Fast Imaging of Single Photons for Astronomical Applications

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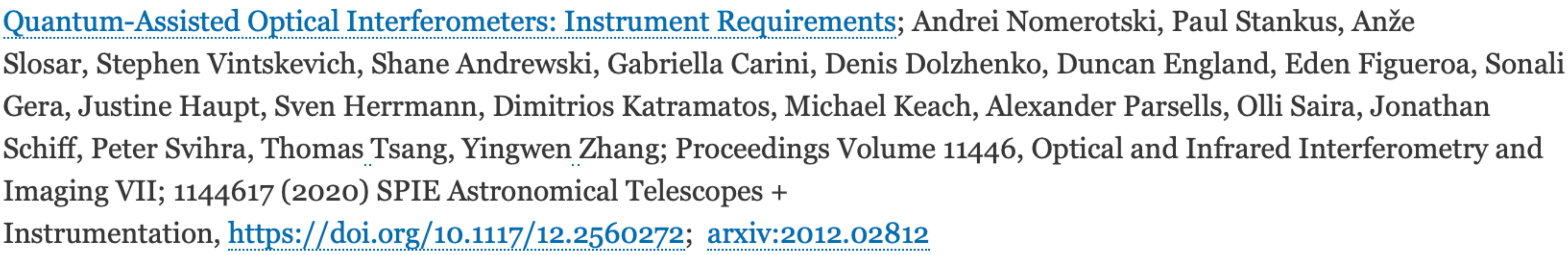
19 March 2021, CPAD2021

Idea: employ quantum entanglement to improve astrometrical precision of optical interferometers

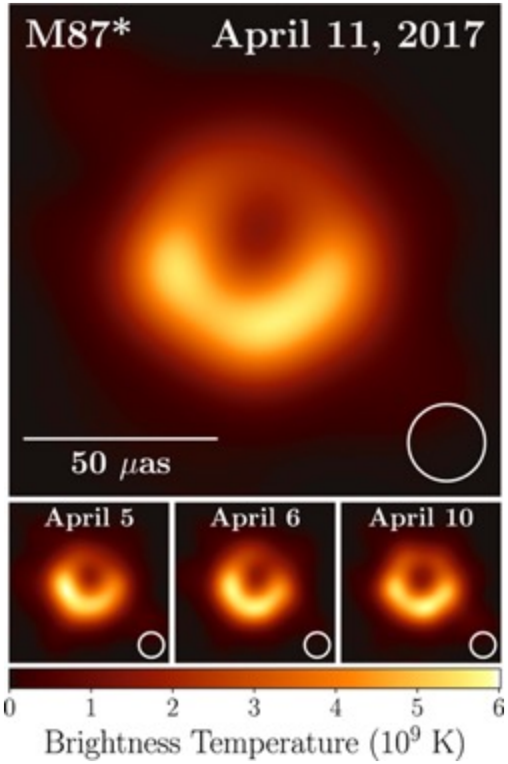
Two-photon amplitude interferometry for precision astrometry
Paul Stankus, Andrei Nomerotski, Anže Slosar, Stephen Vintskevich
https://arxiv.org/abs/2010.09100, under review in Phys. Rev. Research

Will also discuss experimental implications: temporal and spectral resolutions required for implementation



Quantum-Assisted Optical Interferometers: Instrument Requirements; Andrei Nomerotski, Paul Stankus, Anže Slosar, Stephen Vintskevich, Shane Andrewski, Gabriella Carini, Denis Dolzhenko, Duncan England, Eden Figueroa, Sonali Gera, Justine Haupt, Sven Herrmann, Dimitrios Katramatos, Michael Keach, Alexander Parsells, Olli Saira, Jonathan Schiff, Peter Svihra, Thomas Tsang, Yingwen Zhang; Proceedings Volume 11446, Optical and Infrared Interferometry and Imaging VII; 1144617 (2020) SPIE Astronomical Telescopes + Instrumentation, https://doi.org/10.1117/12.2560272; arxiv:2012.02812

Astronomy picture of the decade



sensitive to features on angular scale

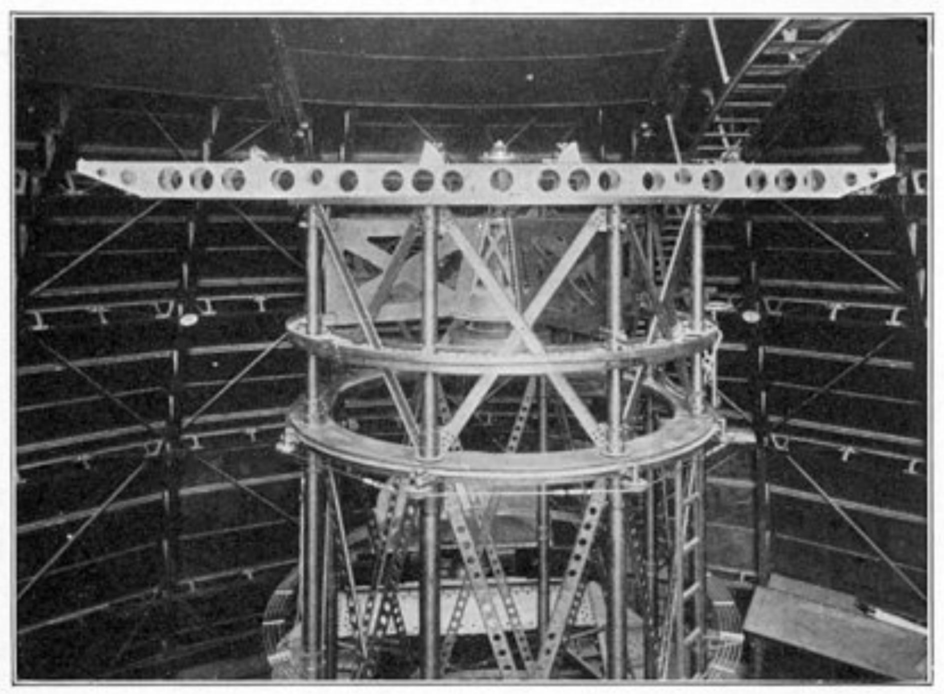
$$\Delta\theta \sim \frac{\lambda}{b}$$

2019 ApJL 875

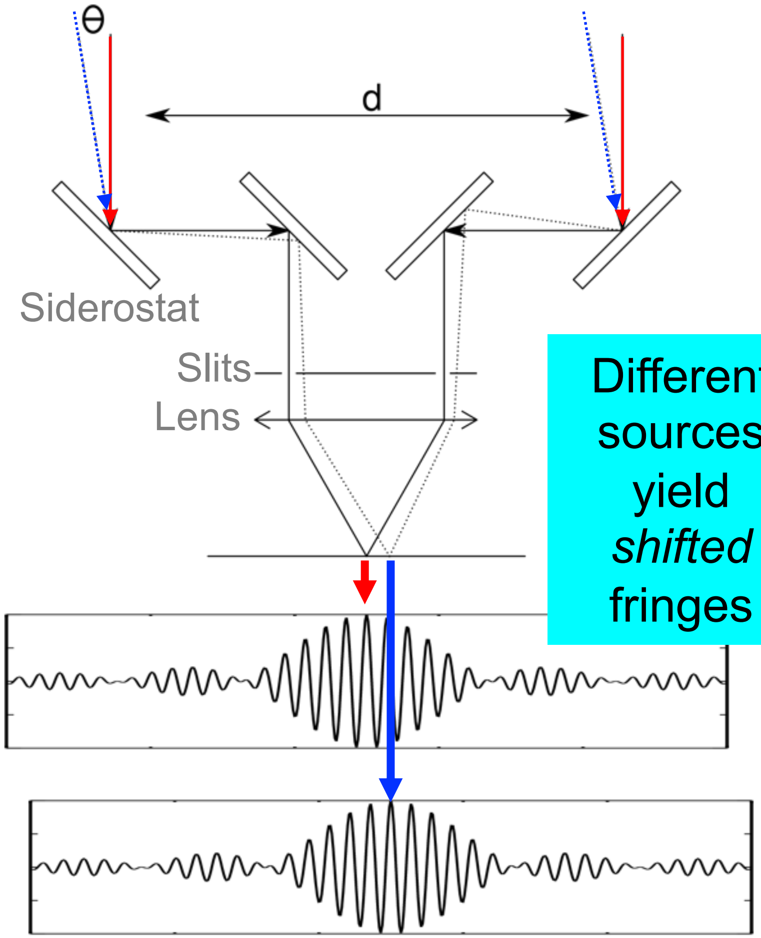
Black hole in the center of M87 imaged at 1.3mm

Achieved by radio interferometry with ~10000 km baselines

In the optical

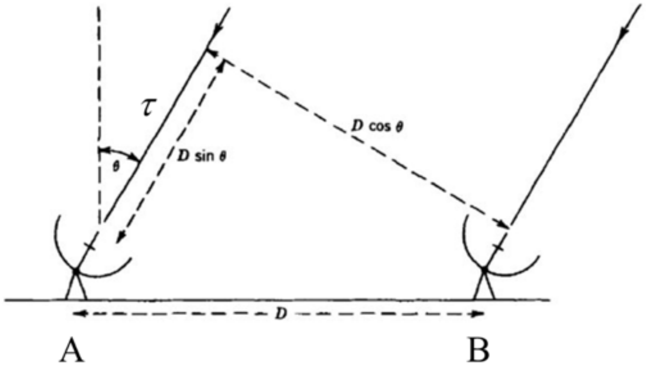


Michelson Stellar Interferometer at Mt. Wilson c. 1920, after original idea by Michelson & Fizeau c. 1890



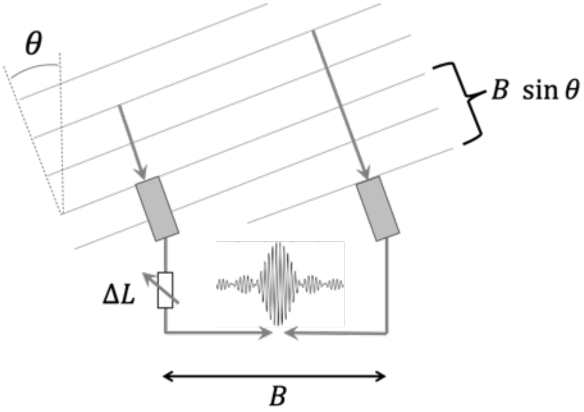
Different sources yield *shifted* fringes

Radio $\bar{n} \gg 1$



Can literally record entire waveform, over some band, separately at each receiver station and interfere later offline

$\bar{n} \ll 1$ Optical



One photon at a time! Need to bring paths to common point in real time

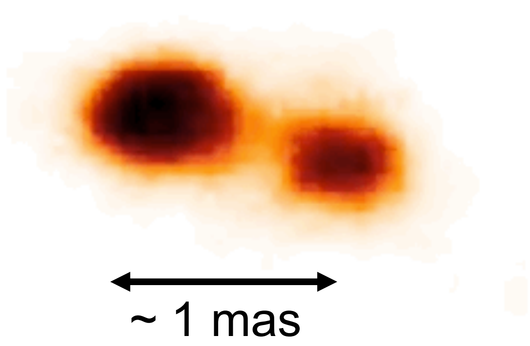
Need path length *compensated* to better than *c*/bandwidth

Need path length *stabilized* to better than λ

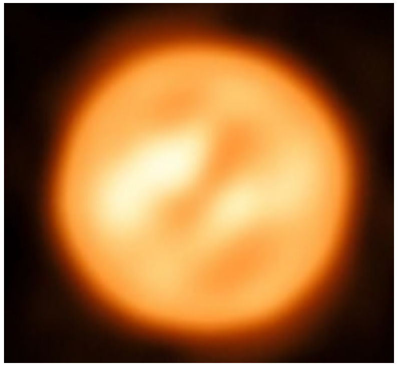
Accuracy ~ 1 mas

Max baselines to ~ 100 m

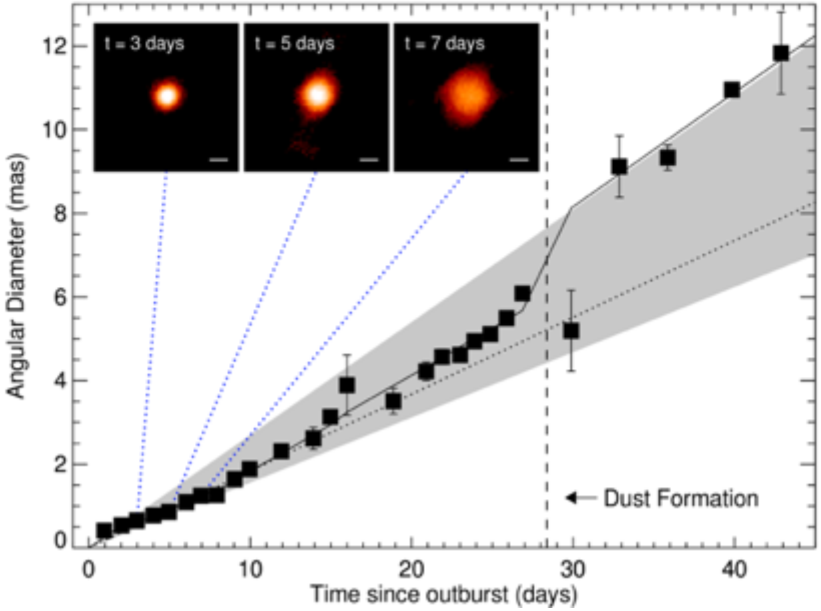
Optical interferometry examples



CHARA Collaboration, “First Resolved Images of the Eclipsing and Interacting Binary β Lyrae”; arXiv:0808.0932, The Astrophysical Journal, 684: L95–L98.



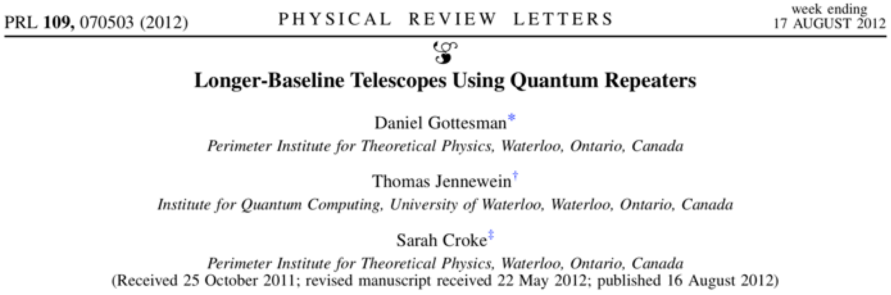
Dynamic convection on Antares
(VLTI, ESO)



Nova in progress (CHARA)

Two-photon techniques

Second photon for quantum assist



PRL **109,** 070503 (2012) PHYSICAL REVIEW LETTERS week ending 17 AUGUST 2012

Longer-Baseline Telescopes Using Quantum Repeaters

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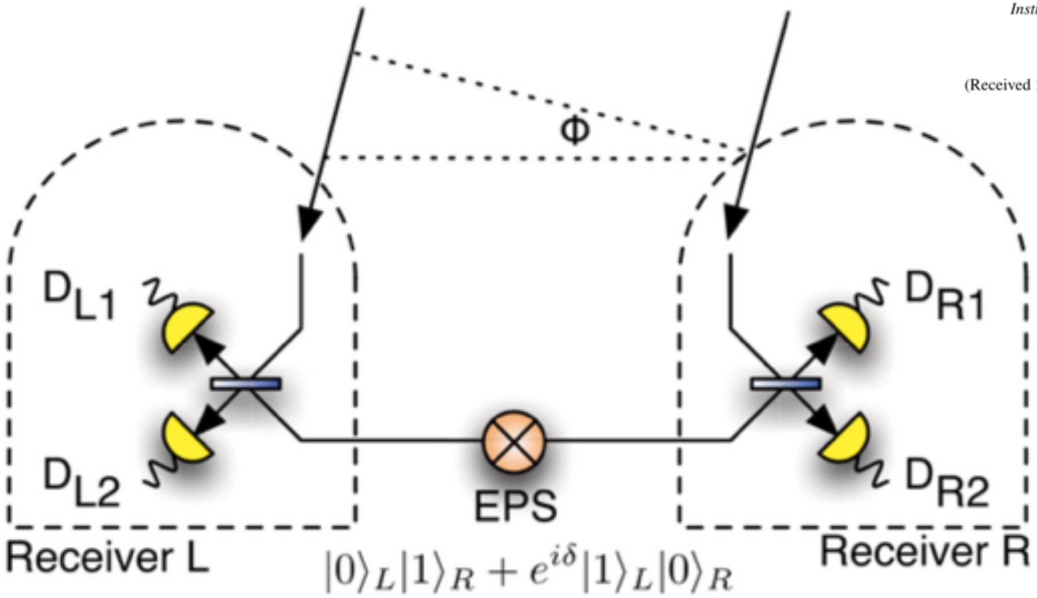
Sarah Croke[‡]
Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
(Received 25 October 2011; revised manuscript received 22 May 2012; published 16 August 2012)

Quantum (two-photon) interferometer



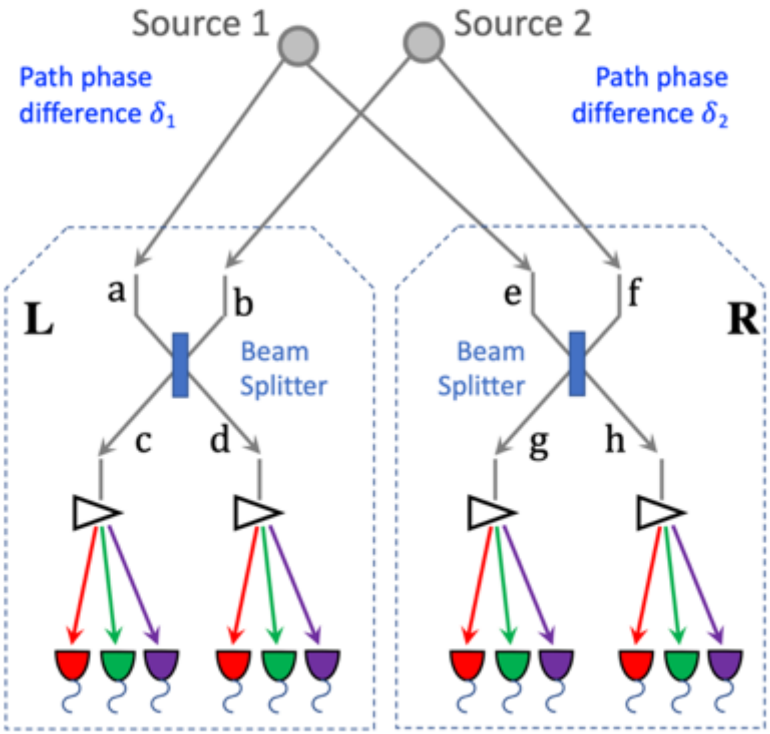
$$\Delta\theta \sim \frac{\lambda}{b}$$

- Measure photon wave function phase difference performing Bell State Measurement at one station so teleporting the sky photon to the other station
- Enables long baselines and could improve astrometric precision by orders of magnitude

Quantum Astrometry

Idea: use another star as source of entangled states for the interference

https://arxiv.org/abs/2010.09100



$$\begin{aligned} P(c^2) = P(d^2) = P(g^2) = P(h^2) &= 1/8 \\ P(cg) = P(dh) &= (1/8)(1+\cos(\delta_1-\delta_2)) \\ P(ch) = P(dg) &= (1/8)(1-\cos(\delta_1-\delta_2)) \end{aligned}$$

Full QFT calculation

$$N_c(xy) = \eta_1\eta_2 A^2 \int_0^{T_r} P^{\text{two photons}}_{L,R,\tau}\, d\tau =$$

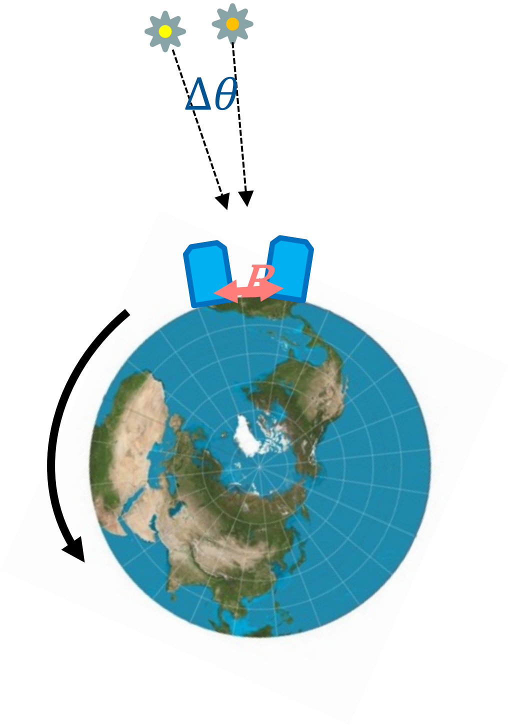
$$A^2\eta_1\eta_2 T_r \left[\overset{\text{Rates}}{\boxed{(I_1+I_2)^2}} + \overset{\text{HBT}}{\boxed{I_1^2 \frac{\tau_c g_{11}}{T_r} + I_2^2 \frac{\tau_c g_{22}}{T_r}}} \pm \underset{\text{New oscillatory term!}}{\boxed{2I_1I_2 \frac{\tau_c g_{12}}{T_r} \cos\left(\frac{\omega_0 B(\sin\theta_1 - \sin\theta_2)}{c} + \frac{\omega_0 \Delta L}{c}\right)}} \right] \quad (30)$$

- Relative path phase difference $\delta_1 - \delta_2$ can be extracted from the coincidence rates of four single photon counters: c, d, g and f

- Different from Hanbury Brown Twiss intensity interferometry, can produce both negative and positive rate oscillations → **amplitude interferometry**

Earth rotation fringe scan

$$\langle N(xy)\rangle = \frac{k(S_1+S_2)^2}{8}\left[1 \pm V_{2\mathrm{PS}}\cos\left[\frac{2\pi B}{\lambda}\underbrace{(\sin\theta_1 - \sin\theta_2)}_{\text{This will evolve as the Earth rotates}} + \frac{2\pi\Delta L}{\lambda}\right]\right]$$



$$\langle N_{xy}\rangle(t) = \bar{N}_{xy}\left[1 \pm V\cos\left(\omega_f t + \Phi\right)\right]$$

Coincidence rates oscillate

$$\omega_f = \frac{2\pi B\Omega_\oplus \sin\theta_0}{\lambda}\Delta\theta$$

Fringe oscillation rate is a direct measure of sources' opening angle!

Can measure with high precision

World-competitive precision

$$\sigma\left[\Delta\theta\right] = \sqrt{\frac{6}{\pi^2\kappa}}\,\frac{1}{V}\,\frac{\lambda}{B}\,\frac{1}{T\Omega_\oplus\,\sin\theta_0}\,\frac{1}{\sqrt{\bar{n}T}}$$

$\bar{n}$ = average pair rate
T = total observation time

A modest experiment:

- Bright stars, mag 2
- 1 m^2 collecting area
- 10^4 seconds observation
- 0.15 nsec time resolution
- 10^4 spectral channels
- 200 m baseline

Track day-over-day changes in $\Delta\theta$ to observe parallax, proper motion, orbital motion, gravitational lensing

➡ $\sigma[\Delta\theta] \sim 10\mu\mathrm{as}$ ($\sim 10^{-11}$ rad)

state of art: 7 μas GAIA (2013 -)

Possible impact on astrophysics and cosmology

So far a blue-sky research

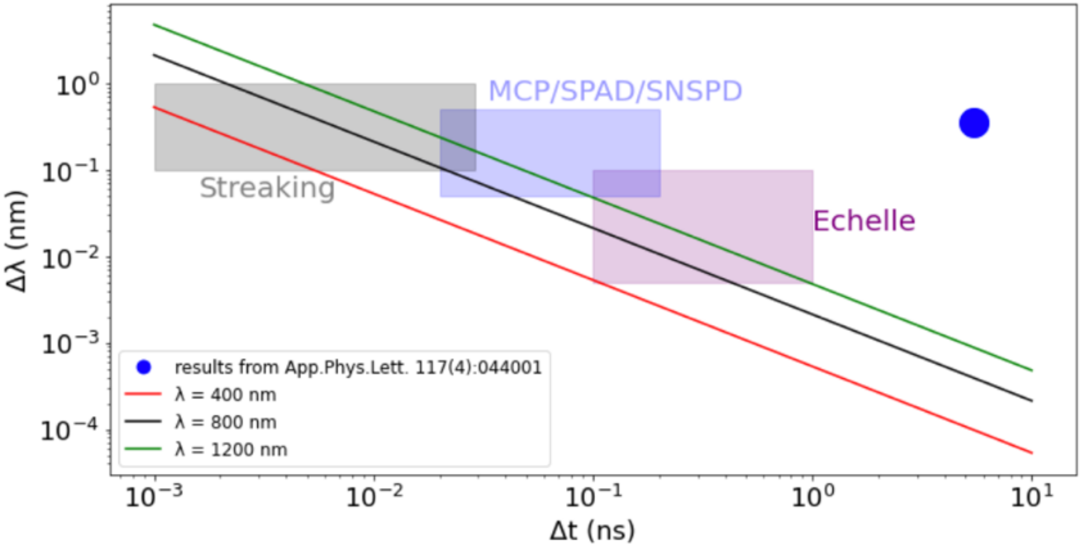
https://arxiv.org/abs/2010.09100

offers orders of magnitude better astrometry

- Parallax: improved distance ladder → SN science → Dark Energy
- Proper motions: local Dark Matter patterns
- Microlensing, see motions and shape changes, Dark Matter hunting

- Gravitational waves, coherent motions of stars
- Exoplanets
- etc

Requirements for detectors



- Photons must be close enough in frequency and time to interfere → temporal & spectral binning: need ~ 0.01 ns * 0.2 nm for 800 nm

- Fast imaging techniques are the key
  - Several promising technologies: CMOS pixels+MCP, SPADs, SNSPDs, streaking
  - Target 1-100 ps resolution
- Spectral binning: diffraction gratings, Echelle spectrometers
  - Fringe rate resolution doesn't depend on bin width - wider spectral binning gives lower visibility but same statistical precision
  - → what's important is # of spectral channels
- Photon detection efficiency: high

Timepix3 Camera → Tpx3Cam

Camera = sensor + ASIC + readout

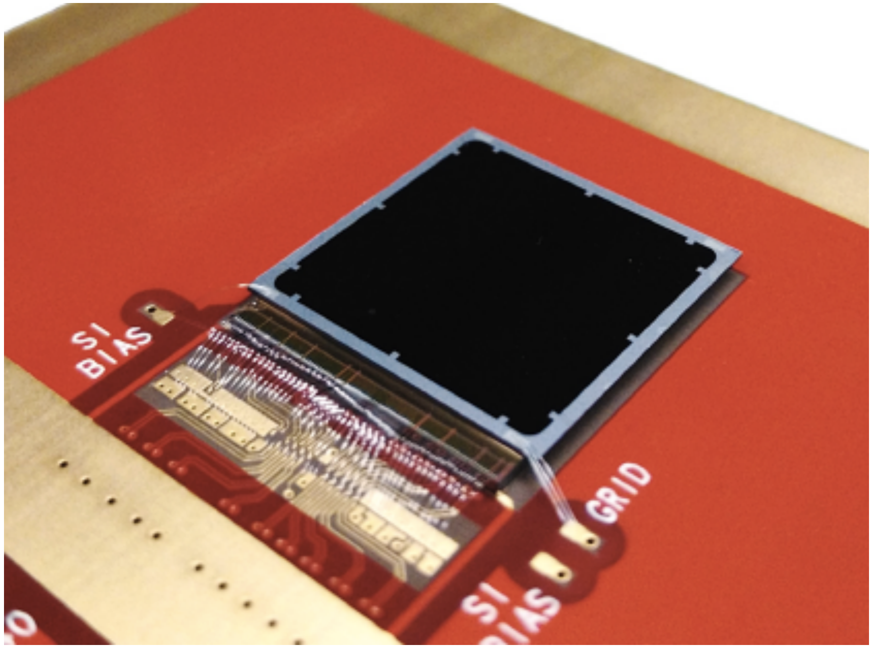
Optical sensor with high QE developed at BNL

- Sensor is bump-bonded to chip Timepix3

Timepix3 ASIC:

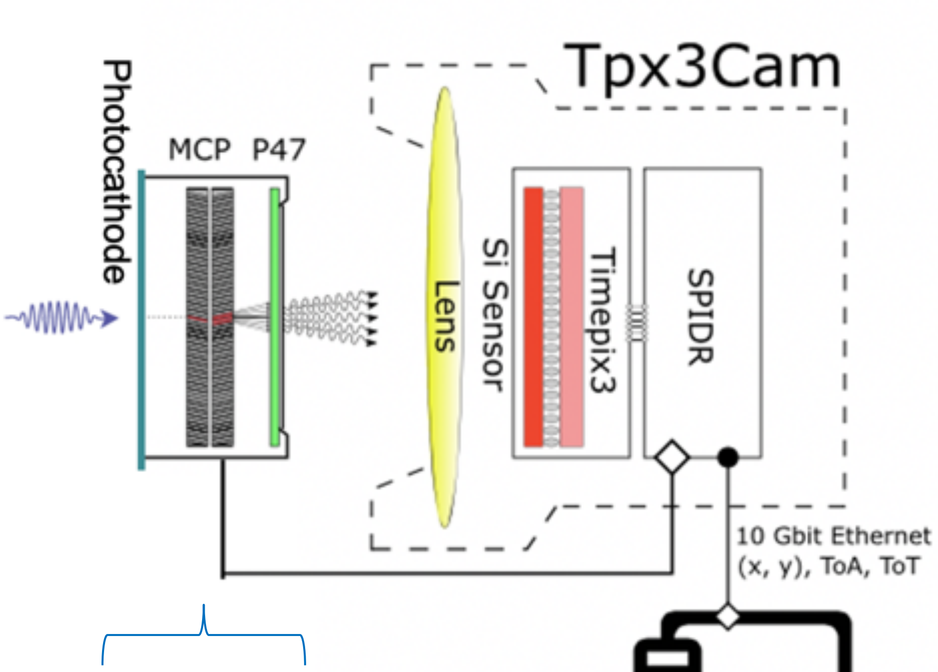
256 x 256 array, 55 x 55 micron pixel

- 1.56 ns timing resolution
- data-driven readout, 80 Mpix/sec, no deadtime



M. Fisher-Levine, A. Nomerotski, Timepixcam: a fast optical imager with time-stamping,
Journal of Instrumentation 11 (03) (2016) C03016.

Intensified camera is single photon sensitive



Intensifier

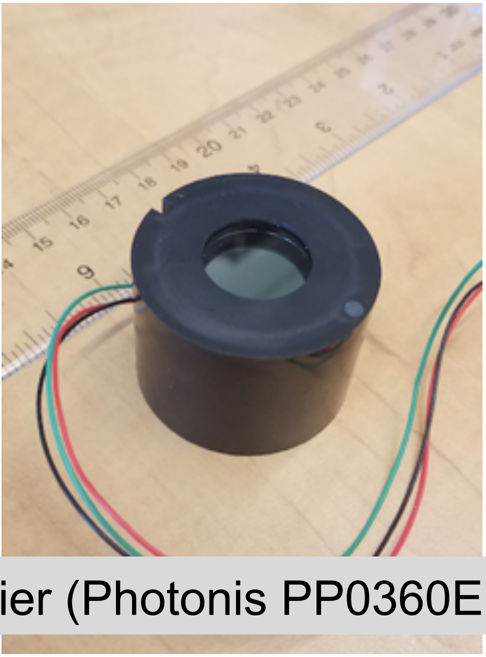
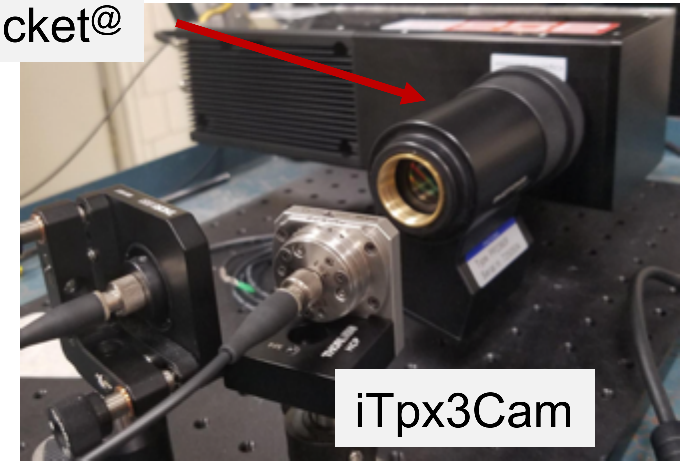


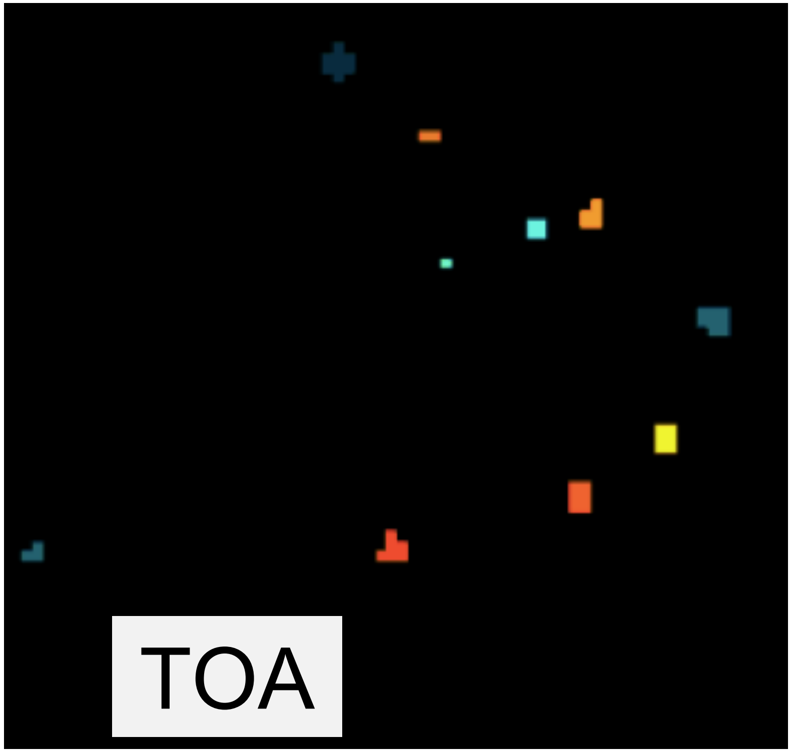
Image intensifier (Photonis PP0360EG)



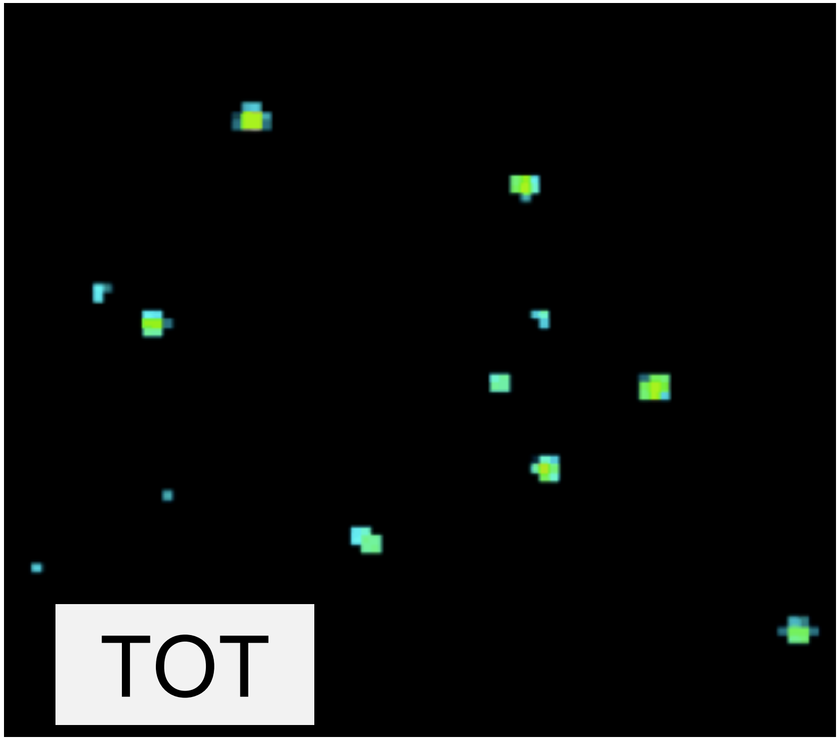
Cricket@

iTpx3Cam

Quantum efficiency ~ 30%



TOA



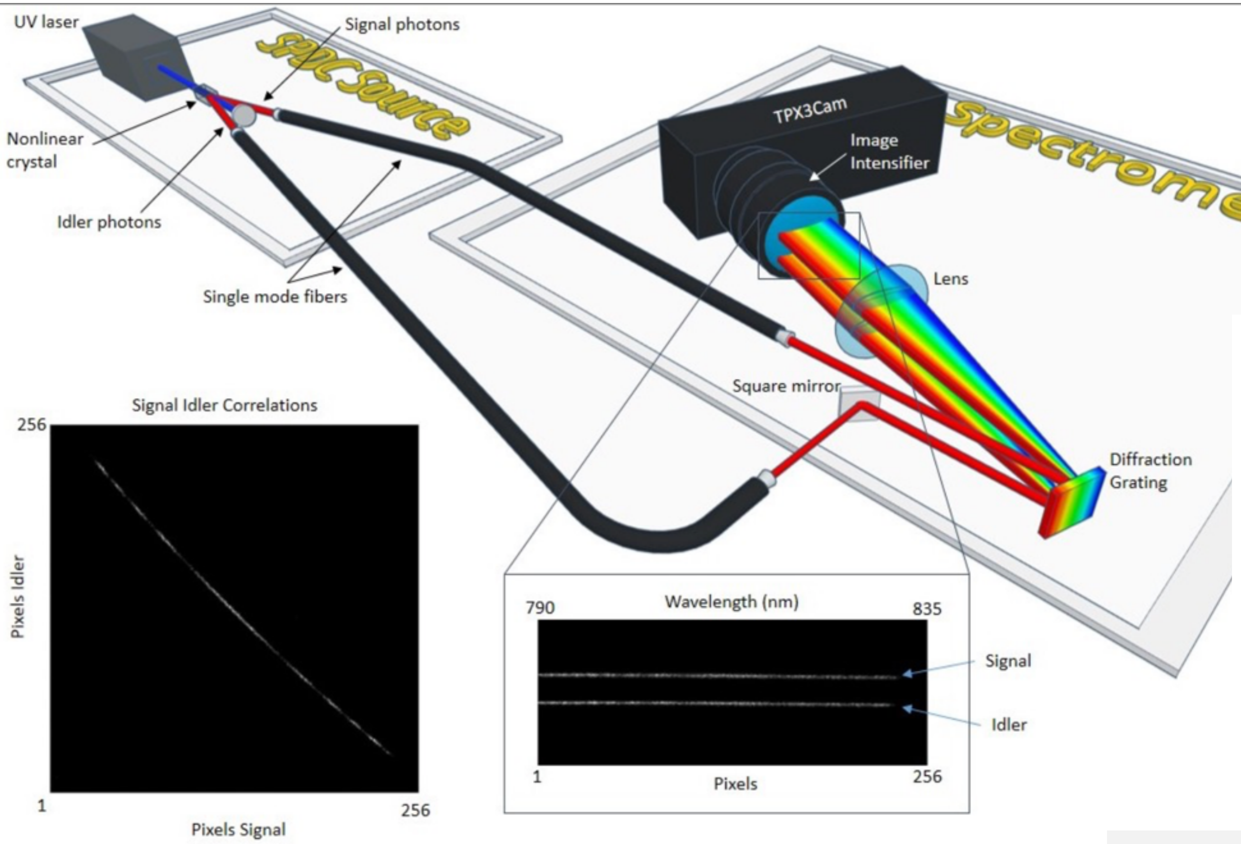
TOT

Each photon is a cluster of pixels
→ 3D (x,y,t) centoiding

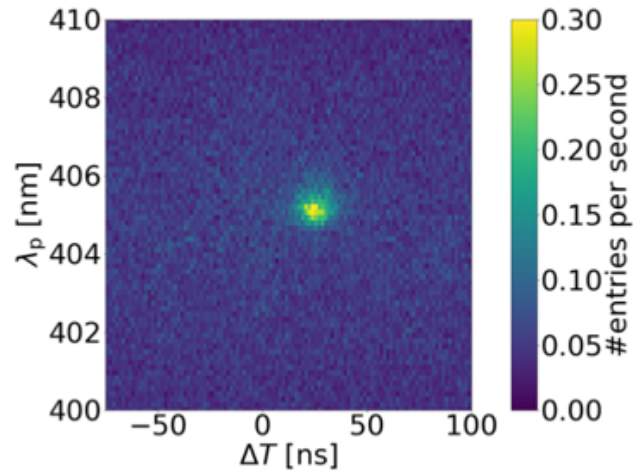
Time resolution: 2 ns / photon

Spectroscopic binning

In collaboration with NRC (Ottawa) D.England, Y.Zhang et al



$\delta\lambda * \delta t$ ~ 5 ns * 0.5 nm

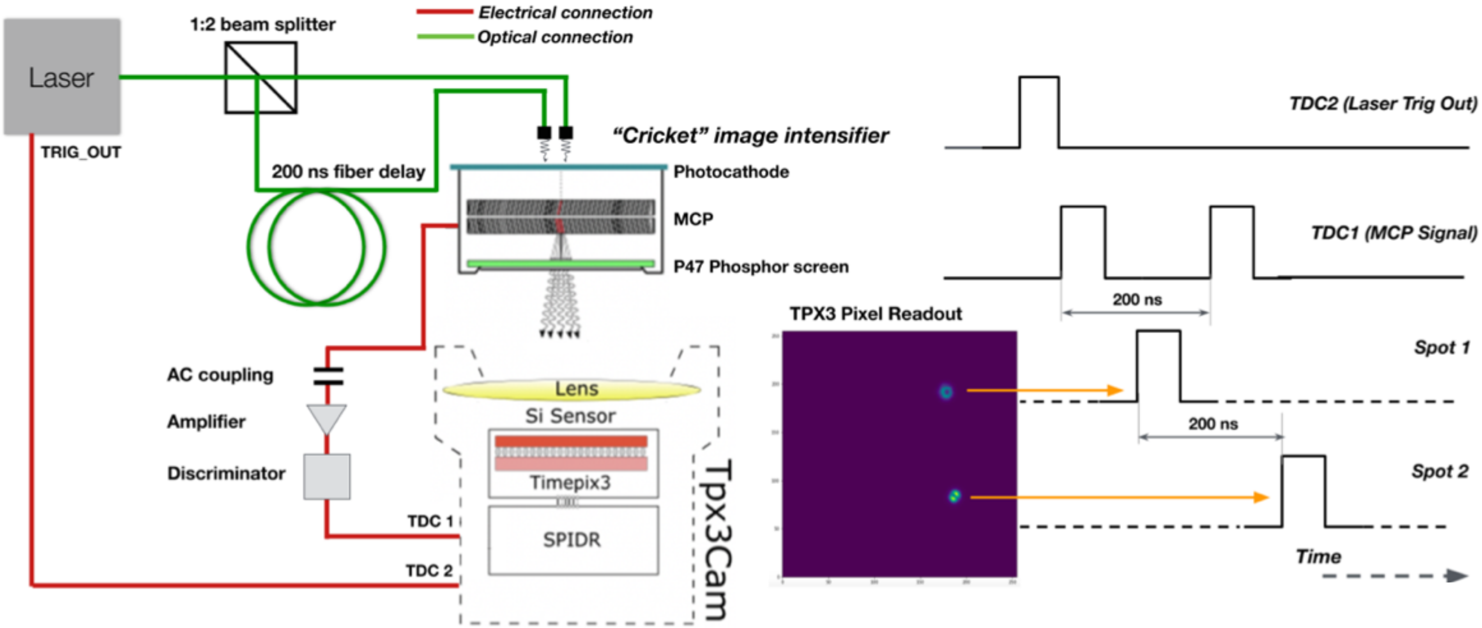


Pump photon wavelength vs time difference

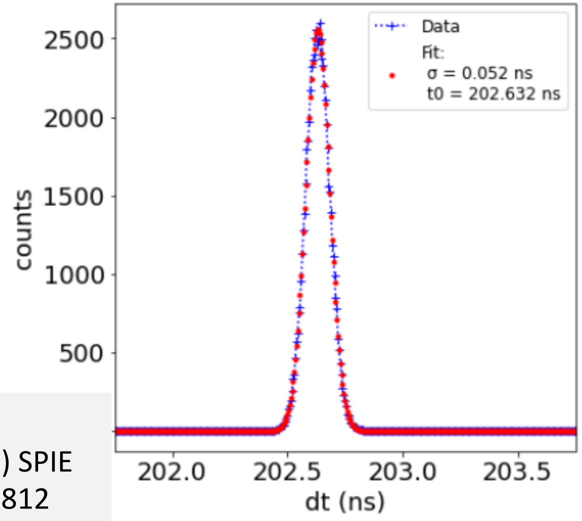
Y Zhang, D England, A Nomerotski, P Svihra et al, Multidimensional quantum-enhanced target detection via spectrotemporal-correlation measurements, Physical Review A 101 (5), 053808

P Svihra et al, Multivariate Discrimination in Quantum Target Detection, Appl. Phys. Lett. **117**, 044001 (2020)

MCP Timing Performance



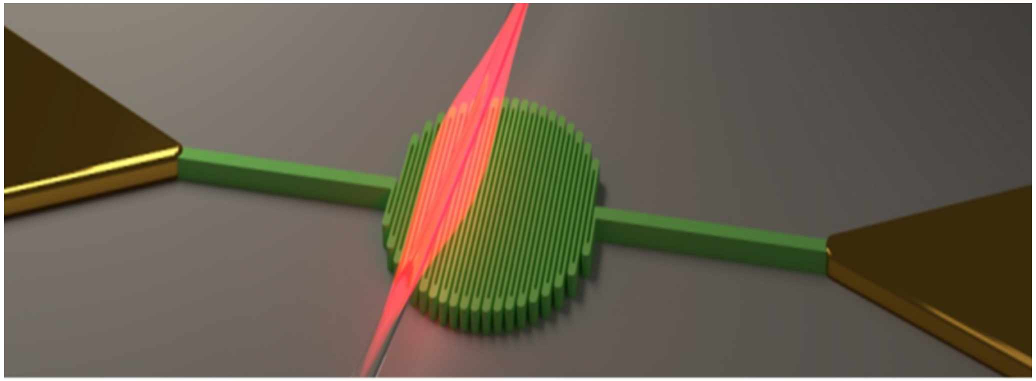
- Micro-channel plate (MCP) is fast
  - Demonstrated resolution < 30 ps
- MCP readout for Tpx3 camera
  - 50 ps, not for single photons yet

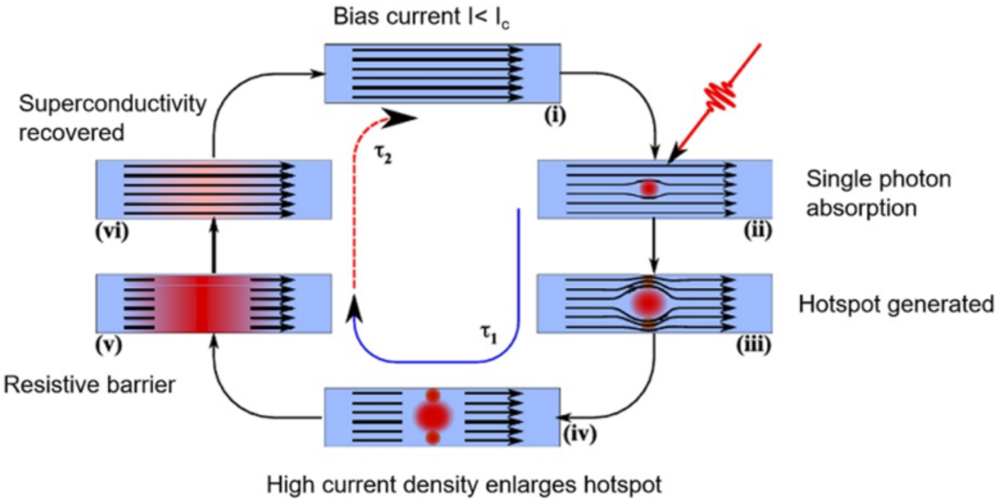


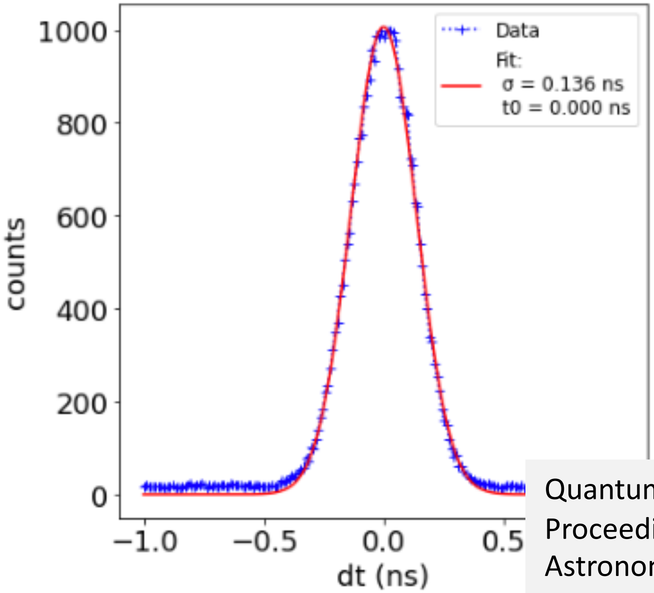
Quantum-Assisted Optical Interferometers: Instrument Requirements; Andrei Nomerotski et al, Proceedings Volume 11446, Optical and Infrared Interferometry and Imaging VII; 1144617 (2020) SPIE Astronomical Telescopes +Instrumentation, https://doi.org/10.1117/12.2560272; arxiv:2012.02812

Possible technologies: SNSPD

- Superconducting nanowires
  - Used Single Quantum SNSPD
  - 100 ps resolution for single photons using SPDC photon pair source
  - 3 ps devices reported







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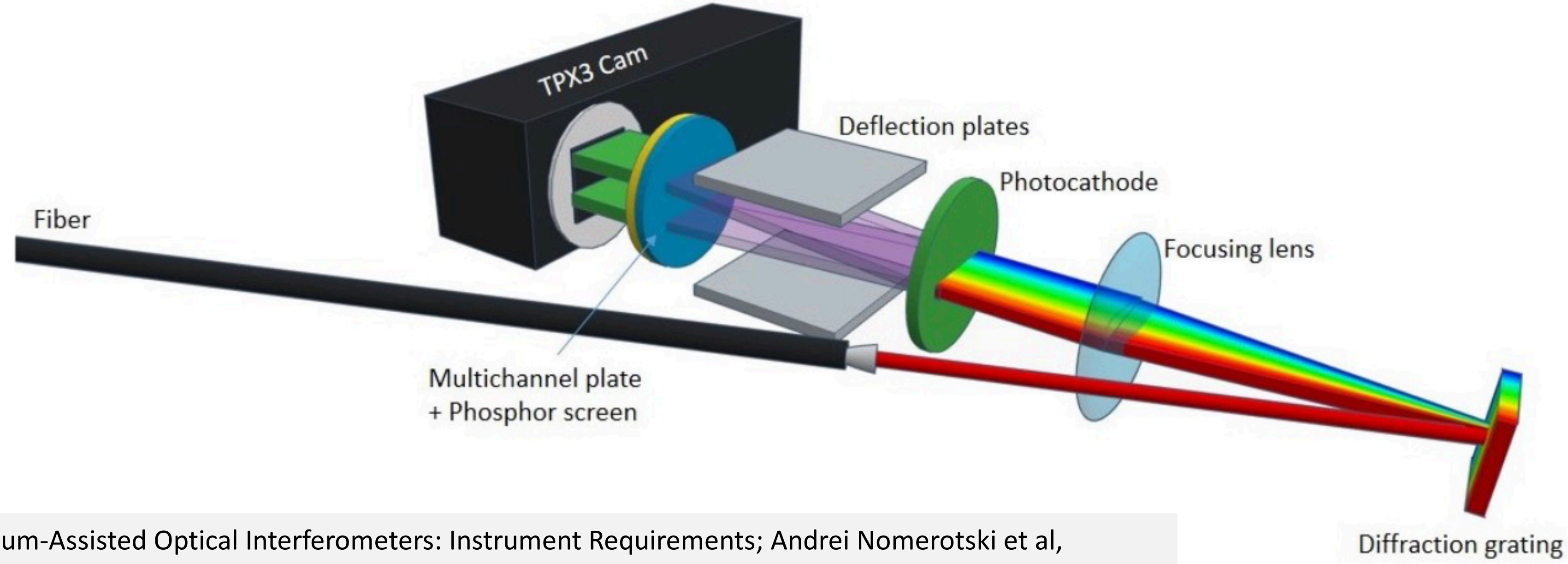
Possible technologies: Streaking

- Streaking: use a spatial coordinate for time measurement
  - Deflect photoelectrons by oscillating field
  - 1 ps resolution possible



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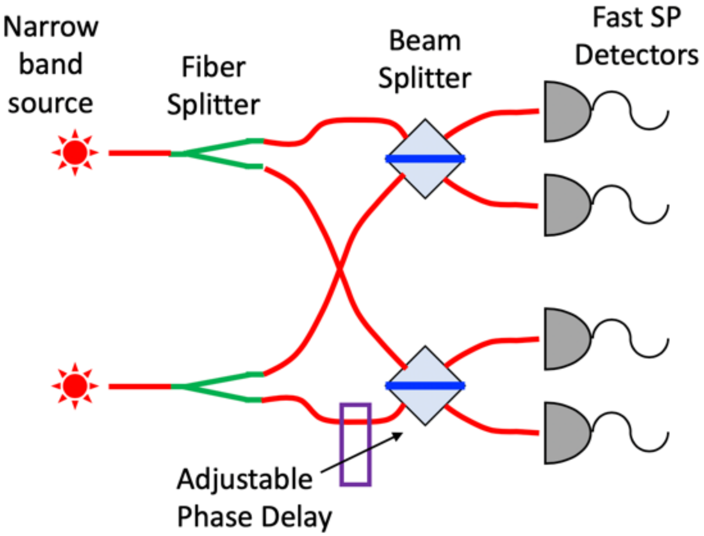
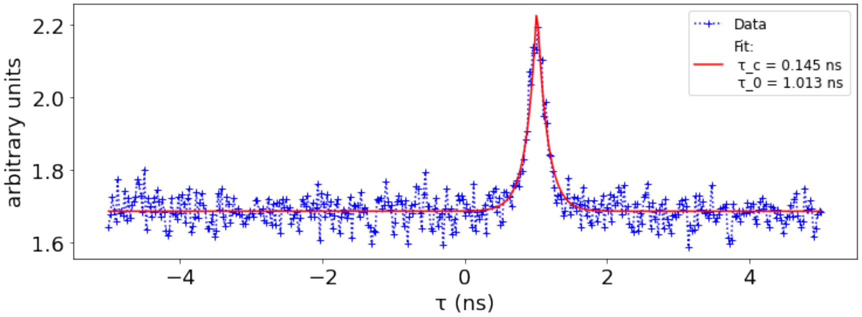
Possible technologies: SPADs

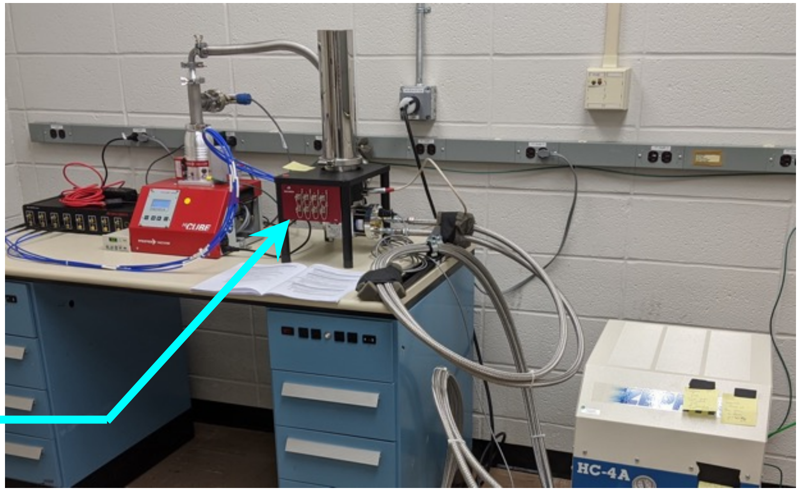
- Starting characterization of 50 ps SPADs

Experiments in progress



Strong HBT peak with single lamp





Bench-top model of two-photon interferometry

Ar vapor lamps with ultra-narrow band filters

Superconducting nanowire single-photon detectors

Supported at BNL by DOE HEP QuantISED grant 2020-21

Summary

- Two-photon amplitude interference can be used to improve astrometrical precision by orders of magnitude
  - Application of quantum entanglement and teleportation techniques to astronomy with great potential

- Not far from practical implementation with existing technologies
  - Motivates new technologies for fast single photon detection with sub-ns resolution

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Maverick Millican
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BNL team


SBU team