Searching for high-frequency (10 kHz-MHz) gravitational waves with Levitated Sensor Detector (LSD)

Northwestern

WEINBERG COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

Center for **Fundamental Physics**



CENTER FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPLORATION AND RESEARCH IN ASTROPHYSICS

Shafaq Elahi (she/her)



Geraci Group

1071

Northwestern

GravNet International Meeting

June 26-27, 2025





Northwestern

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an al property of the Commerce



WEATHER · Published January 28, 2019 8:00am EST

Wind chills of minus-45 to minus-60 expected in Chicago, much of upper Midwest











PI: Andy Geraci Post Docs: Alexey Grinin, Alex Hipp, *George Winstone* Graduate Students: Andrew Dana, *Aaron Wang*, *Jacob Sprague*, Mark Nguyen, *Shafaq Elahi, Scott Grudichak, Shelby Klomp,* William Eom Undergrads: Anna Humphrey, Evan Gerns, Jack Ryan, Maddox Wroblewski High School: Garrett Chong

Prof. Andrew Geraci, Prof. Nancy Aggarwal (Davis), Prof. Shane Larson (Clarkson) and Prof. Vicky Kalogera





Geraci Lab

LSD Collaboration

Gravitational Wave Astronomy



LIGO-like experiments are shot noise limited at HF



HF GW Astronomy: Sneak peak into the BSM Physics



Aggarwal et. Al. Challenges and Opportunities of Gravitational Wave Searches above 10 kHz



HFGWs: Potential Sources

Probing both particle and wave like dark matter at the same time!

- Mergers of Primordial Black Holes
- QCD axions around rotating Black Holes
- Exotic compact objects like Boson stars
- Unknown BSM sources
- String cosmology
- Uncharted regime—> don't know what we'll find!



Also solve the Strong CP problem







Searching for New Physics with a Levitated-Sensor-Based Gravitational-Wave Detector

Nancy Aggarwal, George P. Winstone, Mae Teo, Masha Baryakhtar, Shane L. Larson, Vicky Kalogera, and Andrew A. Geraci Phys. Rev. Lett. 128, 111101 – Published 16 March 2022

O Gravitational atom in the sky

- Ultra-light scalar field like QCD axion bound to a rotating BH by gravity
- Extracts angular mom. from BH via Penrose process—> specific states get super radiantly amplified—>macroscopic boson cloud
- Annihilate to gravitons—>emission of monochromatic GW waves





LSD Searches for GWs in 10 kHz-MHz Band



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LSD Searches for GWs in 10 kHz-MHz Band

1-m prototype may see the signal from the annihilation of $\sim 3.5 \times 10^{-11} eV$ axions !



1 m 10 m 100 m

- 3×10⁻¹¹ eV
- 3.5×10^{−11} eV
- 4×10^{−11} eV
- 4.5×10^{−11} eV
- 5×10^{−11} eV
- 5.5 × 10⁻¹¹ eV
- $6 \times 10^{-11} \text{ eV}$
- 6.5×10⁻¹¹ eV



Levitated Sensor Detector (LSD)



1-m prototype resonant gravitational wave detector with two Fabry-Perot arms





V

- laser focus
- Confined in three axes by radiation pressure ($\propto I$) and dipole forces ($\propto \Delta I$)



polarizability, laser power, beam focusing

• Nm-micron sized polarizable dielectric particles (e.g. silica, NaYF) act as high field seekers - trapped at the





• Particle behaves like a 3-D harmonic oscillator: trap depth & trap stiffness (k) depend on particle size,



Piezo driven slide acts as a dive-board for the particles





1550 nm Dual-Beam Optical Trap

RESEARCH ARTICLE | NOVEMBER 29 2022

optical trap 🔅

Evan Weisman (); Chethn Krishna Galla (); Cris Montoya; Eduardo Alejandro; Jason Lim; Melanie Beck; George P. Winstone; Alexey Grinin 💿; William Eom 💿; Andrew A. Geraci 🖂 💿



SEM image of a Silica nanosphere



View from IR Camera

An apparatus for in-vacuum loading of nanoparticles into an





- •COM motion decoupled from environment no clamping \implies less dissipation •High Q- factors (energy stored per cycle/ energy dissipated) achieved (10^{10}) —> ultra sensitive force detection (Zepto-Newton) demonstrated in our group.

G. Ranjit, et.al. , Phys. Rev. A, 93, 053801 (2016).







Bathroom scales measure 10⁻¹ N



Dust mite 10-7 N



E. coli 10⁻¹⁵ N



Virus 10⁻¹⁹ N



Carbon atom 10⁻²⁵ N



$\underbrace{\mathbb{S}^{10^{-17}}}_{M}$

70 kg ~ 700 N



G. Ranjit, et.al., Phys. Rev. A, 93, 053801 (2016).



Optical Trapping

Limiting Noise Sources and ways to mitigate them

- 1. Thermal Noise
- 2. Photon recoil heating
- 3. Displacement sensing noise

Optical Trapping : Thermal noise

•Force sensitivity is thermal noise limited.



Brownian motion – random "kicks" given to particle due to thermal bath

$$\frac{1}{2}k\langle x^2\rangle = \frac{1}{2}k_BT$$



$$F_{\min} = \left(\frac{4kk_B Tb}{Q\omega_0}\right)^{1/2}$$

Optical Trapping : Linear Feedback cooling Go to UHV to improve F_{min} and use modulated light to damp the oscillations

- Introduce velocity dependent damping force (F_{damp}) $m\ddot{x}(t) - \gamma_g \dot{x}(t) + k x(t) = F_{damp}(t) + F_{ext}(t)$, where $F_{damp}(t) \propto -\dot{x}(t)$
- $\circ F_{damp}$ applied using additional lasers to cool the COM motion of the particle.



Apply radiation pressure force at frequency proportional to particle's motion

Cooling laser beam



Optical Trapping: Photon Recoil heating (PRH)

Flat discs have a more directional scattering into the cavity mode, reducing PRH





Optical Trapping : Photon Recoil heating (PRH)



Disc fabrication

Prof. Peter J. Pauzauskie

Lars Forberger

Greg Felsted

week ending 15 FEBRUARY 2013

Andrew A. Geraci Department of Physics, University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada 89557, USA (Received 18 July 2012; published 14 February 2013)

Levitated object optimization

SiO2 Microdisc / NAYF Microhexagon

Levitated object optimization

For best sensitivity, particles should be:

- Large & flat (to reduce photon recoil)
- High mass (to be more sensitive to GWs)
- Layered (to trap at high frequencies)

How does LSD detect gravitational waves?

end mirror changes

$$L_c = \left(1 + \frac{1}{2}h\right)l_c$$
$$X_s = \left(1 + \frac{1}{2}h\right)x_s$$

Displacement from trap min: $\Delta X = \frac{1}{2} h \left(x_S - h \right)$

Detection Principle

- x_s : position of the particle w.r.t. the input mirror
- l_c : length of the cavity
- x_{min} : trap position of the particle: fixed by the anti-node of the trapping beam

O As a GW passes, the proper length between the particle and the input mirror as well as the input mirror and the

$$l_c)$$

- Passing monochromatic GW acts as an oscillatory driving force on the sensor: $\mathbf{F}_{GW} = -\frac{\mathbf{m}\omega_{GW}^2}{2}\mathbf{h}_0 \cos\left(\omega_{GW}\mathbf{t} + \Delta\phi\right)$
- Mechanical frequency of the trapped particle is tuned to GW frequency ——> resonant detection (wide tunability! Frequency depends on the laser power)
- -> Passing GW wave changes the length of the cavity—> this shifts the trap position
- -> Particle gets displaced due to this optical force
- -> This shift can be detected using our imaging system
- Length change from gravitational wave transduced to (resonant) optical force on levitated sensor!

Detection Principle

• Minimum detectable strain due to a passing GWs:

$$h_{limit} = \frac{4}{\omega_o^2 l_c} \sqrt{\frac{k_B T_{CM} \gamma_g b}{m} \left[1 + \frac{\gamma_{sc} + R_+}{N_i \gamma_g}\right]} H(\omega_o)$$

For a 10m cavity, $h \sim 10^{-22} \sqrt{Hz}$ at high frequency (100kHz)

 $\begin{array}{l} {\rm trapping \ frequency \ } \omega_0 \\ {\rm cavity \ arm \ length \ } l_c \\ {\rm center \ of \ mass \ temperature \ of \ particle \ } T_{CM} \\ {\rm gas \ damping \ rate \ } \gamma_g = 32 P / \pi \bar{v} \rho t \\ {\rm bandwidth \ } b \\ {\rm particle \ mass \ } m \\ {\rm photon \ recoil \ heating \ rate \ } \gamma_{sc} = (V_c \lambda \omega_0 / 4 l_c) \{1 / \int dV(\epsilon - 1)\} (1 / \mathcal{F}_{disc}) \end{array}$

mean initial phonon occupation number of the CM motion $N_i = k_b T_{CM}/\hbar\omega_0$ cavity response function $H(\omega) \approx \sqrt{1 + 4\omega^2/\kappa^2}$

Current status

Trapping of Hexagons

ONR Test chamber

Optical Trapping of High-Aspect-Ratio NaYF Hexagonal Prisms for kHz-MHz Gravitational Wave Detectors

George Winstone, Zhiyuan Wang, Shelby Klomp, Greg R. Felsted, Andrew Laeuger, Chaman Gupta, Daniel Grass, Nancy Aggarwal, Jacob Sprague, Peter J. Pauzauskie, Shane L. Larson, Vicky Kalogera, and Andrew A. Geraci (LSD Collaboration)

Phys. Rev. Lett. 129, 053604 - Published 28 July 2022

Deterministic launcher for hexagons

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Trapping of Hexagons

ONR Test chamber

- Scattered light on a detector with FFT allows us to analyze motion
- Peaks in the spectra correspond to different oscillations of the particle in the trap

Frequency [Hz]

 10^{-9}

10³

Trapping and Cooling of Hexagons

Currently attempting and optimizing linear damping on hexagons

LSD phase 1 construction

Locking 1-m cavity

Get disc-like sensors into 1m cavity

LSD Network (under construction)

LSD node 2 at UC Davis

PI: Dr. Nancy Aggarwal

LSD node 1 at Northwestern PI: Prof. Andrew Geraci

Interesting review papers

Optomechanics of optically-levitated particles: A tutorial and perspective

GEORGE WINSTONE,¹, ALEXEY GRININ,¹ MISHKAT BHATTACHARYA,² ANDREW A. GERACI,^{1,*} TONGCANG LI,³ PETER J. PAUZAUSKIE,^{4,5} AND NICK VAMIVAKAS⁶

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Challenges and Opportunities of Gravitational Wave Searches above 10 kHz

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NEWS FEATURE 27 June 2024

Five new ways to catch gravitational waves - and the secrets they'll reveal

Observatories, experiments and techniques are being developed to spot ripples in space-time at frequencies that currently can't be detected.

Gravitational wave spectrum

