regime” with Quantum Systems

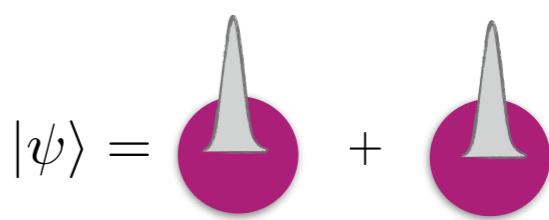
Gravitational Regime

- Macroscopic quantum superpositions

$$|\psi\rangle = \text{circle} + \text{circle}$$


Gravitational Regime

- Macroscopic quantum superpositions
- Entering into the “gravitational regime”



$$|\psi\rangle = \text{red circle} + \text{red circle}$$

Time scale $\tau = h \frac{2R}{GM^2}$

Gravitational Regime

- Macroscopic quantum superpositions

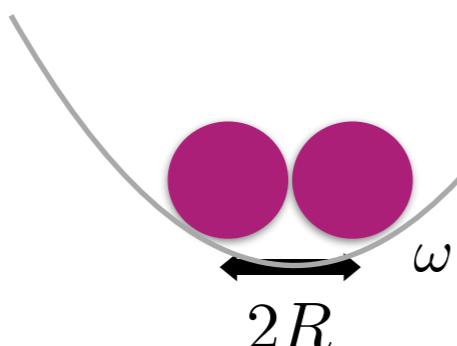
$$|\psi\rangle = \text{pink circle} + \text{pink circle}$$

- Entering into the “gravitational regime”

Time scale $\tau = h \frac{2R}{GM^2}$

→ Two interpretations:

Gravitational energy vs
kinetic energy of 2 masses

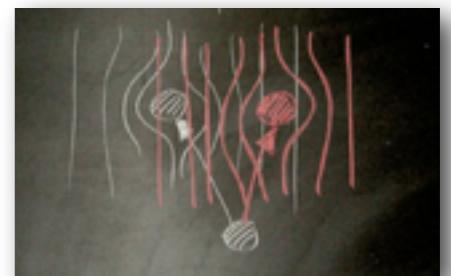


$$G \frac{M^2}{2R} = \hbar\omega \quad \omega = \frac{2\pi}{\tau}$$

Gravitationally induced
decoherence

$$|\psi\rangle = \text{purple circle} + \text{purple circle}$$

Superposition lifetime



Penrose, Diósi 80's

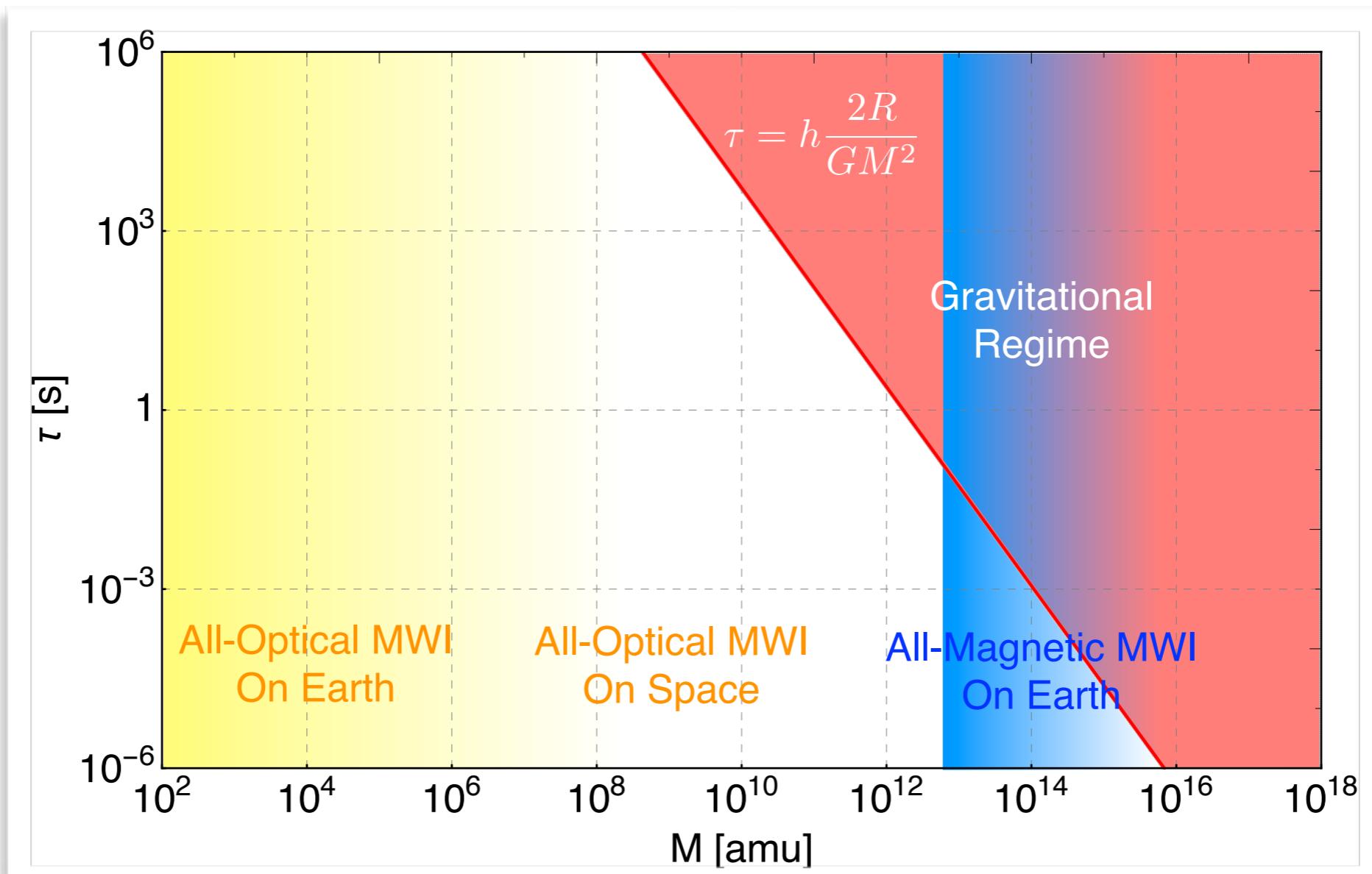
Gravitational Regime

- Toward macroscopic quantum superpositions

$$|\psi\rangle = \begin{array}{c} \text{up} \\ \text{down} \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} \text{down} \\ \text{up} \end{array}$$

- Entering into the “gravitational regime”

Time scale $\tau = h \frac{2R}{GM^2}$



Gravitational Regime

- Toward macroscopic quantum superpositions



- Entering into the “gravitational regime”

$$\text{Time scale} \quad \tau = h \frac{2R}{GM^2}$$

- All-magnetic matter-wave interferometer on a chip

Toward Macroscopic Quantum Superpositions of Levitated Superconducting Spheres

Hernan Pino^{1,2} and Oriol Romero-Isart^{1,2*}

¹*Institute for Quantum Optics and Quantum Information of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, A-6020 Innsbruck, Austria.* and

²*Institute for Theoretical Physics, University of Innsbruck, A-6020 Innsbruck, Austria.*

 ArXiv: ...

Gravitational Regime

- Toward macroscopic quantum superpositions

$$|\psi\rangle = \text{red circle} + \text{blue circle}$$

- Entering into the “gravitational regime”

Time scale $\tau = h \frac{2R}{GM^2}$

- All-magnetic matter-wave interferometer on a chip

→ Combination of salient features:

1. Cryogenic temperatures



No black-body decoherence!

2. Static magnetic potentials



Levitation and exponential speed-up of dynamics (no need for space)!

3. Coupling to quantum circuits



Purification, quantum double-slit, measurement!

Gravitational Regime

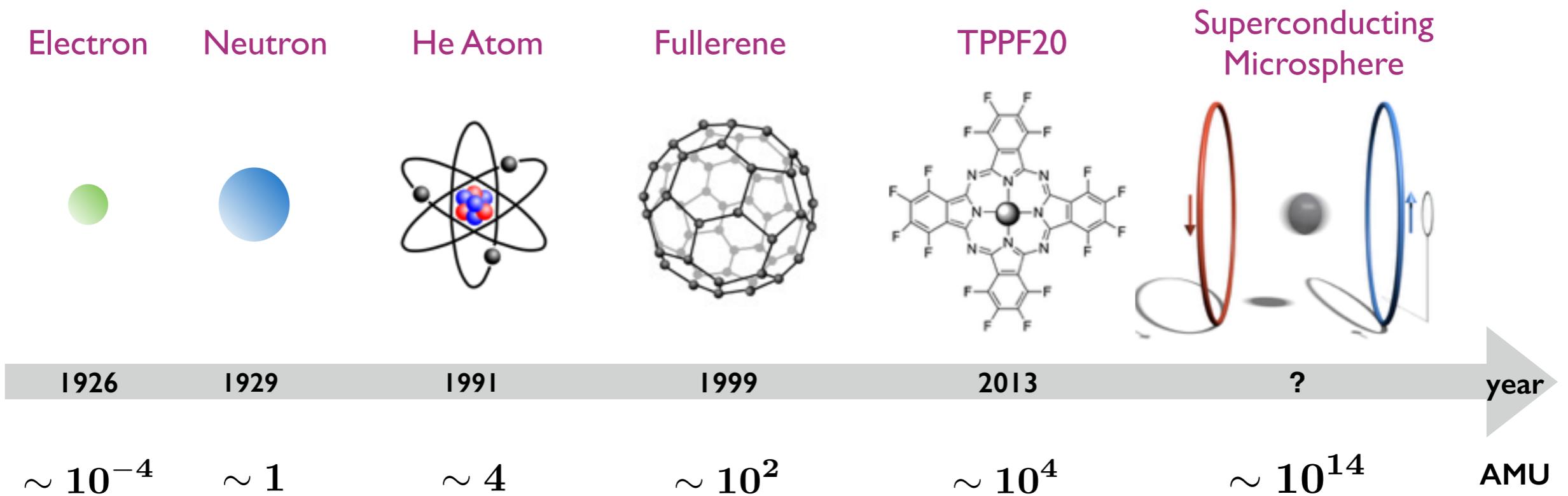
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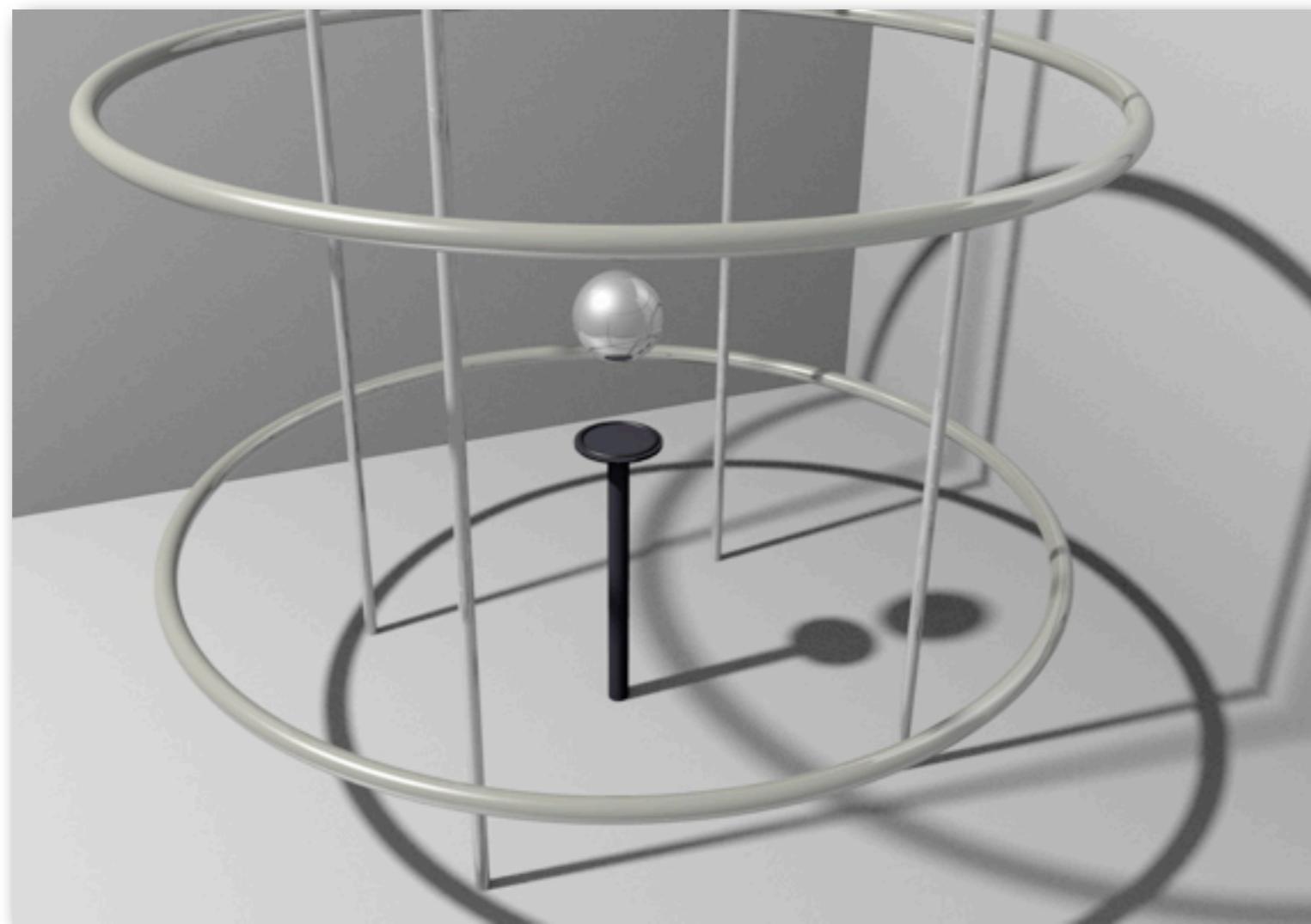
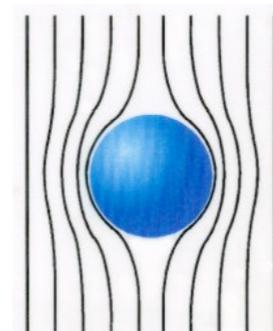
- All-magnetic matter-wave interferometer on a chip



Magnetic levitation

- Magnetic coupling to a quantum circuit

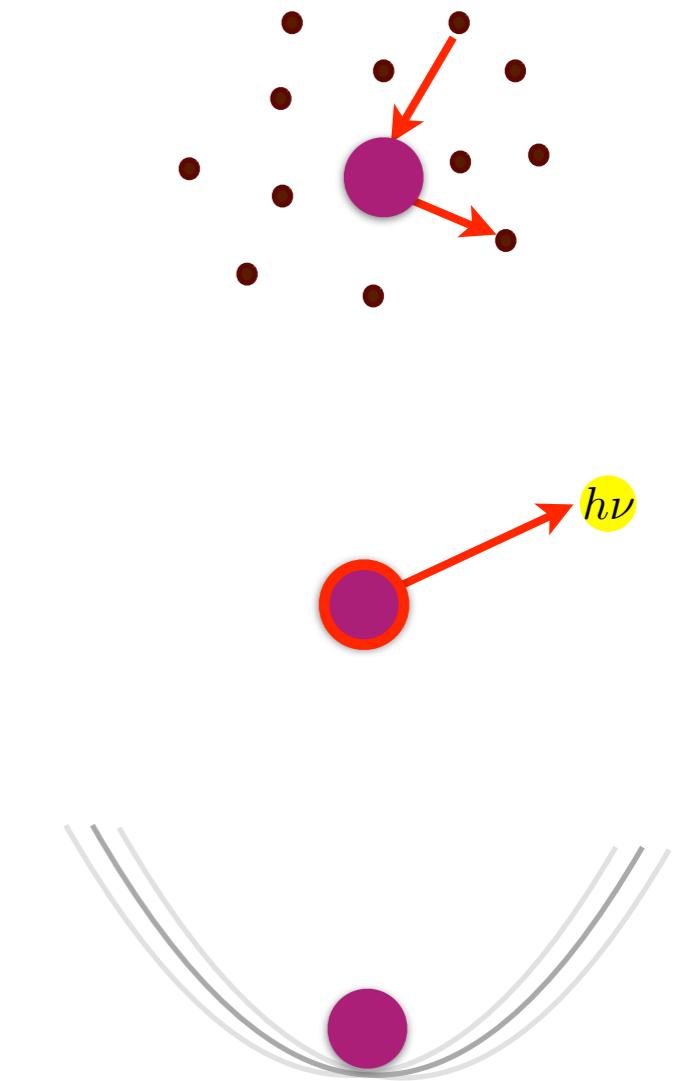
- Diameter $\sim 4 \mu\text{m}$
- $N \sim 10^{14}$



Decoherence

Decoherence

- Scattering of air molecules
- Scattering, emission, and absorption of black-body radiation (or any used light)
- Fluctuating forces (e.g. due to vibrations)
- Collapse models

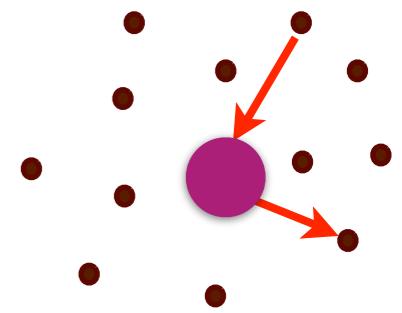


Decoherence

- Decoherence due to scattering of air molecules

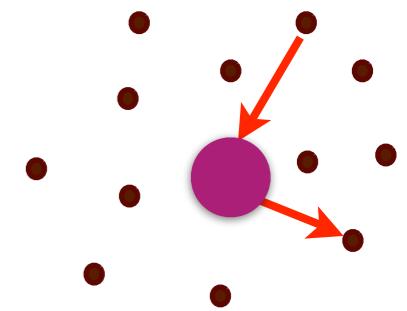
$$\langle x | \hat{\rho}(t) | x' \rangle = e^{-\gamma_{\text{air}} t} \langle x | \hat{\rho}(0) | x' \rangle$$

$$\gamma_{\text{air}} = \frac{16\pi\sqrt{2\pi}}{\sqrt{3}} \frac{P R^2}{\bar{v} m_a}$$



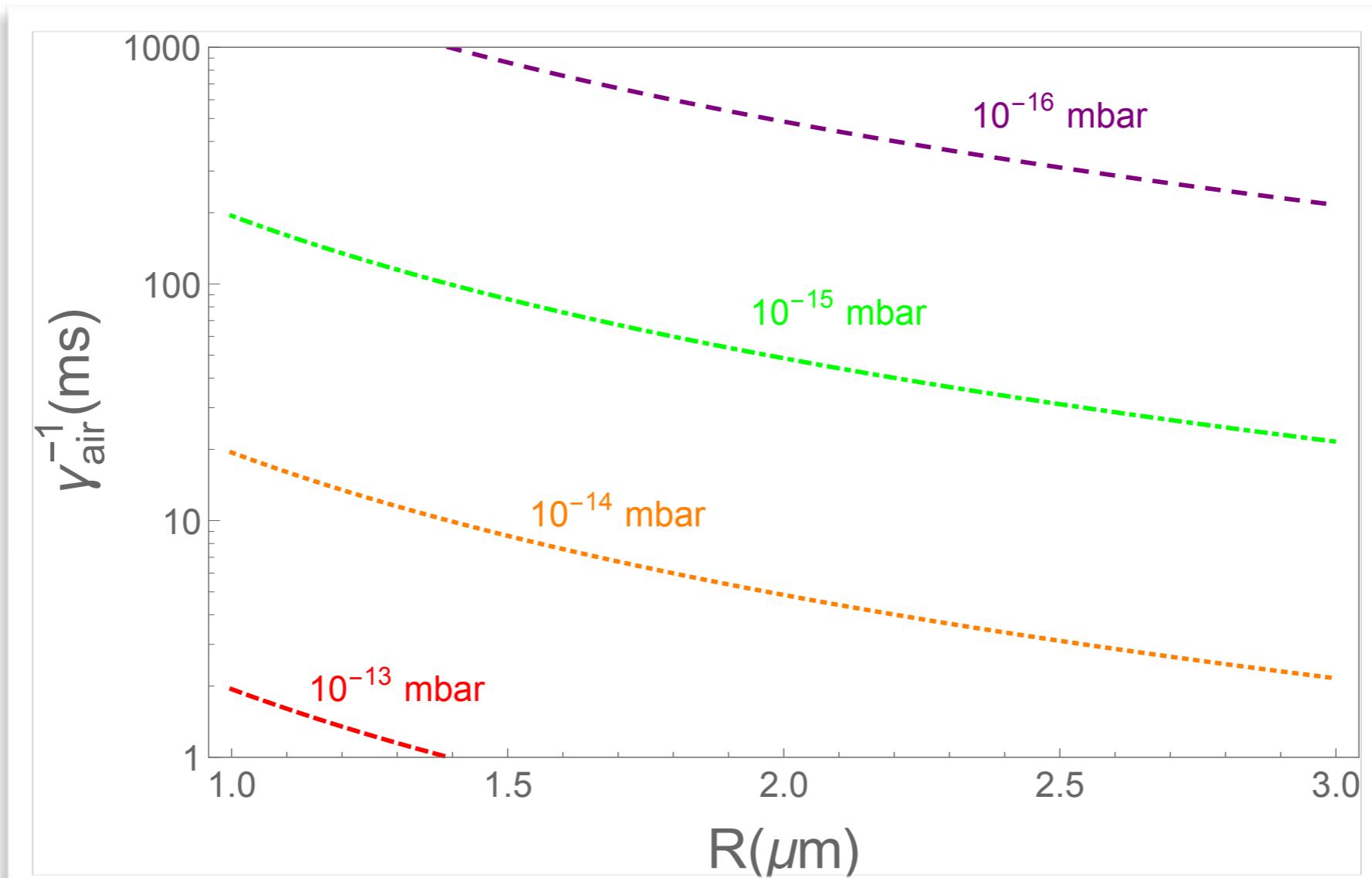
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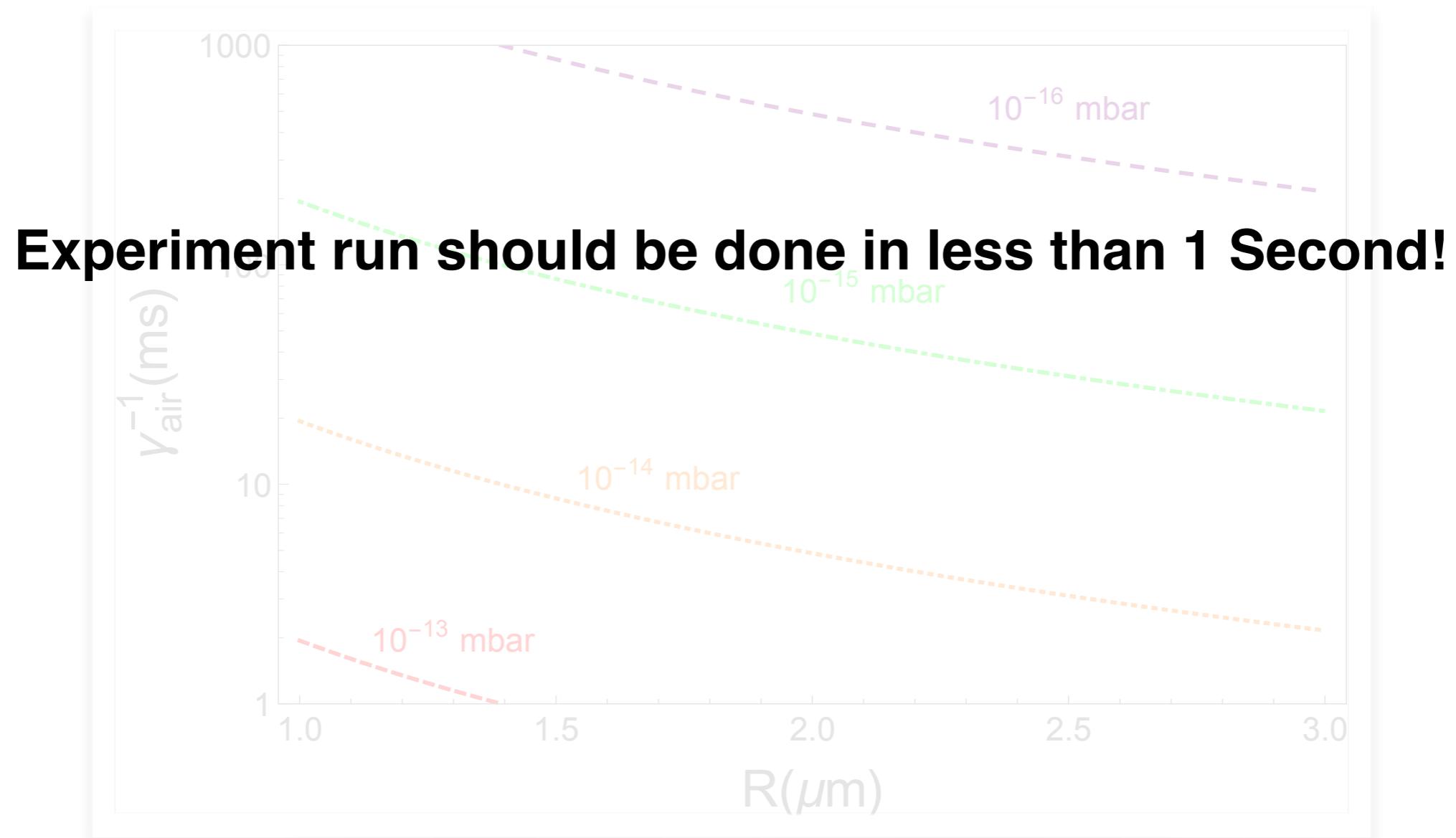
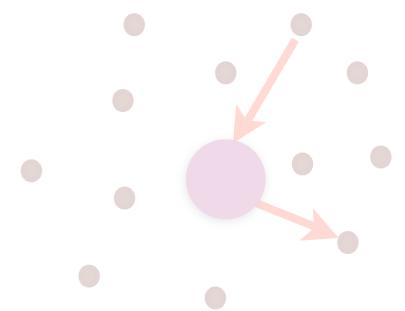


Decoherence

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Decoherence

- Position localization master equation

$$\dot{\rho} = \frac{1}{i\hbar} [\hat{H}, \hat{\rho}] - \Lambda[\hat{x}, [\hat{x}, \hat{\rho}]]$$

→ Describes black-body and fluctuating forces decoherence, and collapse models

$$\langle x | \rho(t) | x' \rangle \sim e^{-\Lambda(x-x')^2} \langle x | \rho(0) | x' \rangle$$

Decoherence

- Position localization master equation

$$\dot{\rho} = \frac{1}{i\hbar} [\hat{H}, \hat{\rho}] - \Lambda[\hat{x}, [\hat{x}, \hat{\rho}]]$$

- Gravitationally-induced decoherence

$$\Lambda_G = \frac{GM^2}{2\hbar R^3}$$

Decoherence

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Very **weak** compared to other collapse models!

But **parameter free**...

G-induced with mass resolution

(Yanbei's talk)

$$\tilde{\Lambda}_G = \Lambda_G \left(\frac{R}{\sigma_{DP}} \right)^3 \sim 10^{18} \Lambda_G$$

CSL Model

(Yanbei's and Angelo's talk)

$$\Lambda_{CSL} \sim \Lambda_G \times 10^6 \times \frac{\gamma_{CSL}^0}{10^{-16} \text{Hz}}$$

Position localization decoherence

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Falsifying parameter-free gravitationally-induced decoherence

G-induced with mass resolution

(Yanbei's talk)

$$\tilde{\Lambda}_G = \Lambda_G \left(\frac{R}{\sigma_{DP}} \right)^3 \sim 10^{15} \Lambda_G$$

CSL Model

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- Coherence length

$$\langle x/2 | \hat{\rho} | -x/2 \rangle = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi V_x}} \exp\left(-\frac{x^2}{\xi^2}\right)$$

→ For gaussian states and dynamics

$$\xi(t) = P(t) \sqrt{8V_x(t)}$$

- We require

$$\Lambda_G \gg \Lambda_{QM}$$

Decoherence

- Position localization master equation

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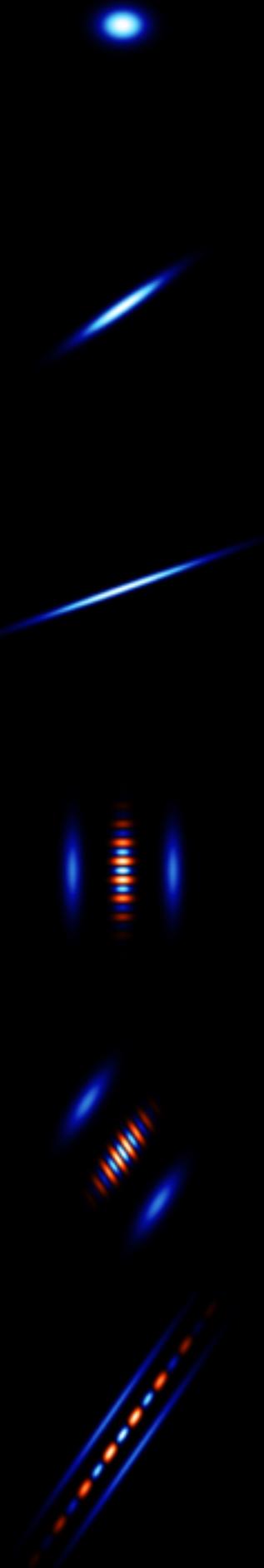
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$$\Lambda_G \gg \Lambda_{QM}$$

Protocol

I. Preparing a pure state



2. Exponential speed-up

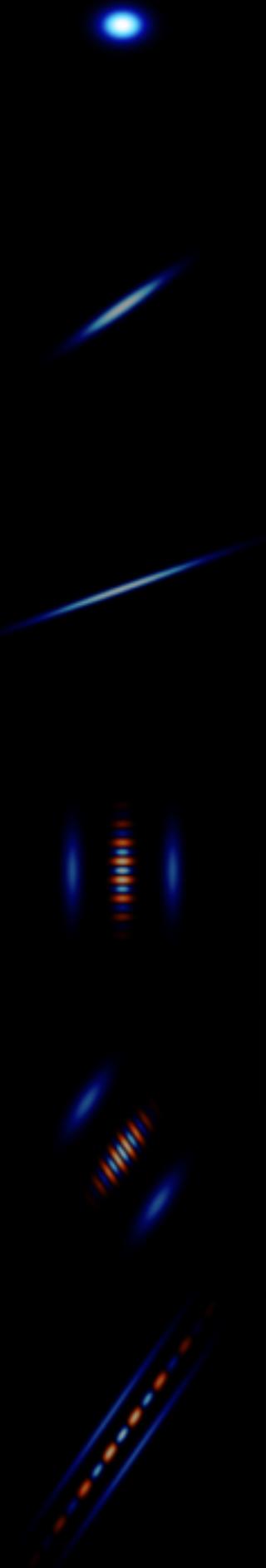
3. Free expansion

4. Double slit

5. Rotation

6. Exponential generation of fringes

I. Preparing a pure state



2. Exponential speed-up

3. Free expansion

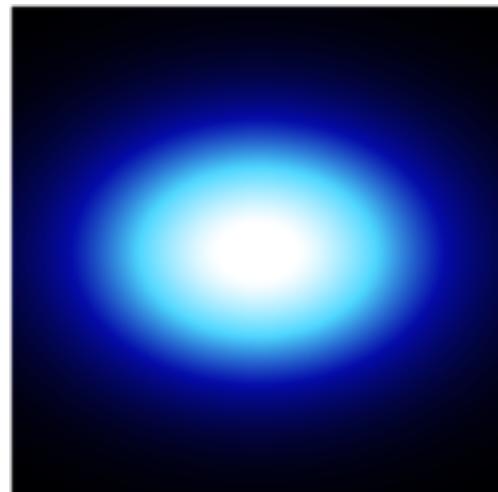
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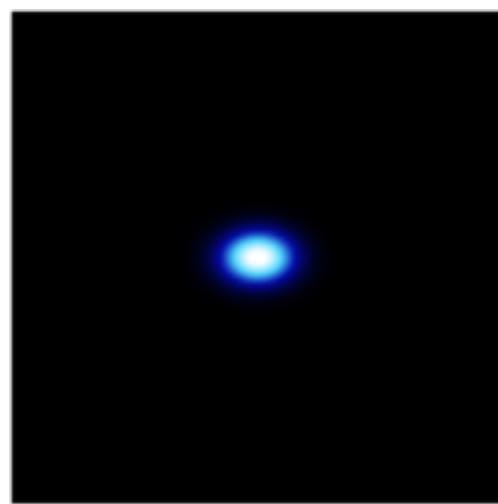
Preparing a pure state

- Cooling the center-of-mass motion



Microsphere trapped in an harmonic potential

$$\hat{H} = \frac{\hat{p}^2}{2M} + \frac{1}{2}M\omega_t^2\hat{x}^2$$



Cooling by coupling to quantum circuit

Density matrix determined by variances

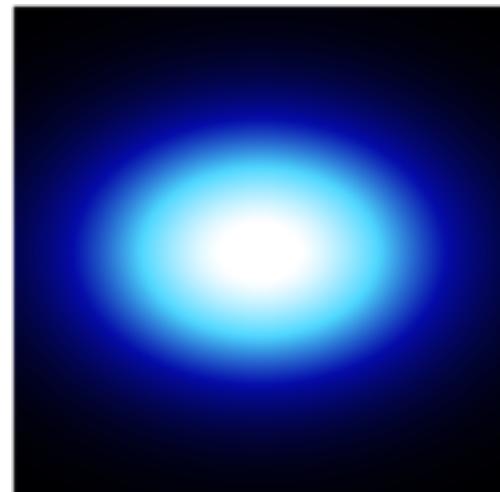
$$V_x = \langle \hat{x}^2 \rangle = \frac{\hbar}{2M\omega_t}(2\bar{n} + 1)$$

$$V_p = \langle \hat{p}^2 \rangle = \frac{\hbar M\omega_t}{2}(2\bar{n} + 1)$$

$$C = \frac{1}{2}\langle \hat{x}\hat{p} + \hat{p}\hat{x} \rangle = 0$$

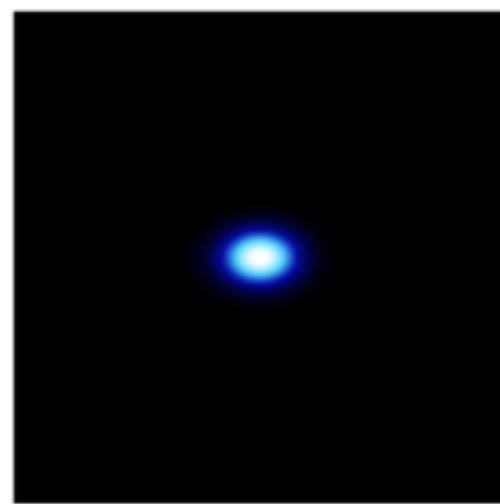
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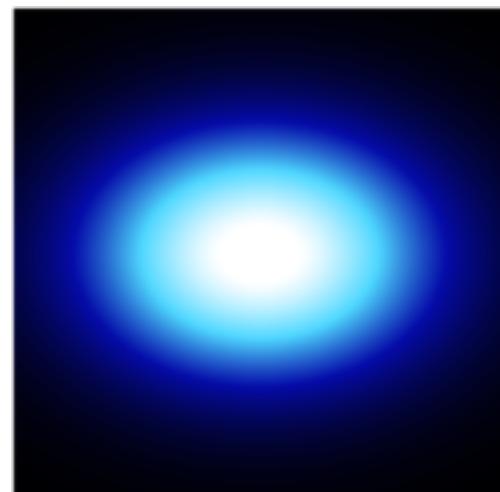
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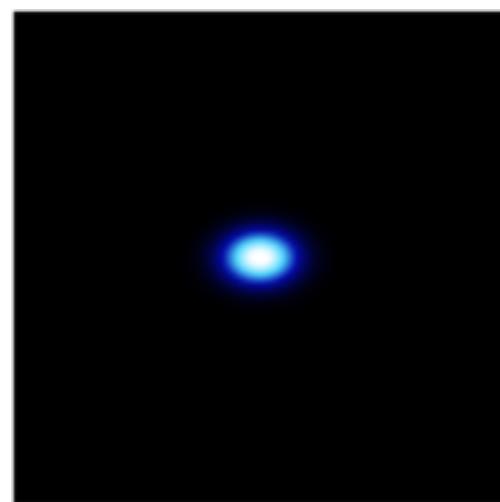


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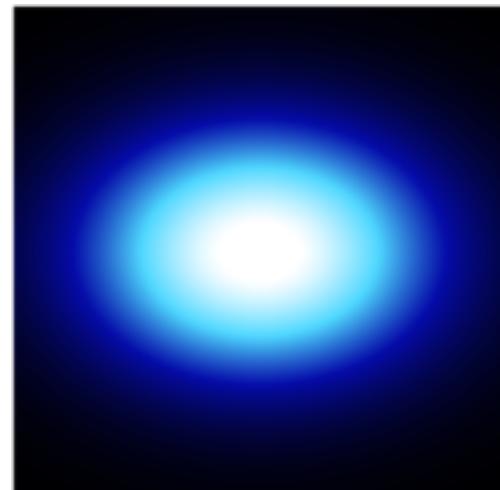
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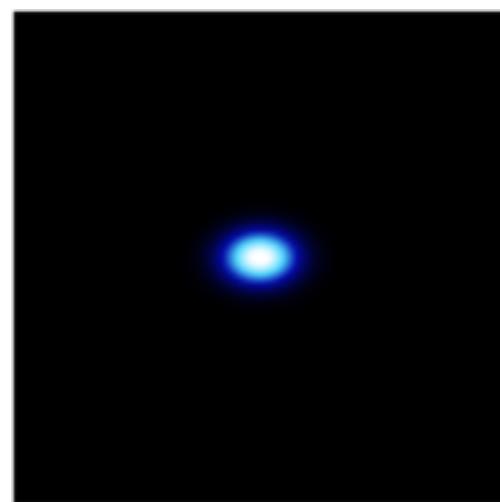
Preparing a pure state

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Microsphere trapped in an harmonic potential

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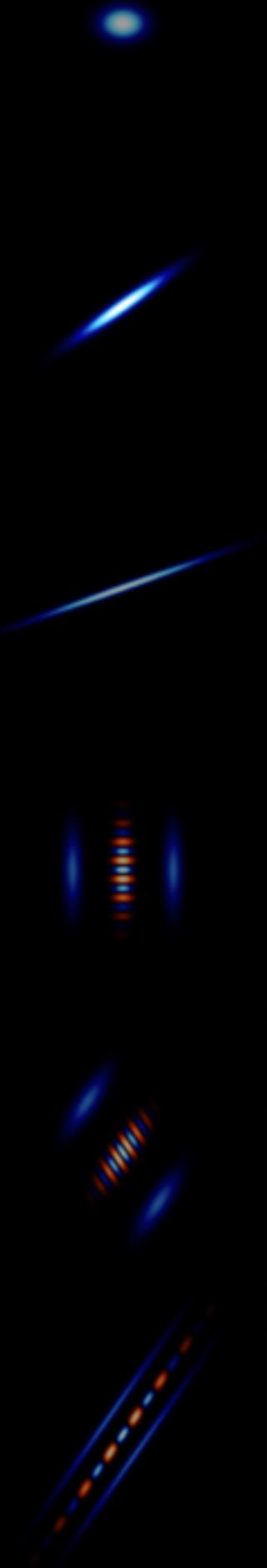
Density matrix determined by variances

$$V_x = \langle \hat{x}^2 \rangle = \frac{\hbar}{2M\omega_t}(2\bar{n} + 1)$$

$$V_p = \langle \hat{p}^2 \rangle = \frac{\hbar M\omega_t}{2}(2\bar{n} + 1)$$

$$C = \frac{1}{2}\langle \hat{x}\hat{p} + \hat{p}\hat{x} \rangle = 0$$

I. Preparing a pure state



2. Exponential speed-up

3. Free expansion

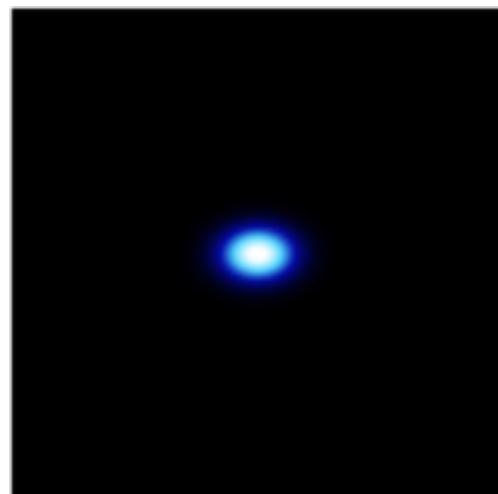
4. Double slit

5. Rotation

6. Exponential generation of fringes

Exponential speed-up

- Evolution in a **repulsive** quadratic potential

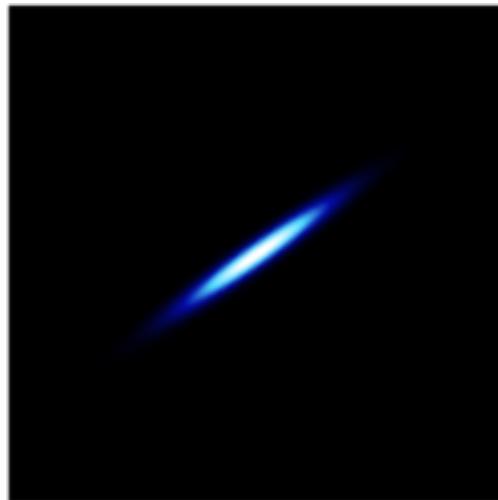


Dynamics can be **calculated analytically** taking into account decoherence

$$\hat{H} = \frac{\hat{p}^2}{2M} - \frac{1}{2}M\omega_R^2\hat{x}^2$$

Momentum (and position) distribution grows **exponentially**

$$V_p(t) \approx e^{2\omega_R t} V_p(0)$$



Also coherence length

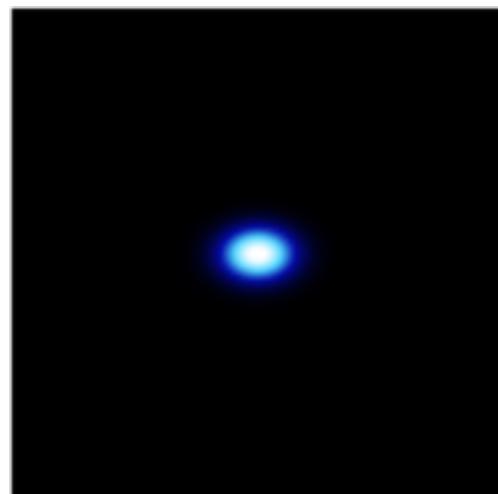
$$\xi(t) = P(t) \sqrt{8V_x(t)}$$

Interesting that for position localization decoherence:

$$\xi(t \rightarrow \infty) = \sqrt{\frac{2\omega_r}{\Lambda}}$$

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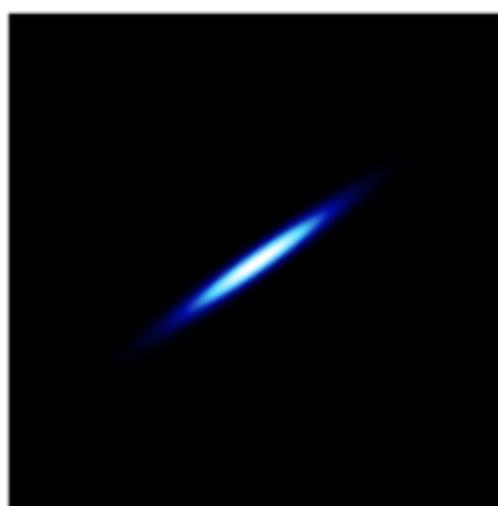


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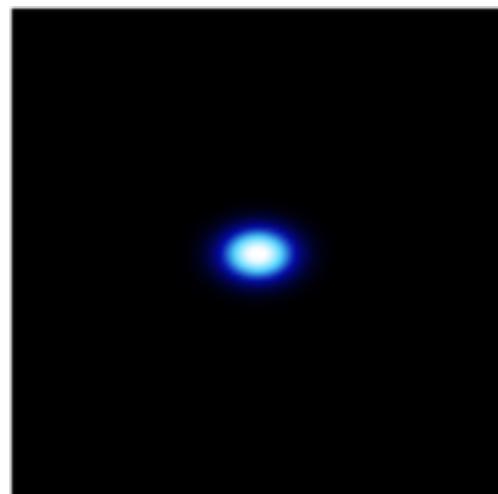
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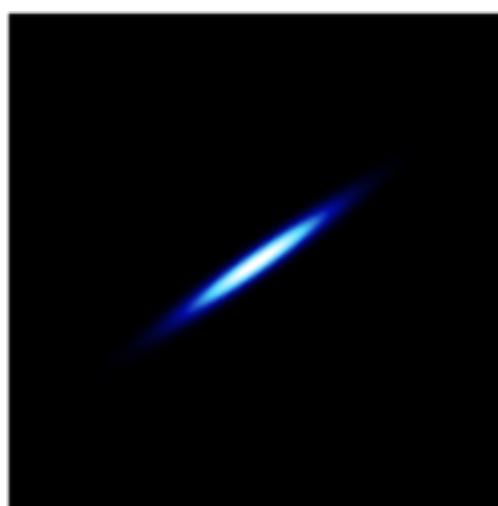
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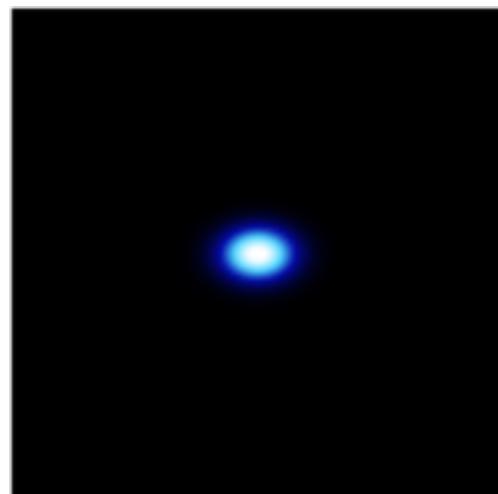


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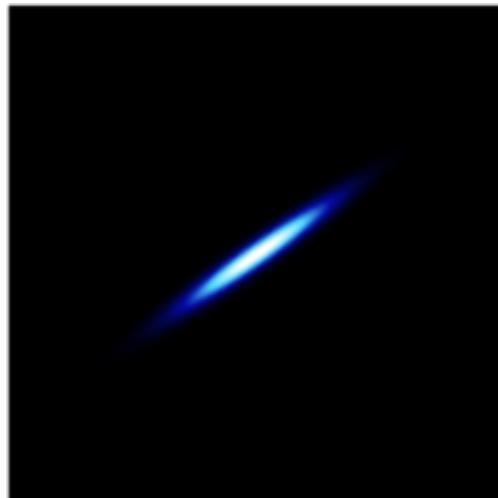
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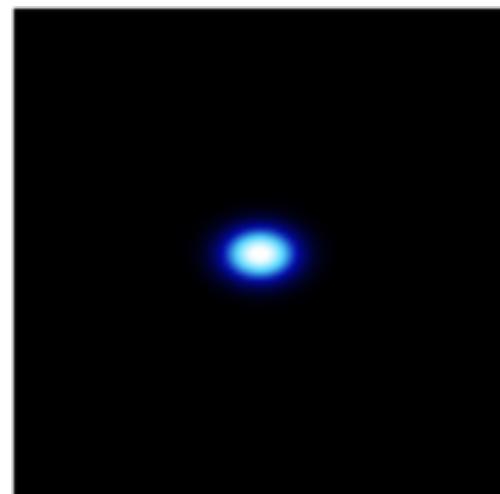


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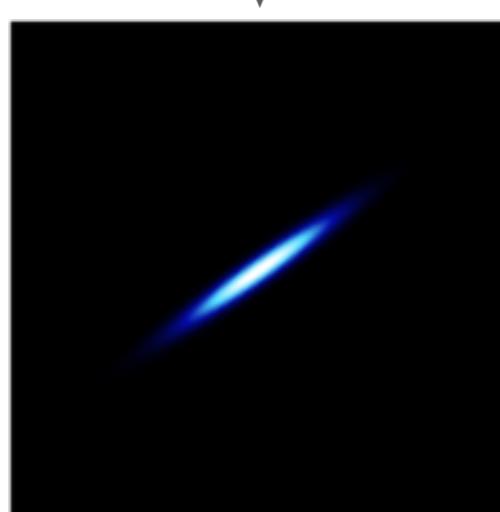
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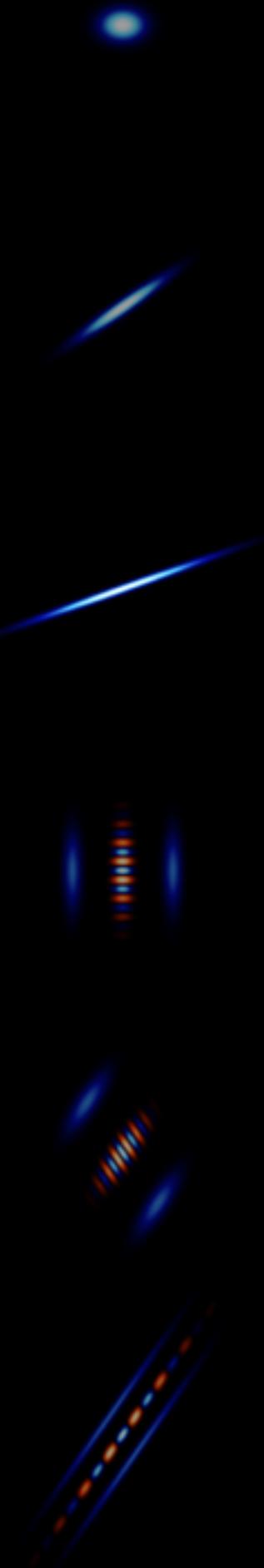
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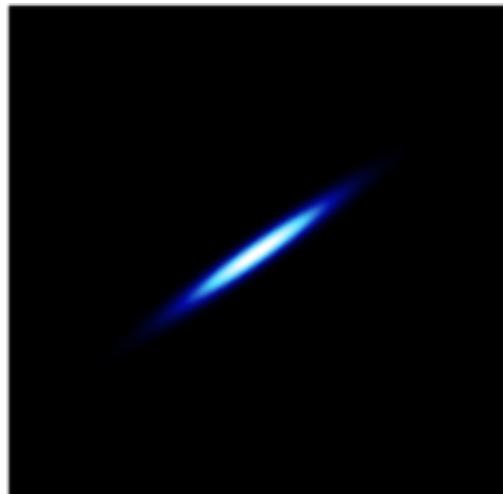
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Free expansion

- Evolution with free dynamics



$$\hat{H} = \frac{\hat{p}^2}{2M}$$



Dynamics can be **calculated analytically** taking into account decoherence

Coherence lengths grows **linearly in time** at a speed

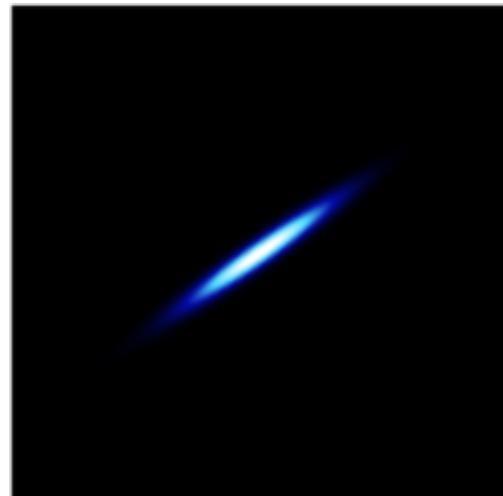
$$\dot{\xi}_{\text{free}} = \sqrt{\frac{8V_p}{M^2}}$$

Without momentum speedup the speed is

$$\dot{\xi}_{\text{free}} \approx \frac{10^7}{\sqrt{M[\text{amu}]}} \times 40 \text{ nm/s}$$

Free expansion

- Evolution with free dynamics



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↓



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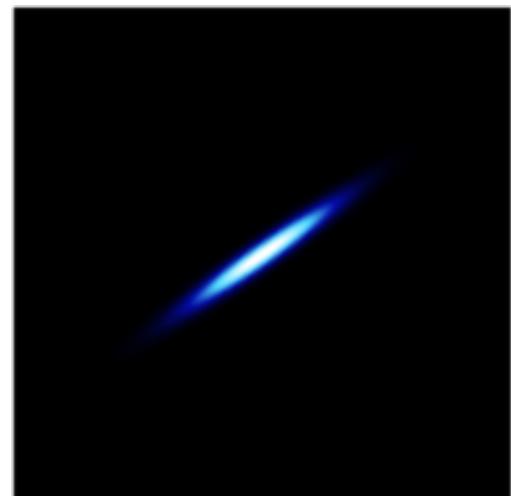
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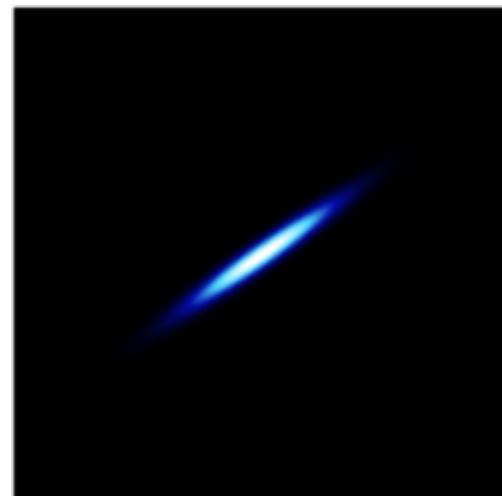
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Free expansion

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↓

A diagram showing the quantum mechanical Hamiltonian $\hat{H} = \frac{\hat{p}^2}{2M}$ enclosed in a light gray rounded rectangle, with a downward-pointing arrow indicating the flow of time or evolution.



Dynamics can be **calculated analytically** taking into account decoherence

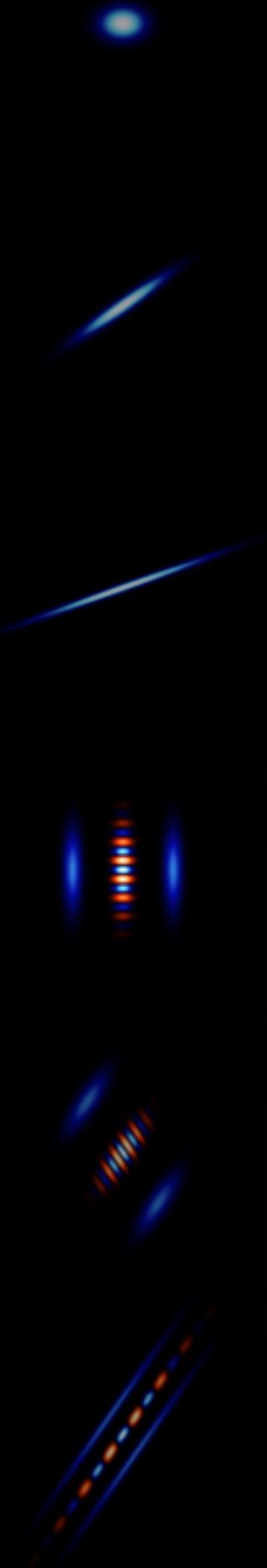
Coherence lengths grows **linearly in time** at a speed

$$\dot{\xi}_{\text{free}} = \sqrt{\frac{8V_p}{M^2}}$$

Without momentum **kick** the speed is **very slow**

$$\dot{\xi}_{\text{free}} \approx \frac{10^7}{\sqrt{M[\text{amu}]}} \times 40 \text{ nm/s}$$

I. Preparing a pure state



2. Exponential speed-up

3. Free expansion

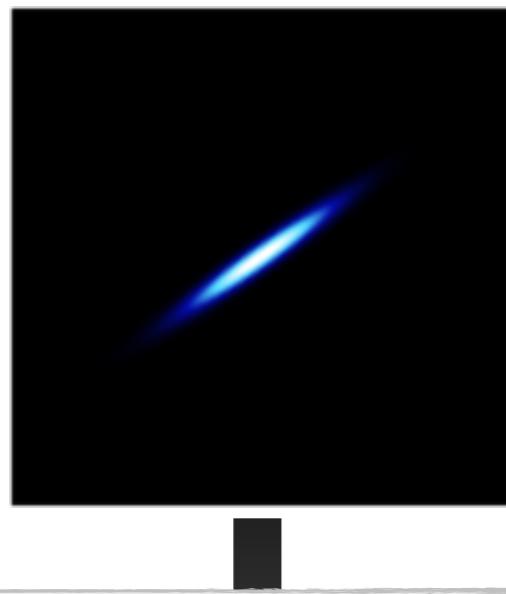
4. Double slit

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Double slit

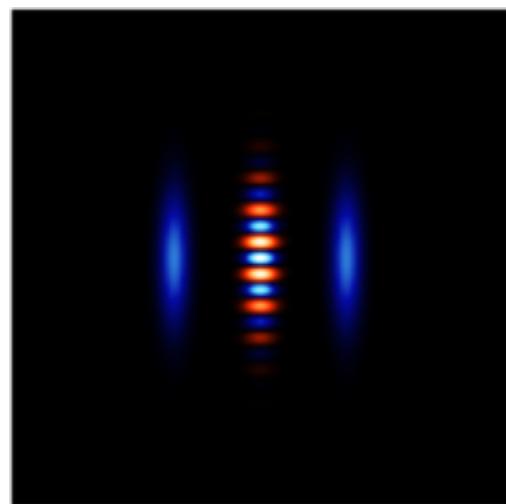
- X squared measurement



Interaction with a **non-quadratic potential** is analytically and numerically very challenging

Coupling to quantum system used to measure X^2

$$\hat{\mathcal{M}}_d = e^{i\phi_{ds}(\frac{\hat{x}}{\sigma})^2} \left\{ \exp \left[-\frac{(\hat{x} - \frac{d}{2})^2}{4\sigma_d^2} \right] + \exp \left[-\frac{(\hat{x} + \frac{d}{2})^2}{4\sigma_d^2} \right] \right\}$$

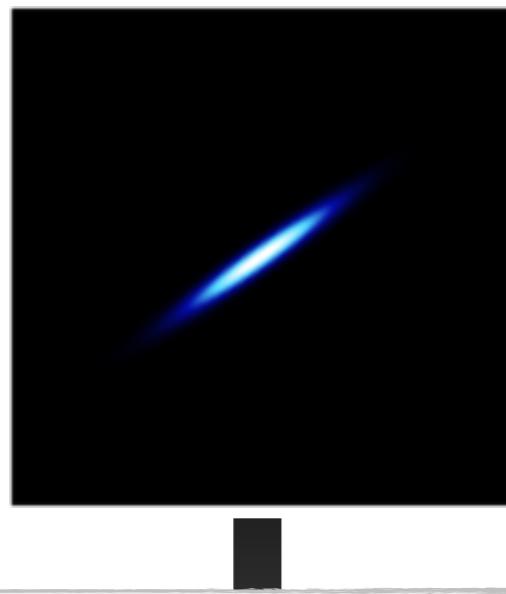


Advantage: double-slit can be smaller than particle size

Disadvantage: slit separation depends on outcome

Double slit

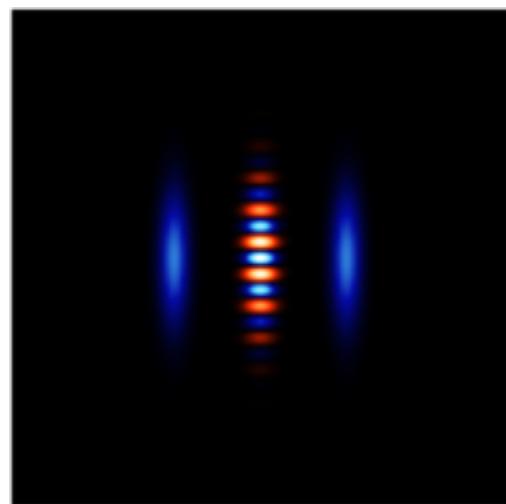
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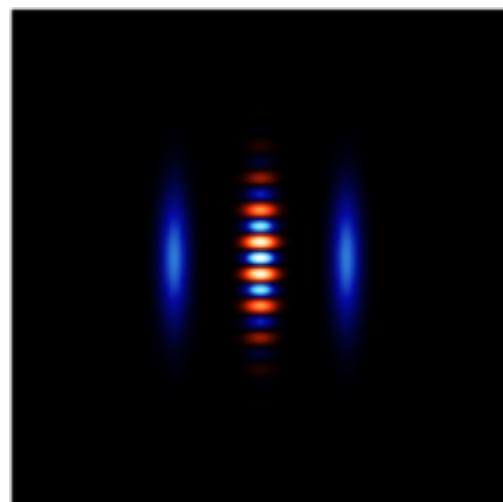
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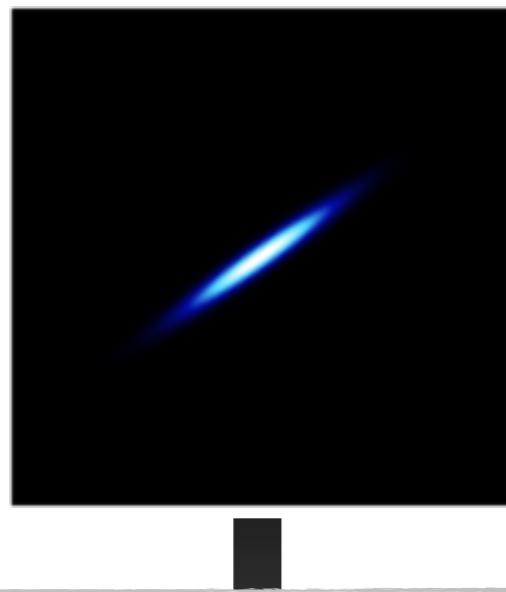


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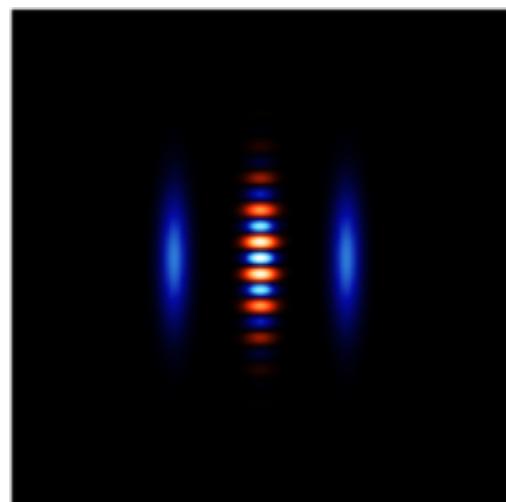
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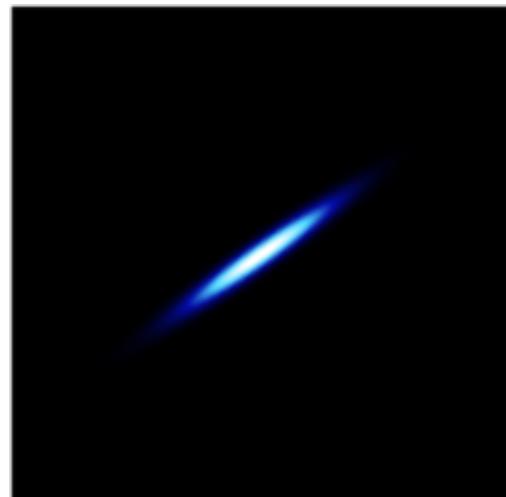


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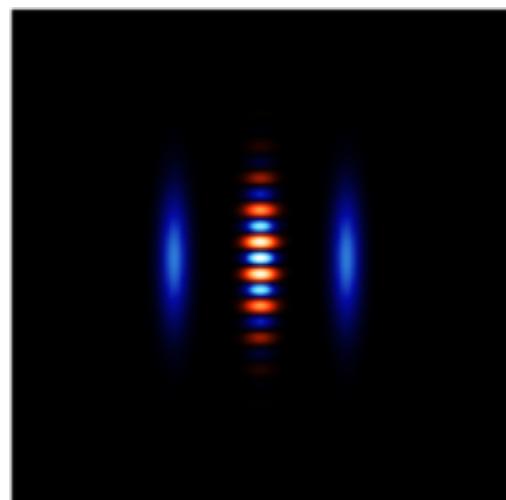
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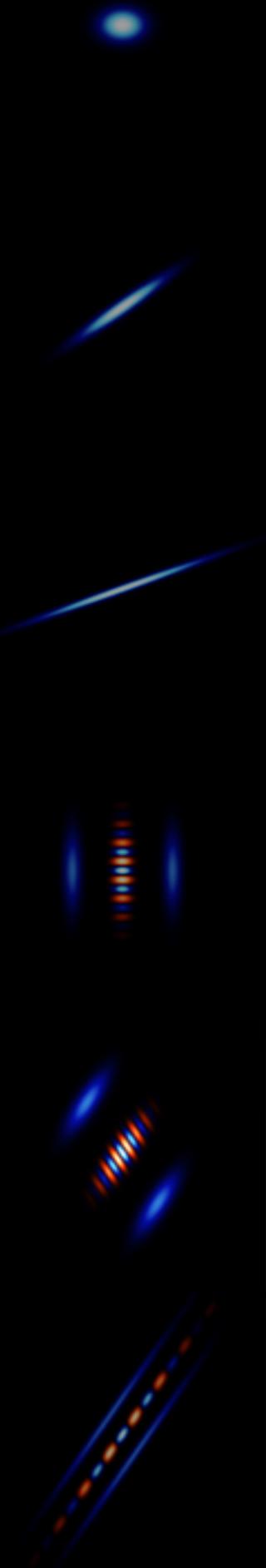
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I. Preparing a pure state



2. Exponential speed-up

3. Free expansion

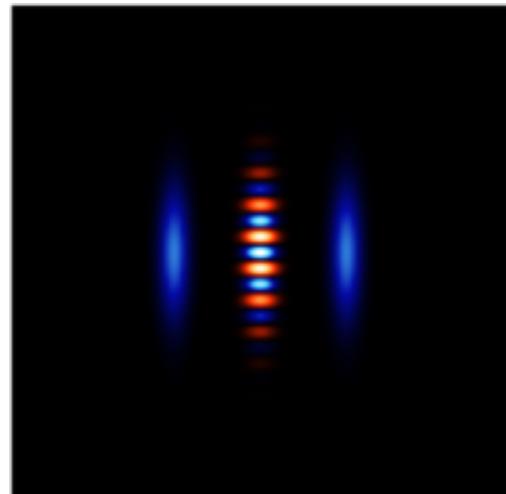
4. Double slit

5. Rotation

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Rotation

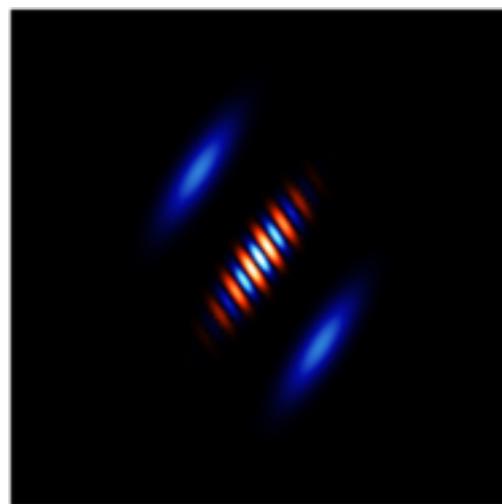
- $\pi/4$ rotation



We have to **prepare state** for exponential time-of-flight



$$\hat{H} = \frac{\hat{p}^2}{2M} + \frac{1}{2}M\omega_R^2 \hat{x}^2$$



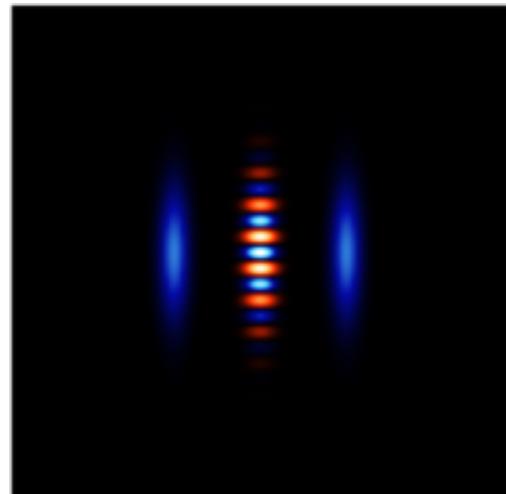
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$$\omega_R t = \frac{\pi}{4}$$

After double slit **state is more robust** against decoherence

Rotation

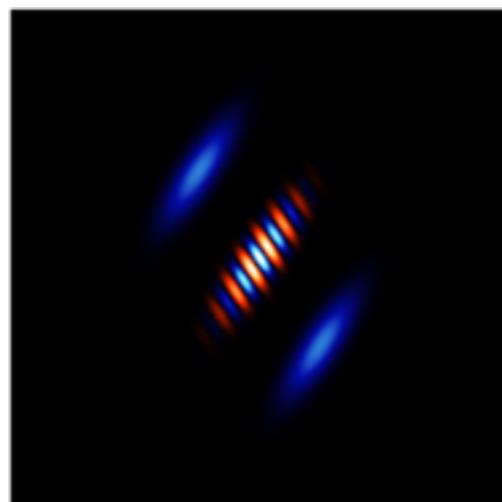
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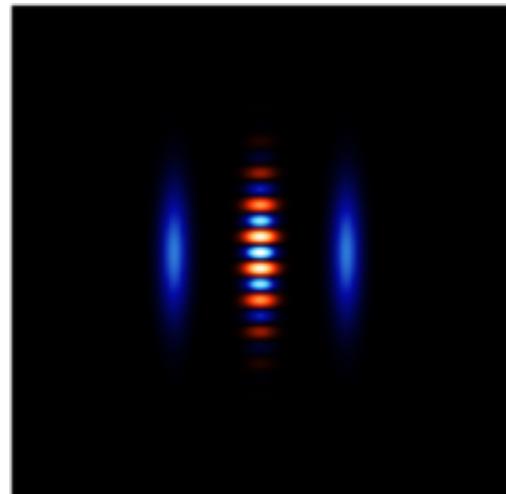
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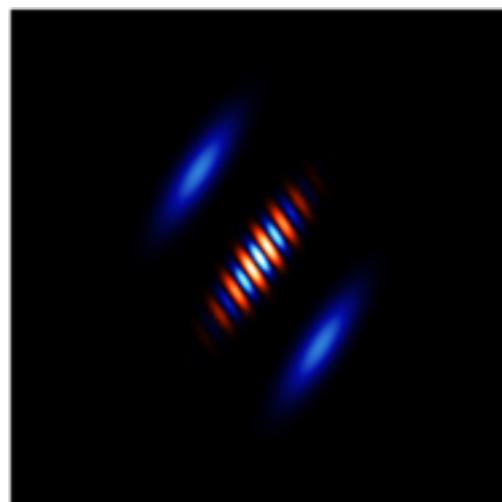
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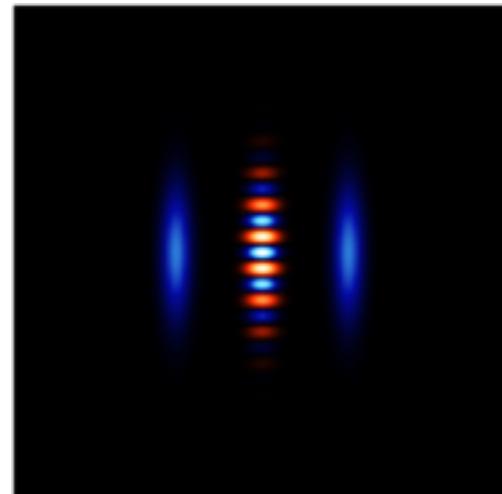
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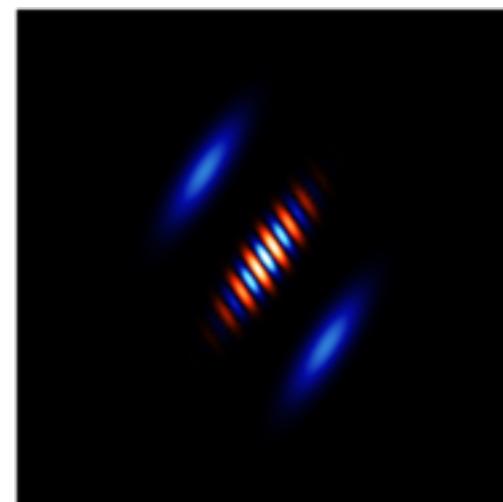
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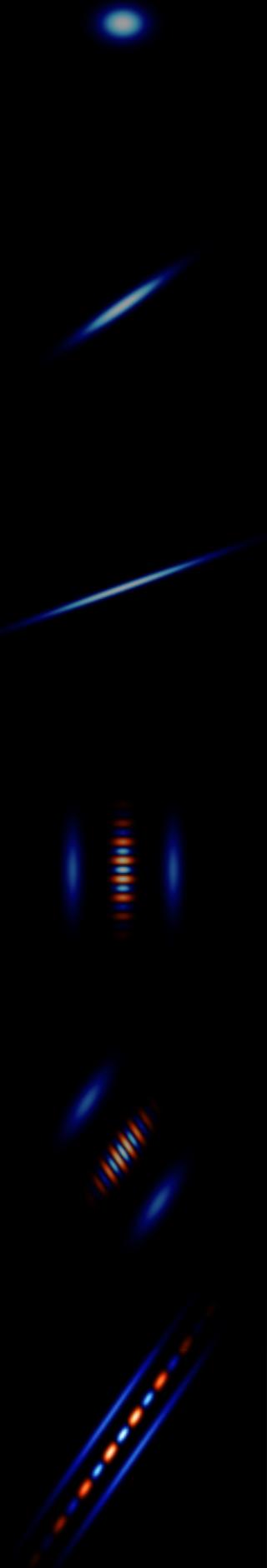


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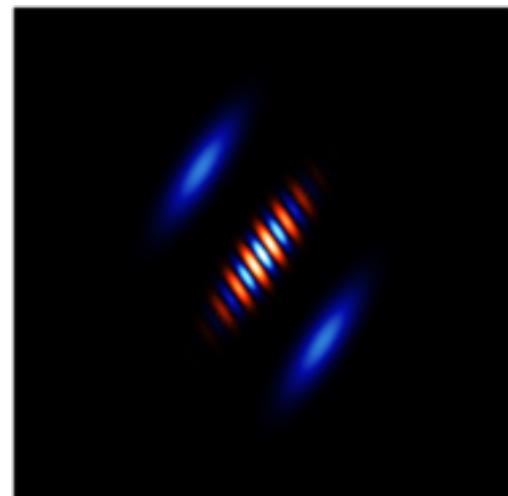
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Exponentially generation of fringes

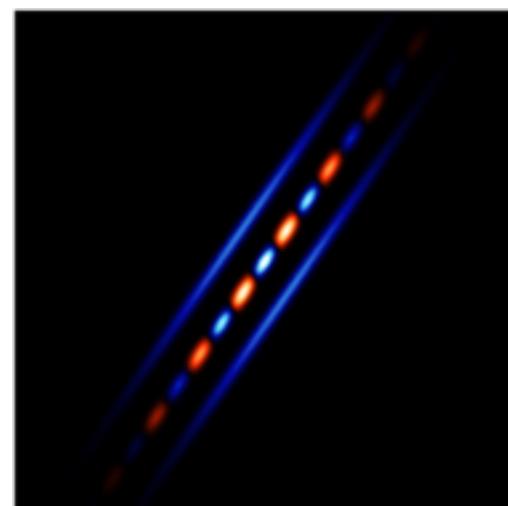
- Evolution in a **repulsive** quadratic potential



In **free dynamics** fringes generate **very slowly**

$$x_f = \frac{2\pi\hbar t}{Md}$$

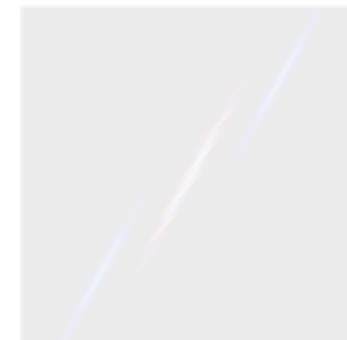
$\hat{H} = \frac{\hat{p}^2}{2M} - \frac{1}{2}M\omega_R^2\hat{x}^2$



In **repulsive dynamics** fringes generate **exponentially faster**

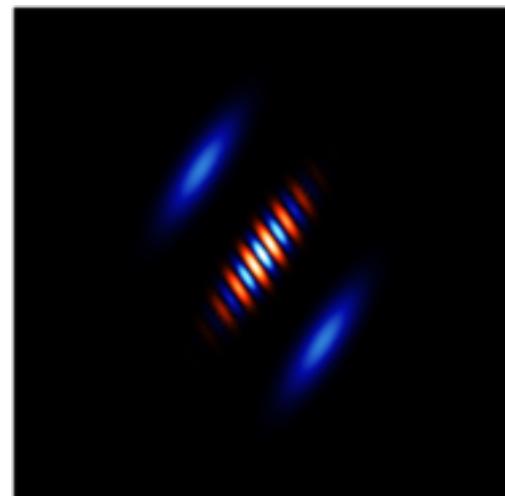
$$x_f(t) \approx e^{\omega_r t} x_f(0)$$

Without previous rotation: no fringes



Exponentially generation of fringes

- Evolution in a **repulsive** quadratic potential



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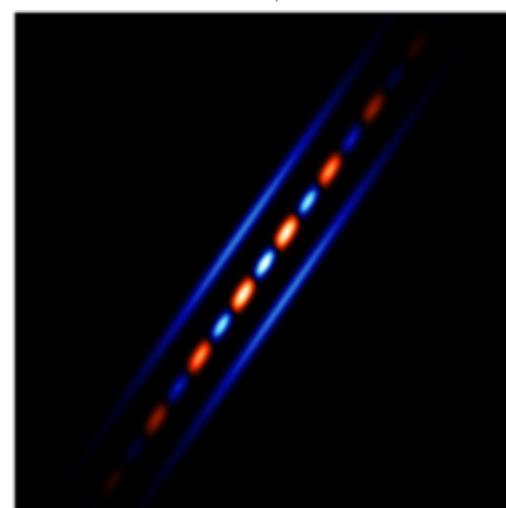
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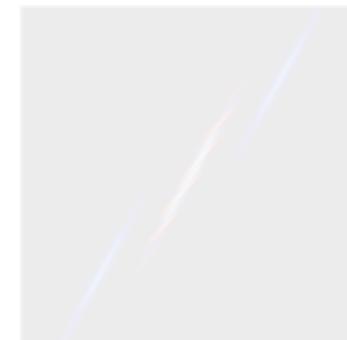


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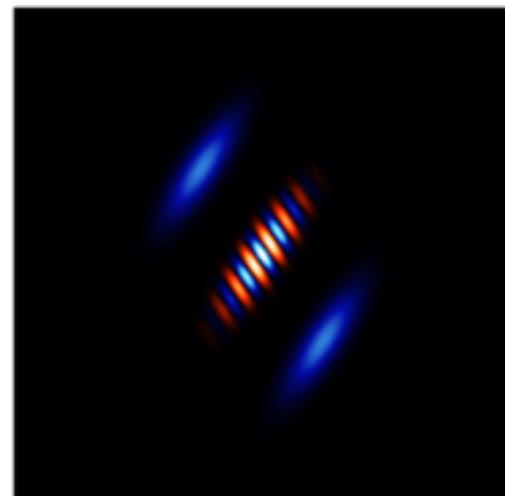


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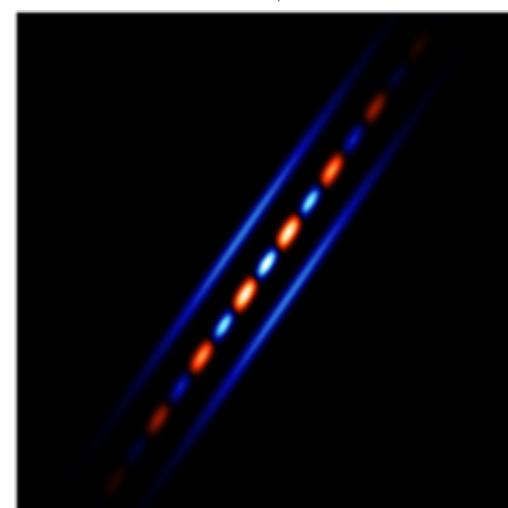


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↓



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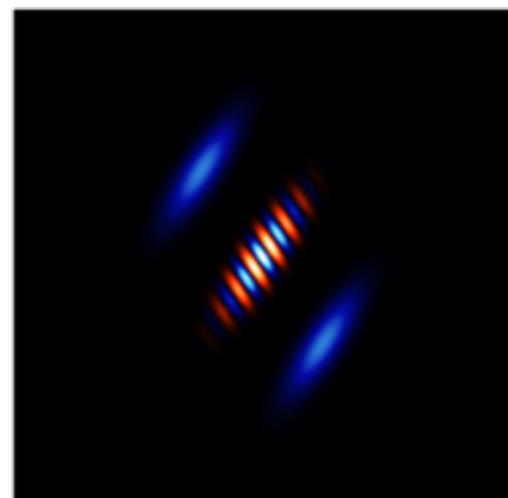
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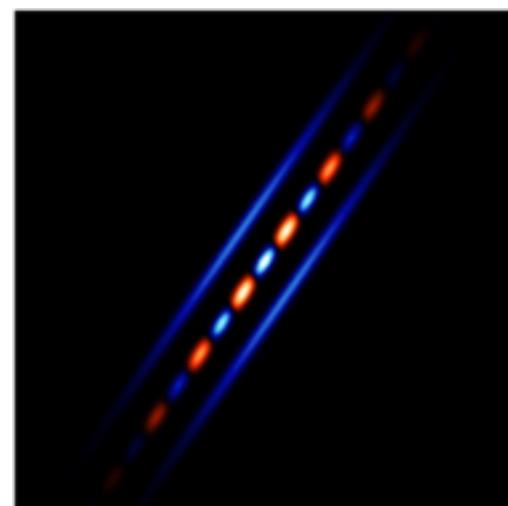
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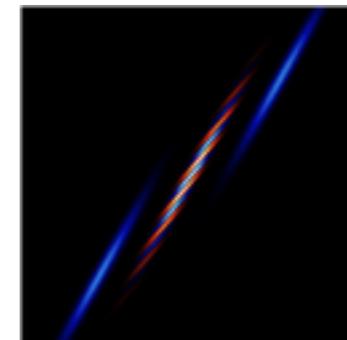
A large grey downward-pointing arrow indicating a process flow from the free dynamics section to the repulsive dynamics section.

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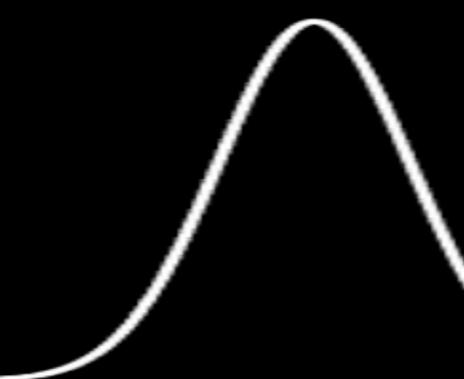
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Exponential speed-up: repulsive potential dynamics



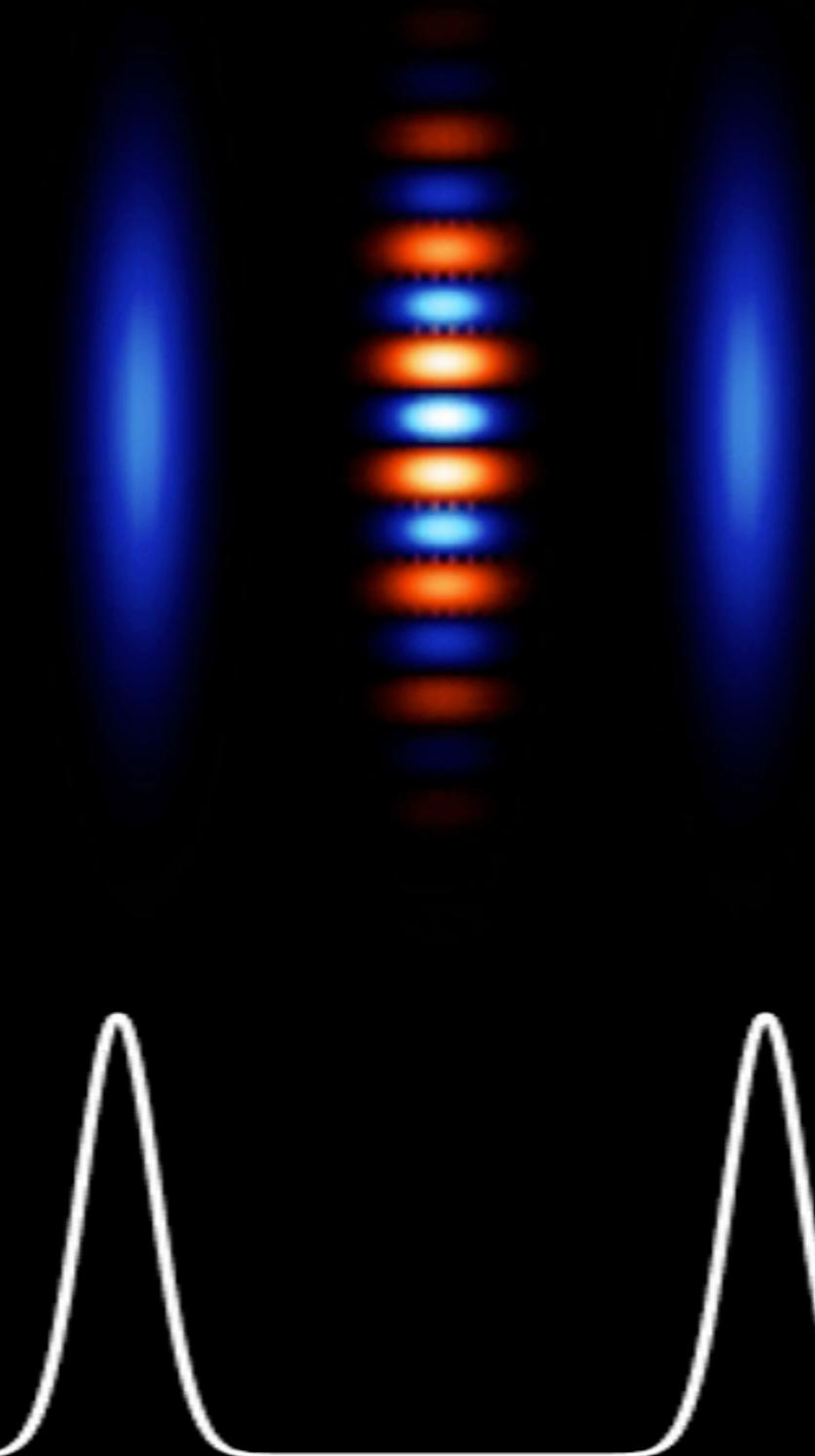
Free expansion: free dynamics



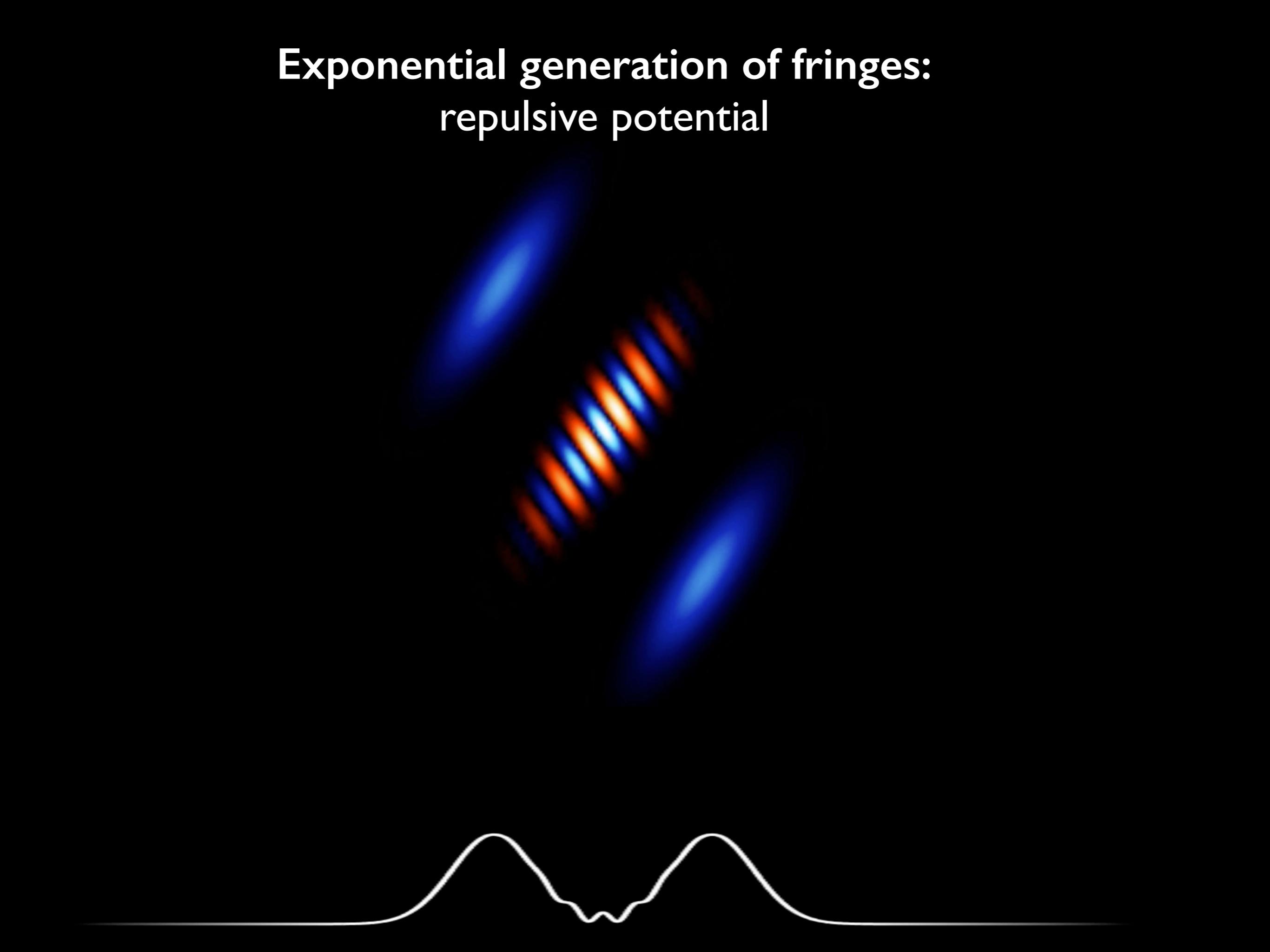
Double-slit: X-squared measurement



Rotation: harmonic potential dynamics



Exponential generation of fringes: repulsive potential



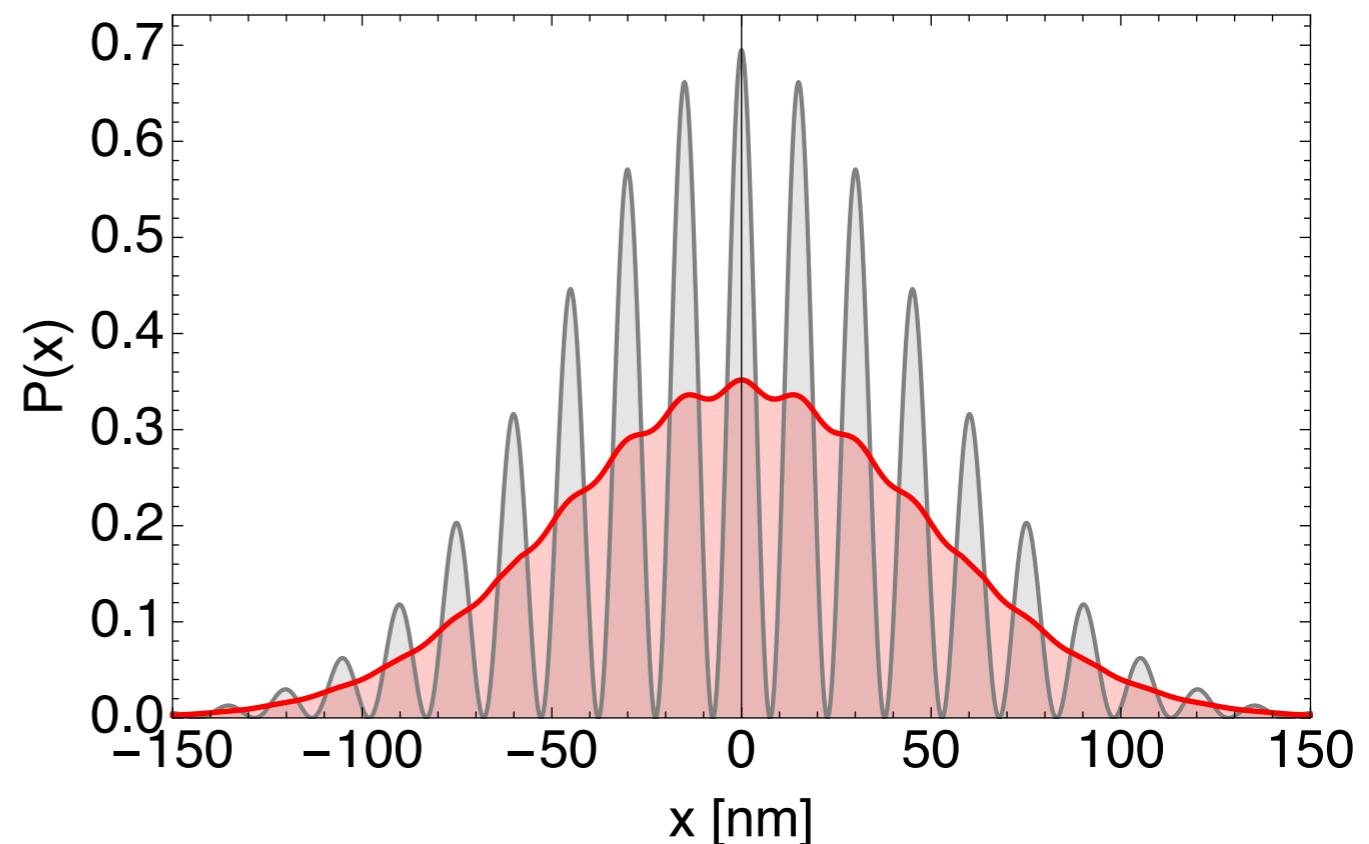
Results

Growing coherence length in repulsive expansion



$$\Lambda_G = \frac{GM^2}{2\hbar R^3}$$

Gravitationally-induced decoherence could be falsified



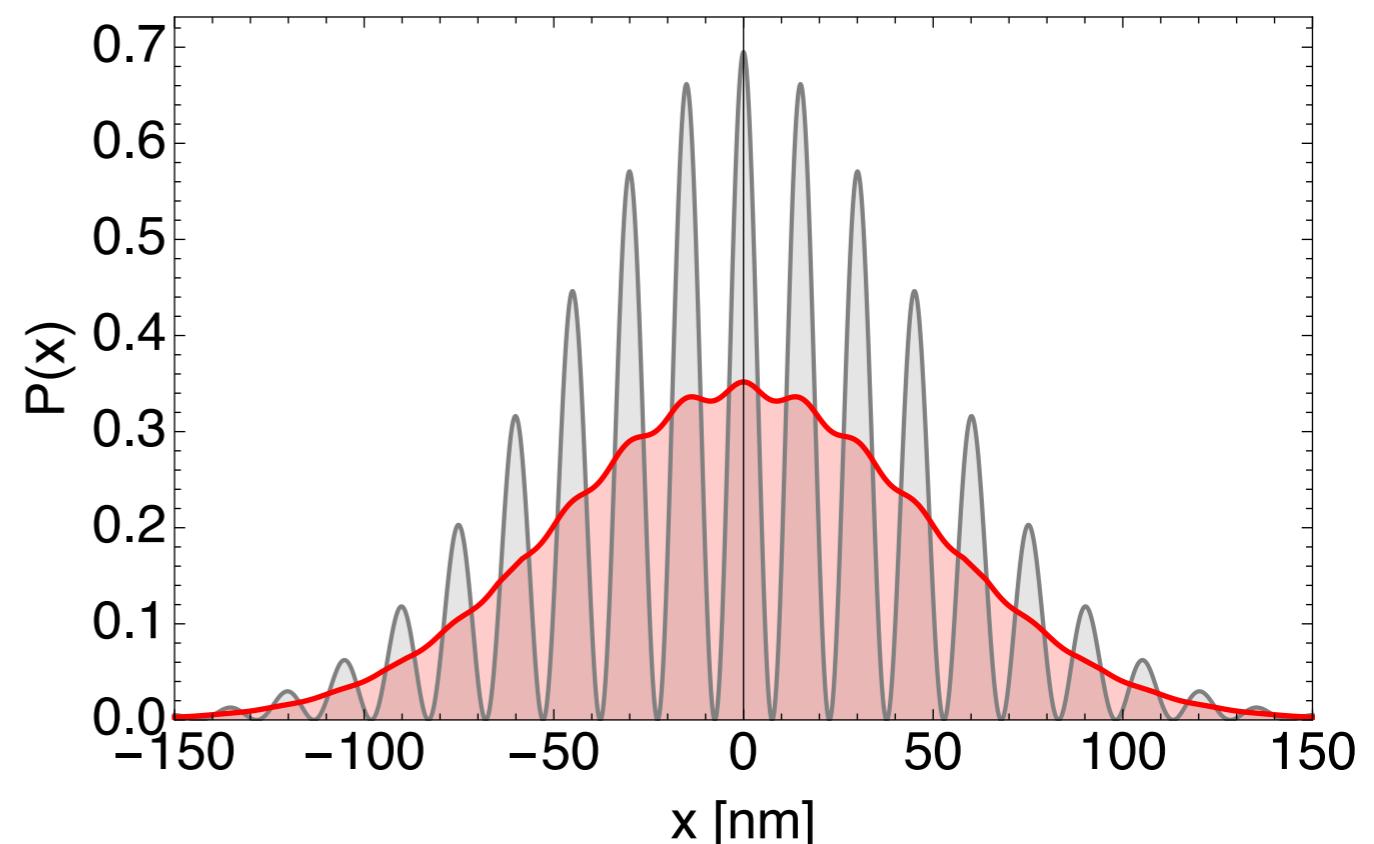
$$\Lambda = \Lambda_G + \Lambda_{QM}$$

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Growing coherence length in repulsive expansion

- Sphere (Nb): 4 micrometers

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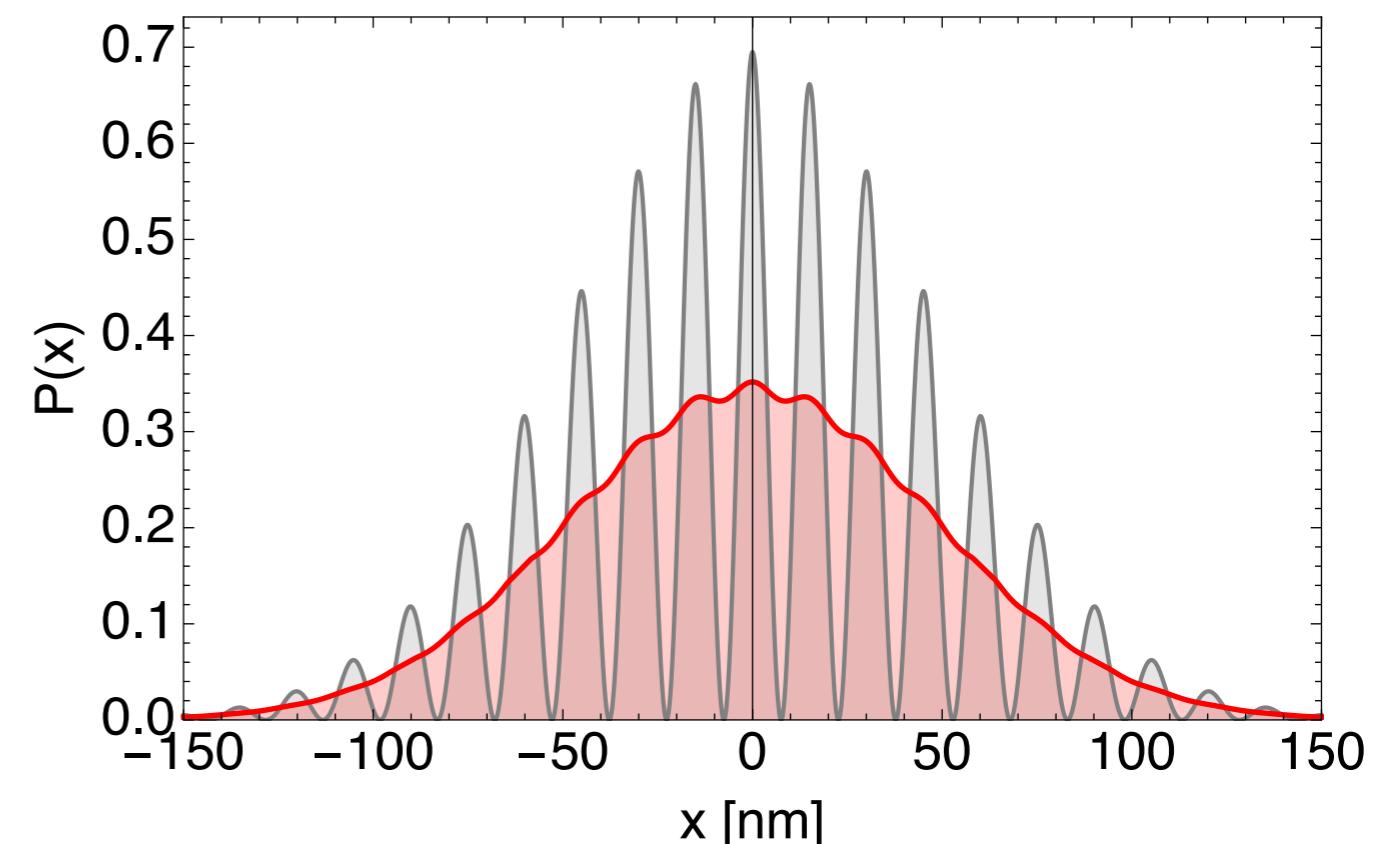
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Growing coherence length in repulsive expansion

- Sphere (Nb): 4 micrometers
- Total time: 537 ms
 - Exponential speed-up: 4.8 ms
 - Free expansion: 500 ms
 - Rotation: 1.3 ms
 - Exp generation of fringes: 31.8 ms

Gravitationally-induced decoherence could be falsified

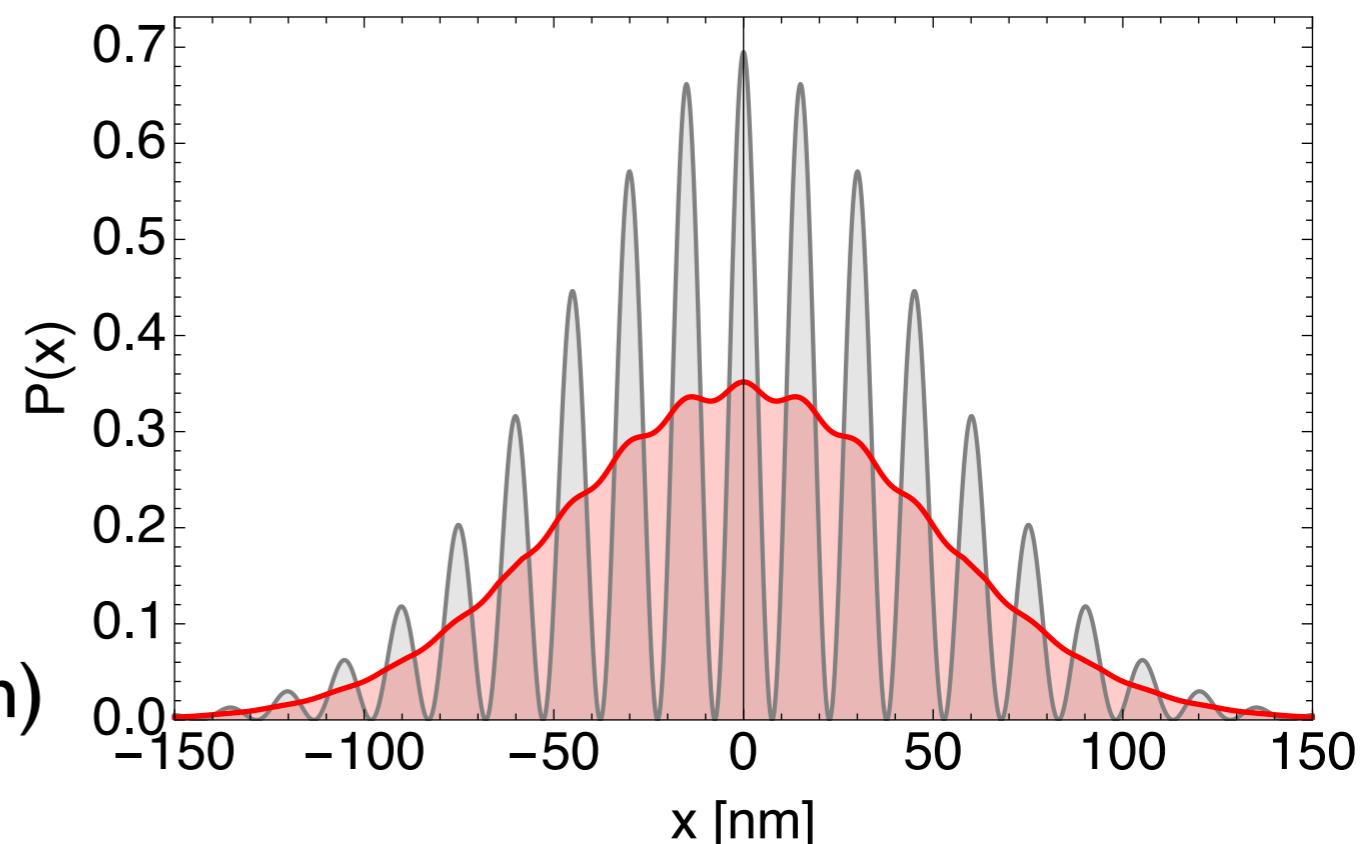


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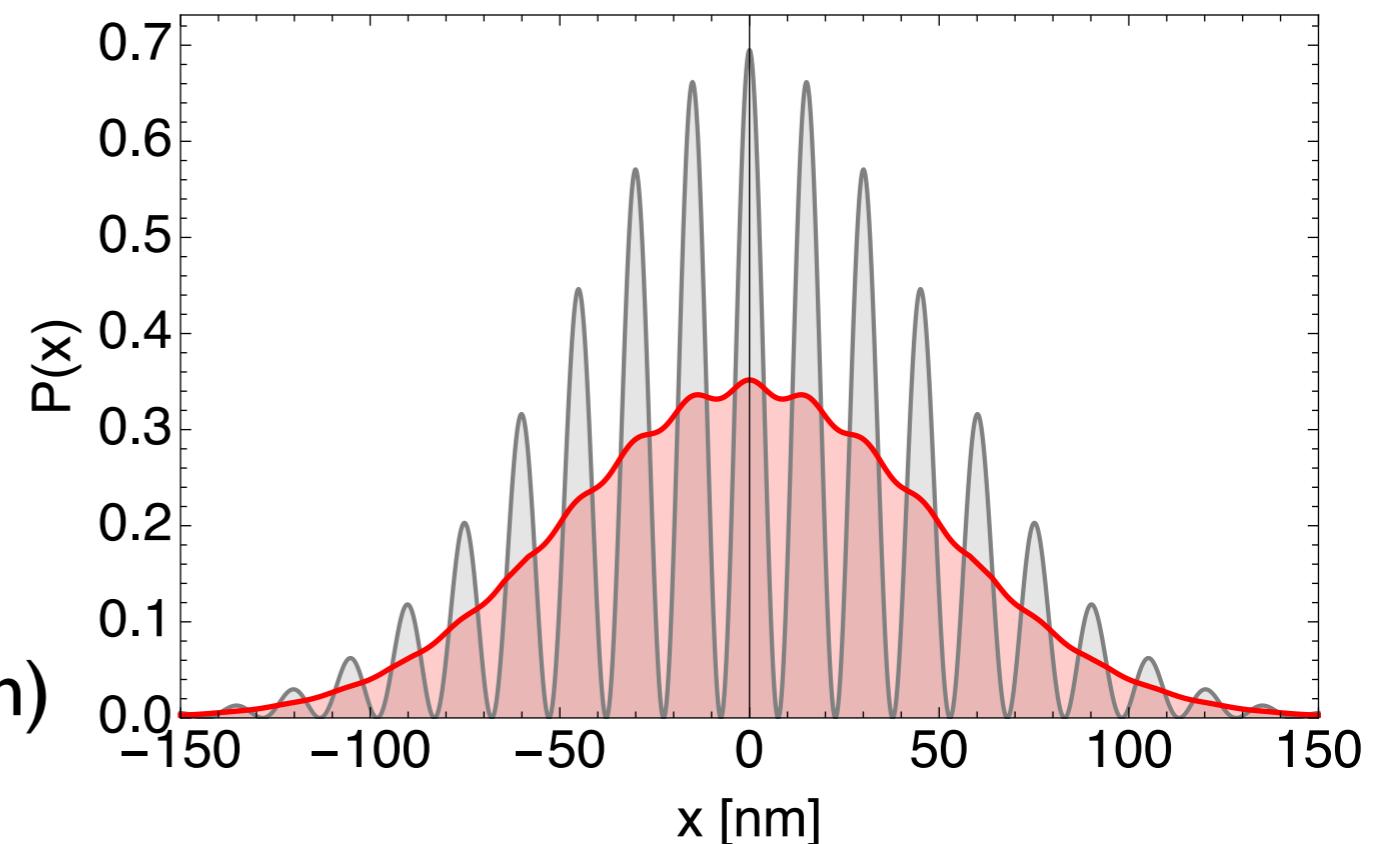


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- Slit separation: 84 nm (width 4 nm)
- Temperature: < 1K
- Quadratic potentials: 100 Hz

Gravitationally-induced decoherence could be falsified

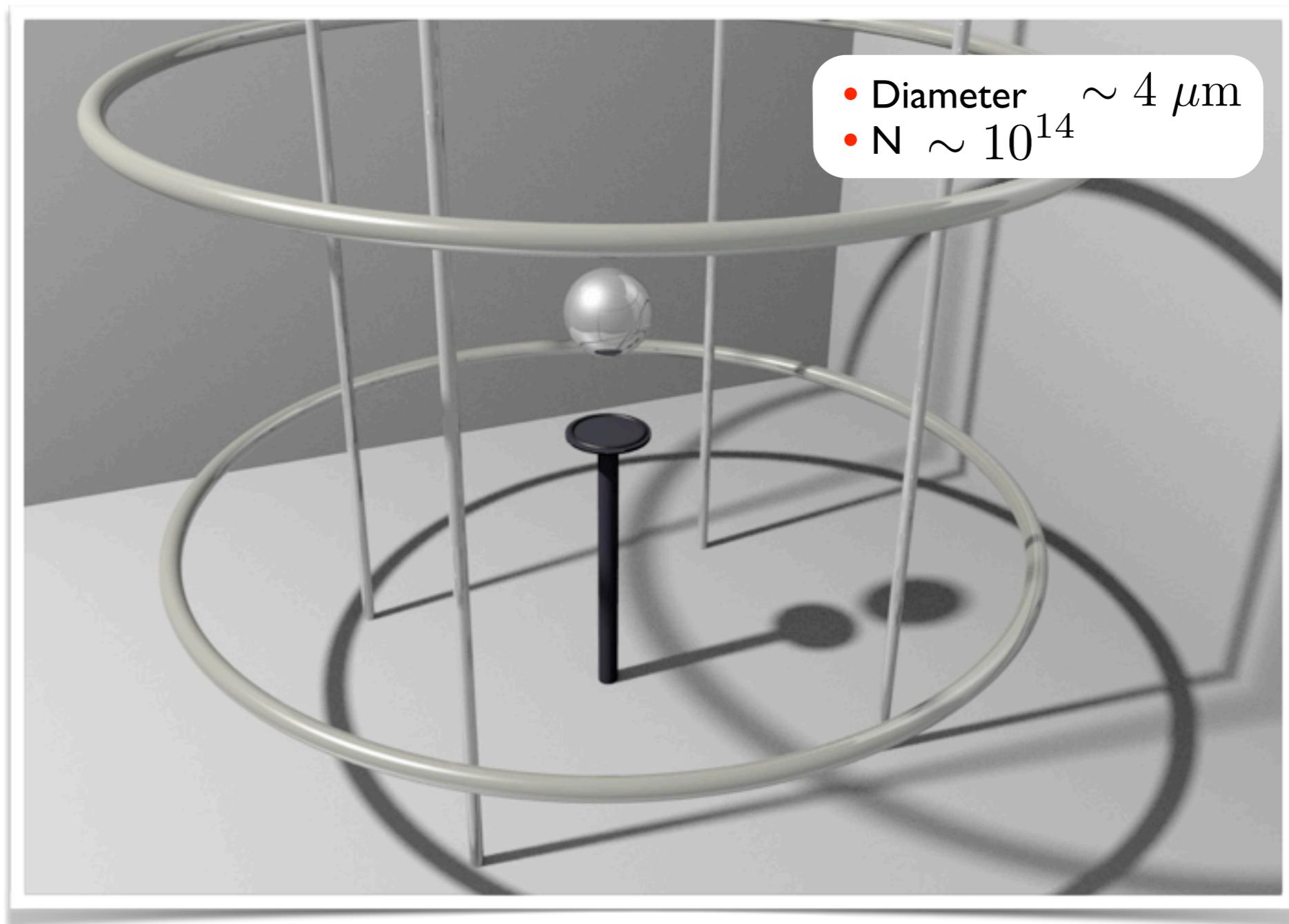


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Experimental Proposal

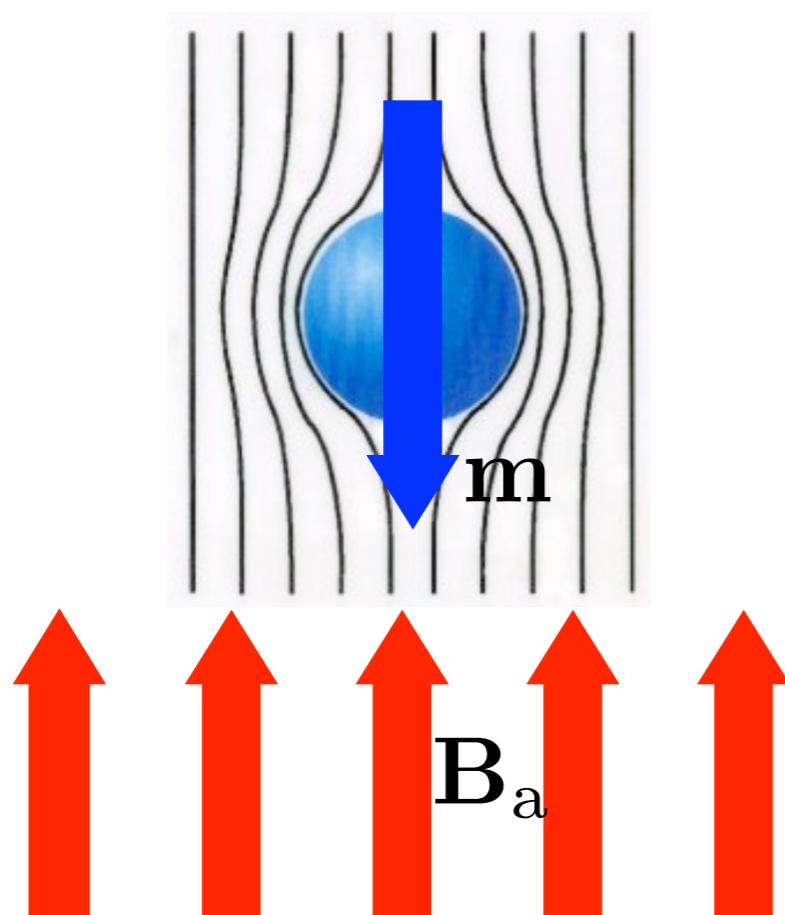
Levitating superconducting microspheres

- Quantum magnetomechanics: magnetic coupling to a quantum circuit



Levitating superconducting microspheres

- Quantum magnetomechanics: magnetic coupling to a quantum circuit
- Sphere behaves as a magnetic dipole



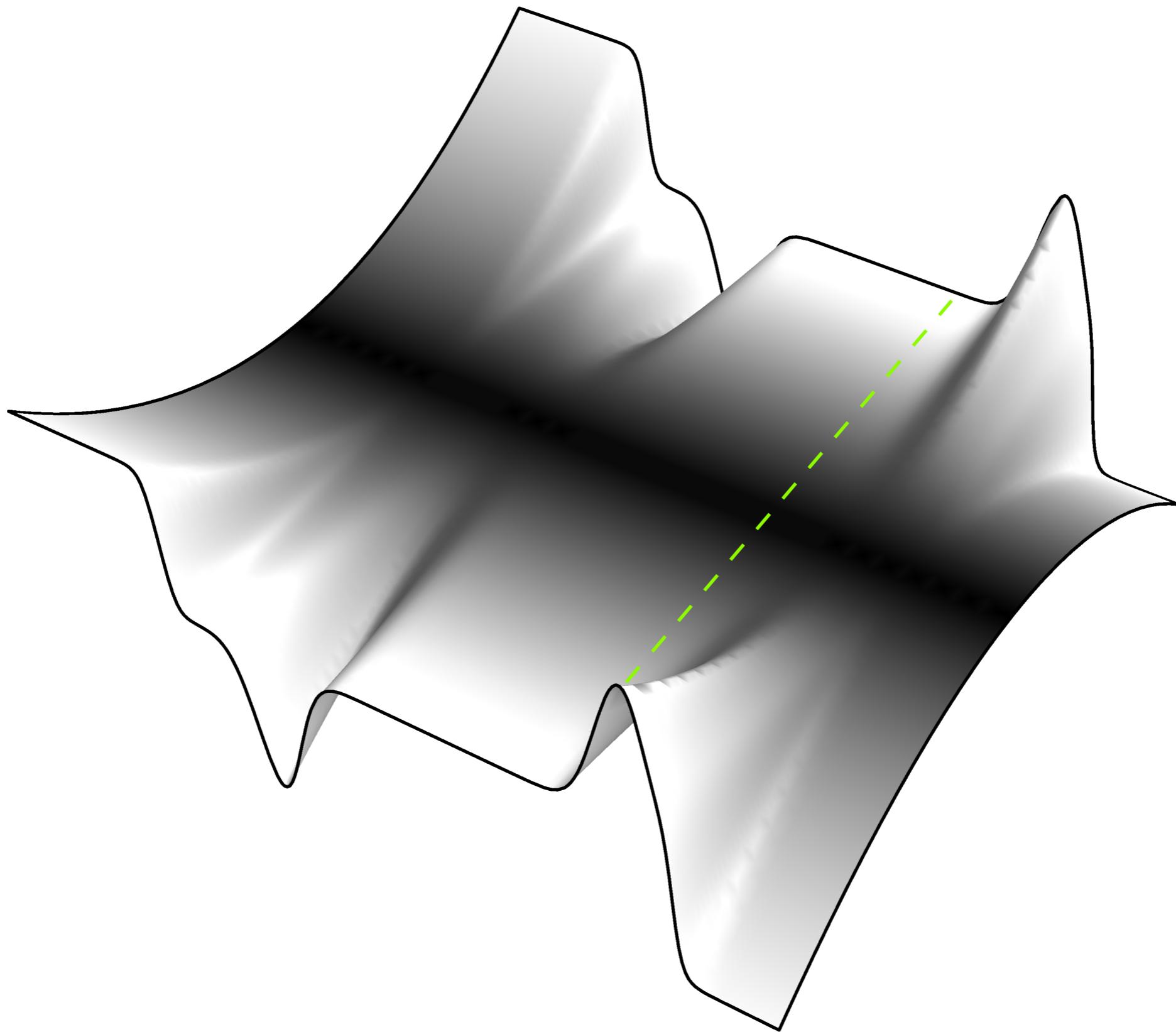
$$\mathbf{m} = -\frac{\mathbf{B}_a}{\mu_0} \frac{3V}{2}$$

scales with volume!

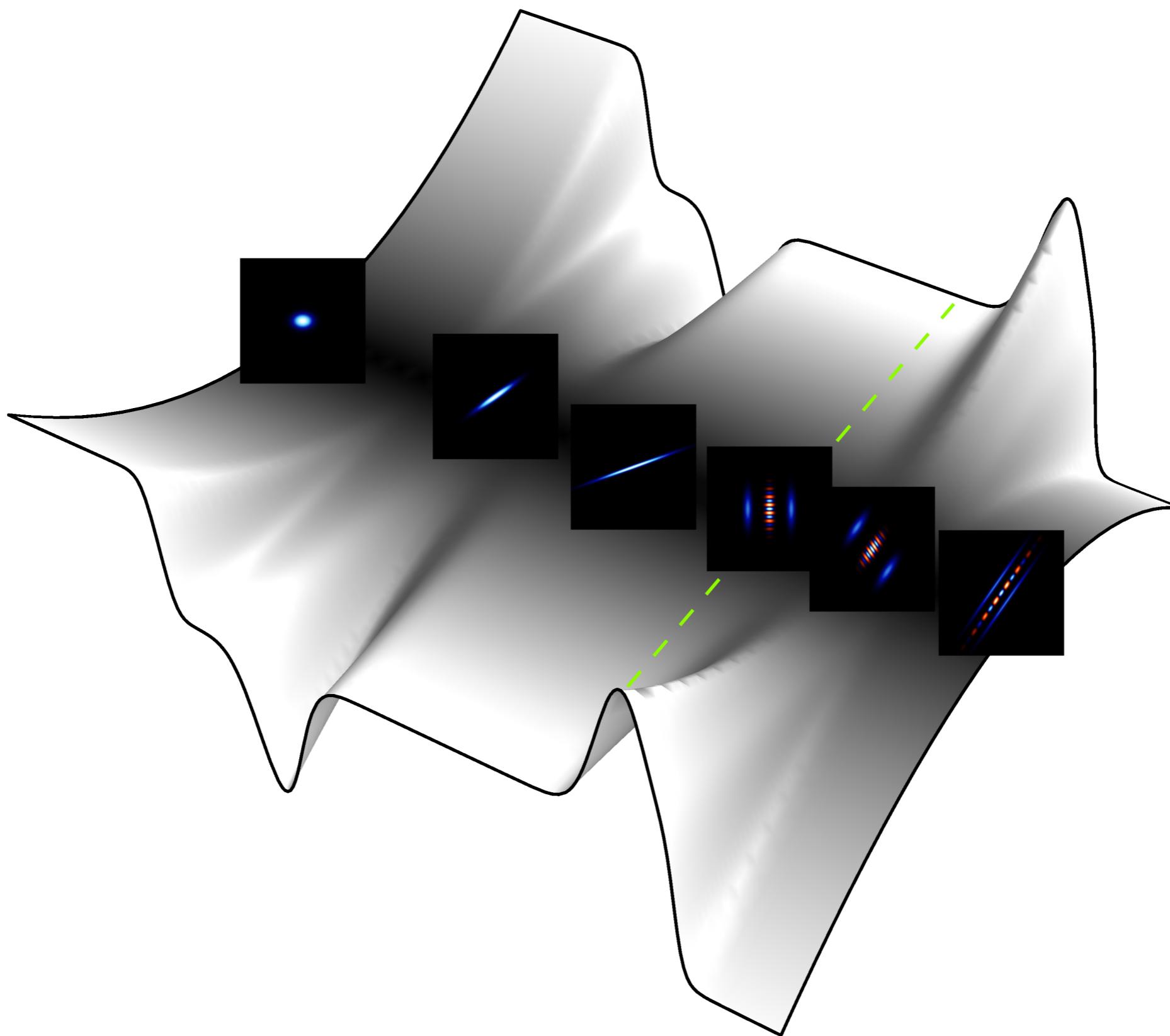


**On-chip all-magnetic “skatepark”
for a superconducting microsphere**

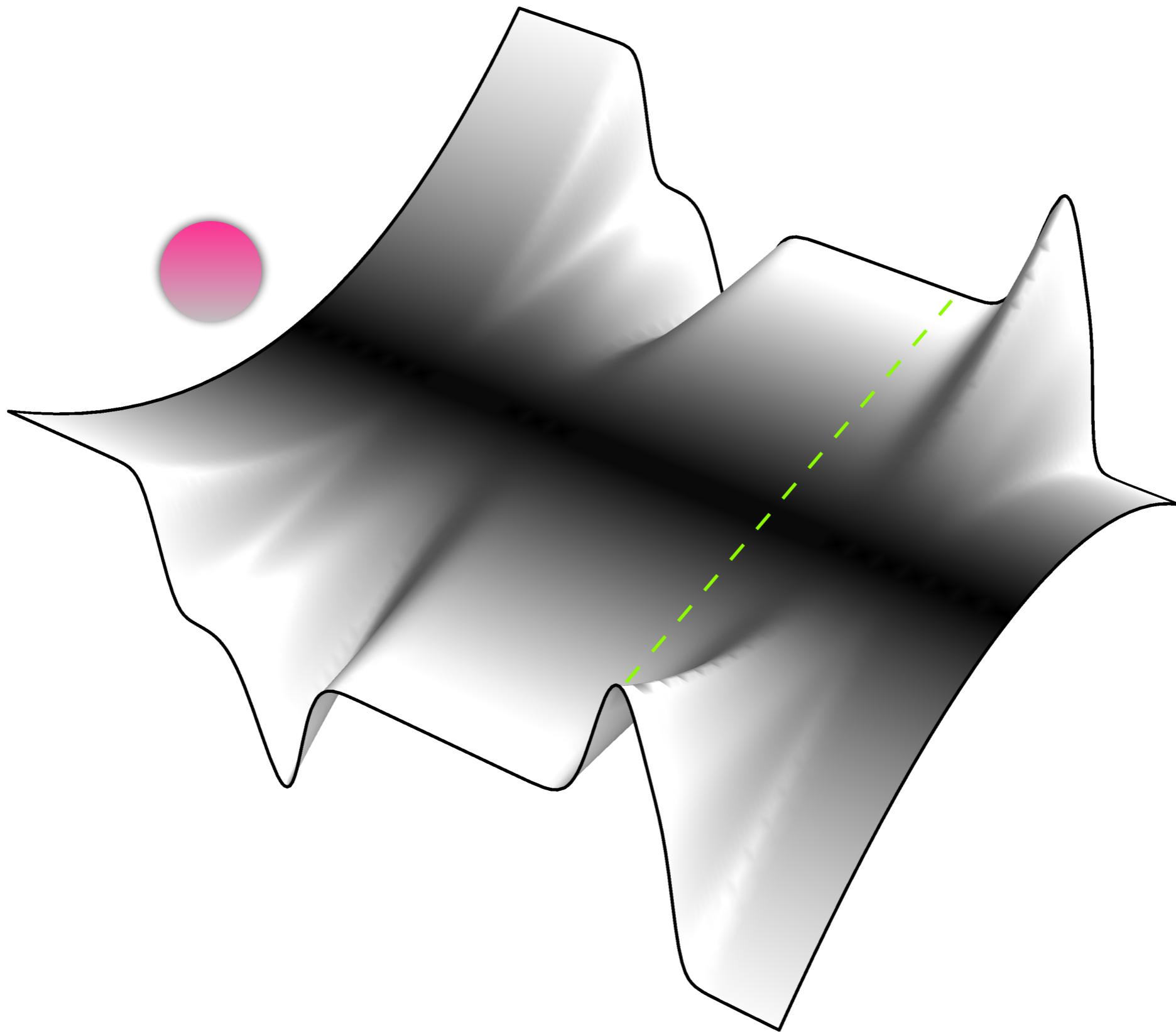
On-chip magnetic “skatepark”



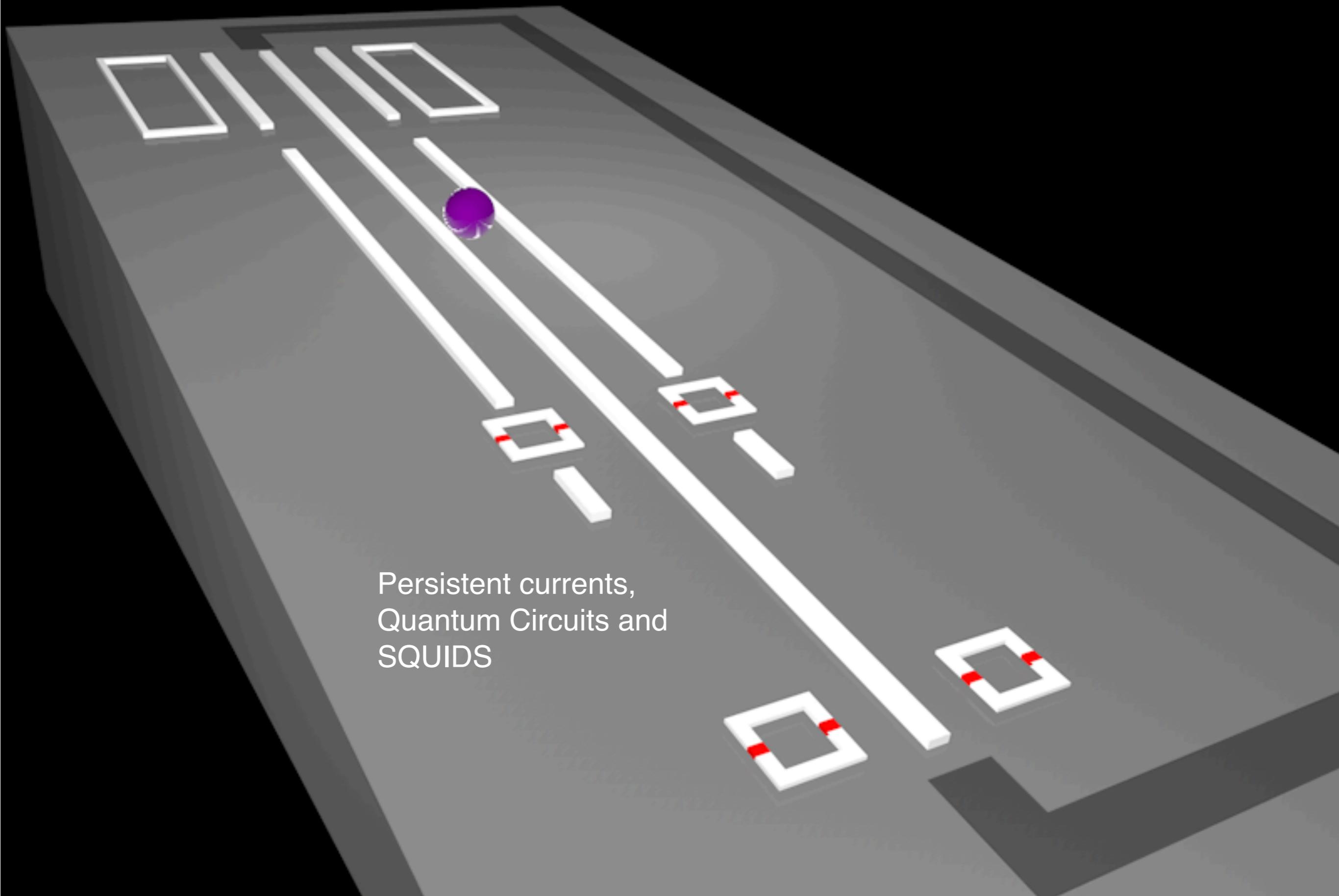
On-chip magnetic “skatepark”



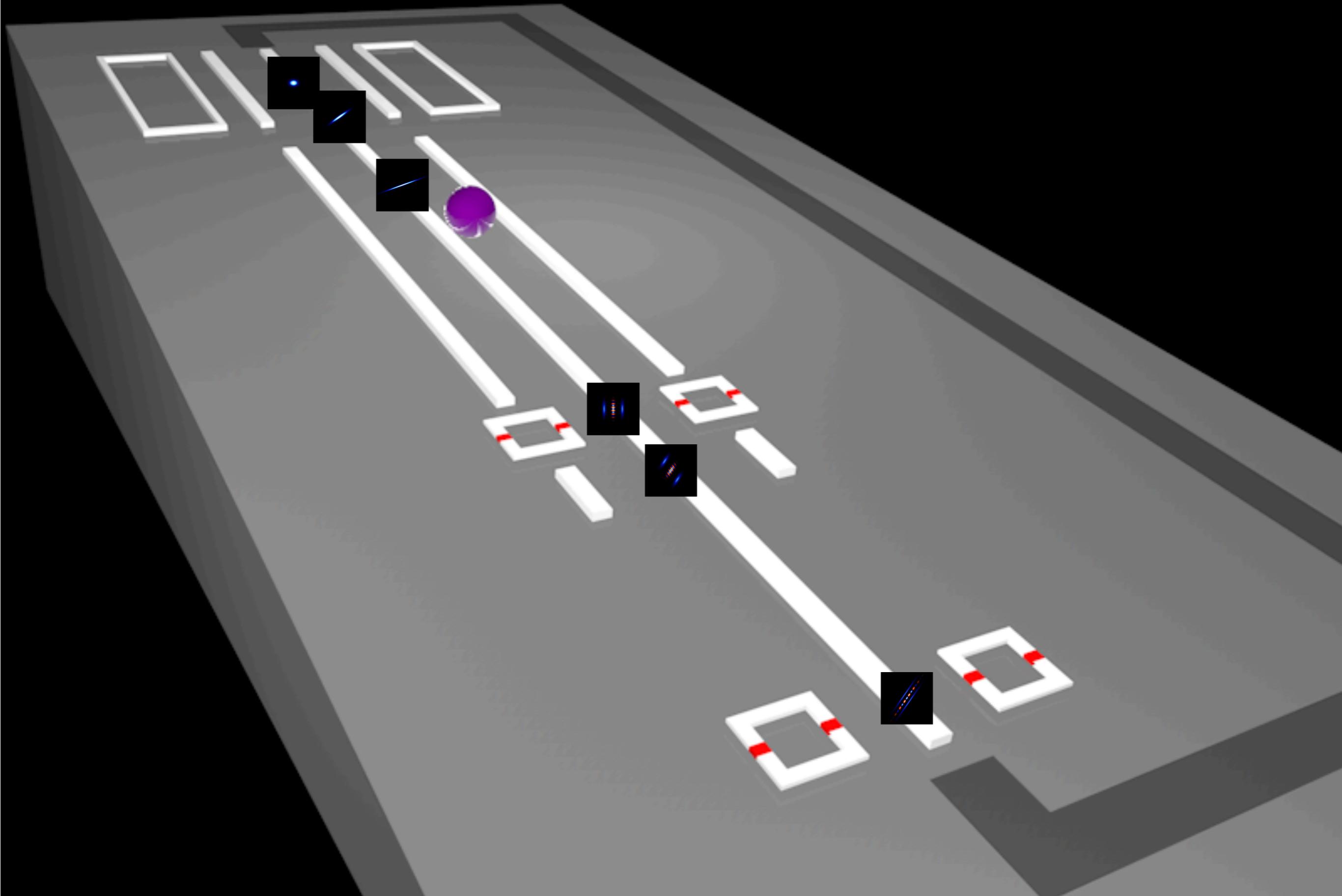
On-chip magnetic “skatepark”



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On-chip magnetic “skatepark”



Conclusions

Final remarks

- **Gravitationally-induced decoherence? Gravitational regime?** $\tau = h \frac{2R}{GM^2}$
- Magnetically levitated superconducting microspheres can falsify it
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 - ➡ Cryogenic temperatures
 - ➡ Magnetic levitation
 - ➡ Static potentials
 - ➡ On-chip all-magnetic “skatepark”
- Challenging but put it into context and recall side applications (measuring capital G?)
- This experiment would falsify (by far) all other known collapse models

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Thank you very much for your attention

