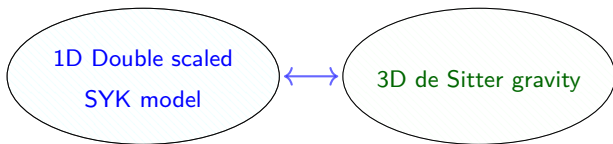


Dual perspectives on double scaled SYK

Herman Verlinde

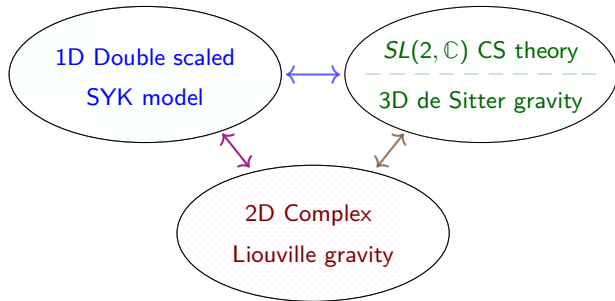
Strings 2025, NYU Abu Dhabi, 01/08/25

Based on: 2310.16991, 2402.00635, 2402.02584, 2409.11551, WIP
with D. Gaiotto, V. Narovlansky, D. Tietto, and M. Zhang

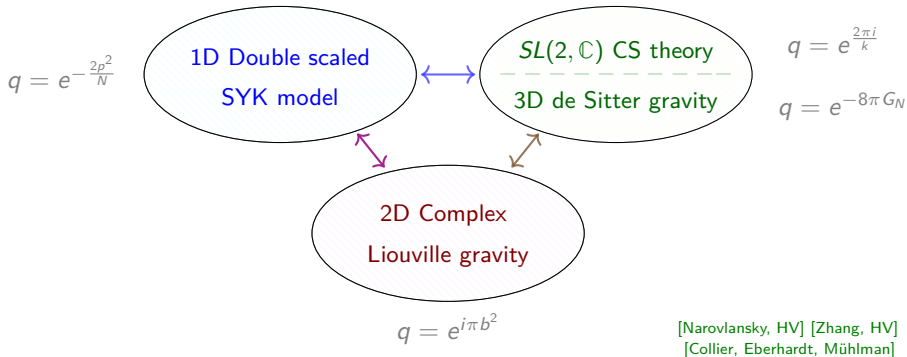


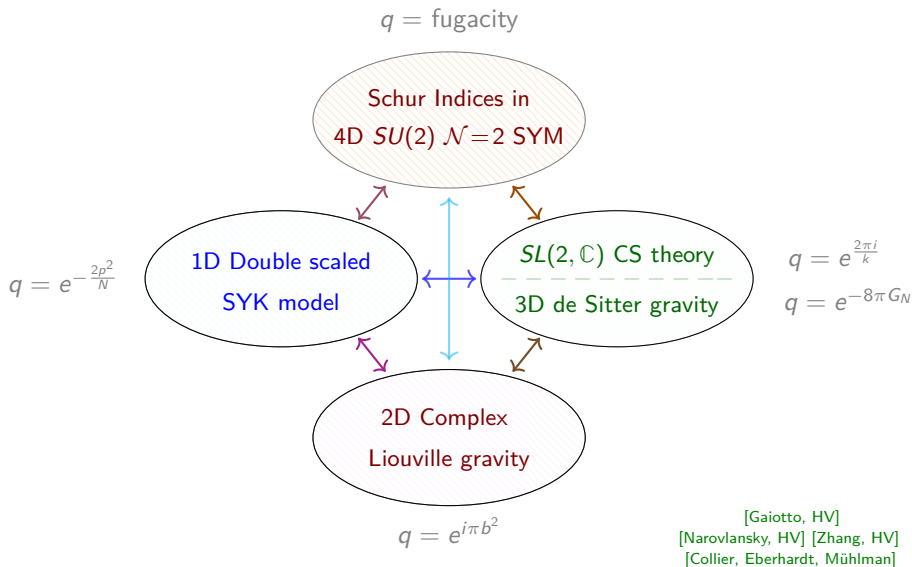
[HV] [Rahman, Susskind]
[Narovlansky, HV] [Zhang, HV]

$$q = e^{-\frac{2p^2}{N}}$$





[Narovlansky, HV] [Zhang, HV]
[Collier, Eberhardt, Mühlman]





Double scaled SYK

$$H_{\text{SYK}} = i^{p/2} \sum_{i_1 \dots i_p} J_{i_1 \dots i_p} \psi_{i_1} \dots \psi_{i_p} \quad \{\psi^i, \psi^j\} = \delta^{ij}$$

random couplings 
 N majorana variables

In the $N \rightarrow \infty$ limit with $\lambda = \frac{p^2}{N}$ finite, the bi-local collective field theory takes the form of a Liouville CFT with complex central charge $c_{\pm} = 13 \pm i(\frac{6\lambda}{\pi} - \frac{6\pi}{\lambda})$

$$S_{\text{eff}} = \frac{N}{8p^2} \int d\tau_1 d\tau_2 [\partial_{\tau_1} g \partial_{\tau_2} g - 4\mathcal{J}^2 \exp g(\tau_1, \tau_2)] \quad G(1, 2) = \frac{1}{N} \psi_i(1) \psi_i(2)$$

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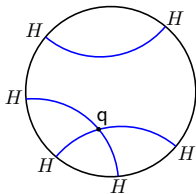
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DSSYK is exactly soluble. Its interactions are governed by simple chord rules [Berkooz et al]



$$\mathbf{H}|n\rangle = |n+1\rangle + [n]_q |n-1\rangle$$

$$[n]_q = \frac{1-q^n}{1-q} \quad q \equiv e^{-2\lambda} \equiv e^{-\frac{2p^2}{N}}$$

The Hamiltonian can be expressed in terms of q -deformed oscillators a, a^\dagger as

$$\mathbf{H} = a^\dagger + a$$

$$a^\dagger |n\rangle = |n+1\rangle,$$

$$a |n\rangle = [n]_q |n-1\rangle,$$

$$[a, a^\dagger]_q = 1.$$

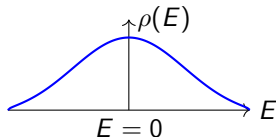
\Rightarrow The energy spectrum and partition function of DSSYK are given by

$$\mathbf{H}|\theta\rangle = \frac{\cos \theta}{\sqrt{\lambda(1-q)}} |\theta\rangle$$

$$\rho(E) = e^{S_0} \vartheta_1(2\theta, q)$$

$$\mathcal{Z}_{\text{SYK}}(q, \beta) = \text{Tr}[e^{-\beta H}] = e^{S_0} \int_0^\pi \frac{d\theta}{\pi} (q, e^{\pm 2i\theta}; q)_\infty e^{-\beta E(\theta)}$$

The energy spectrum is bounded and
has a state with maximum entropy.
DSSYK operators span a type II₁ algebra.



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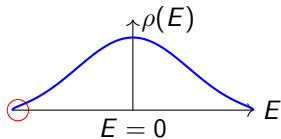
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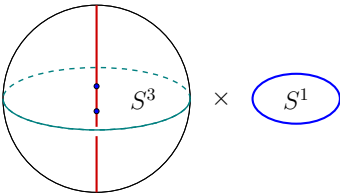
The energy spectrum is bounded and
has a state with maximum entropy.
DSSYK operators span a type II_1 algebra.



Schur correlators in 4D $\mathcal{N} = 2$ supersymmetric gauge theory

Schur correlation functions in superconformal 4D $\mathcal{N}=2$ gauge theory are defined as the twisted trace over the Hilbert space of states on S^3 , or equivalently, as the twisted partition function on $S^3 \times S^1$ decorated by line operators wrapping the S^1 :

$$\mathcal{I}(\mathfrak{q}, \beta) = \text{Tr}(-1)^{2R} \mathfrak{q}^{j_3+R} e^{-\beta W_1}$$



The diagram illustrates the geometry $S^3 \times S^1$. On the left, a sphere represents S^3 , with a vertical red line passing through its center and two blue dots on the line. To the right of the sphere is a multiplication symbol \times , followed by a blue oval representing S^1 .

Schur correlators are topological: they only depend on operator ordering and do not depend on gauge couplings. Hence they can be computed at zero coupling.¹

¹In this talk, we are interested in Schur correlators in pure $SU(2)$ SW theory. SW-theory is not superconformal, so defining the correlators takes some care.

SYK-Schur duality

By introducing a boundary, the Schur index can be generalized to a half-index. Schur-SYK duality is the statement that

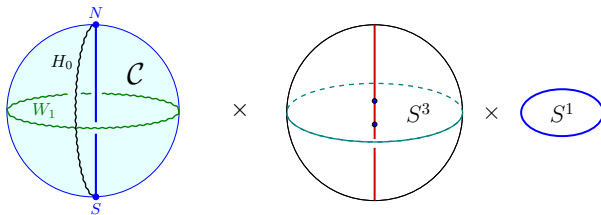
$$\mathcal{Z}_{\text{SYK}}(\mathbf{q}, \beta) = \mathcal{I}_{\text{SW}}^{1/2}(\mathbf{q}, \beta)$$

[Gaiotto, HV]

What explains this correspondence? What can we learn from it?

Can we generalize it?

SYK-Schur duality is a cousin of AGT duality. Both follow from the class \mathcal{S} description of $SU(2)$ SW theory in terms of 6D (2,0) theory compactified on the sphere \mathcal{C} with two irregular singularities.



The class \mathcal{S} description of SW theory maps Schur correlators to correlators of Wilson line operators of $SL(2, \mathbb{C})$ Chern-Simons theory defined on a 3D manifold B_3 with boundary given by the curve \mathcal{C} .

Schur quantization

Gaiotto, Tachner

Pure 2+1 de Sitter gravity can be reformulated as an $SL(2, \mathbb{C})$ CS theory via

$$S_E = \frac{i\kappa}{2\pi} \int \text{tr}(\mathcal{A}d\mathcal{A} + \frac{2}{3}\mathcal{A}^2) - \frac{i\kappa}{2\pi} \int \text{tr}(\bar{\mathcal{A}}d\bar{\mathcal{A}} + \frac{2}{3}\bar{\mathcal{A}}^3)$$

$$\mathcal{A} = \omega + ie, \quad \bar{\mathcal{A}} = \omega - ie, \quad \frac{2\pi}{\kappa} = 8\pi G_N$$

The Hilbert space of $SL(2, \mathbb{C})$ CS theory is spanned by the conformal blocks of a pair of Virasoro-Liouville CFTs with complex central charge

$$S = \frac{i\kappa}{2\pi} \int (\frac{1}{2}\partial\varphi_+\bar{\partial}\varphi_+ + 2e^{\varphi_+}) - \frac{i\kappa}{2\pi} \int (\frac{1}{2}\partial\varphi_-\bar{\partial}\varphi_- + 2e^{\varphi_-})$$

$$c_{\pm} = 13 \pm 6i(\kappa - \frac{1}{\kappa})$$

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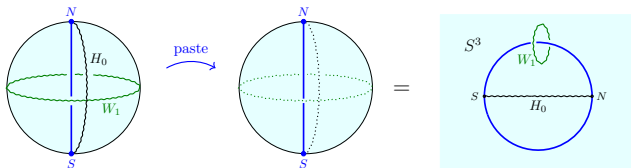
$$c_{\pm} = 13 \pm 6i(\kappa - \frac{1}{\kappa})$$

The central charges add up to 26 \implies Adding a bc-ghost system produces the worldsheet theory of a soluble string theory, the **Complex Liouville String**. Amplitudes of the \mathbb{C} LS are invariant under the mapping class group. They evaluate the inner product between states of 3D de Sitter gravity.

CLS amplitudes of a given topology Σ_g compute cosmological correlators in 3D de Sitter gravity in a cosmological spacetime with Cauchy slice Σ_g .

Collier, Eberhardt, Mühlman

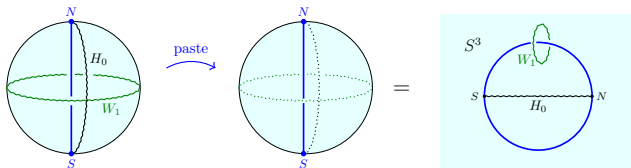
Applying this idea to the SW curve \mathcal{C} , we are led to identify \mathcal{C} with the spatial section of 3D de Sitter with a localized matter source ("observer") at the poles.



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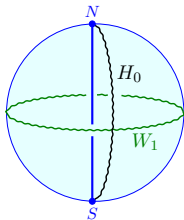
Collier, Eberhardt, Mühlman

Applying this idea to the SW curve \mathcal{C} , we are led to identify \mathcal{C} with the spatial section of 3D de Sitter with a localized matter source ("observer") at the poles.



The path-integral over the ball B_3 with boundary \mathcal{C} produces an in-state $|\Psi_{in}\rangle$. Gluing the two spheres amounts to taking an innerproduct $\langle \Psi_{out} | \Psi_{in} \rangle$.

The holonomy operator W_1 measures the deficit angle at the poles. The open line operator H_0 measures the time difference between the poles. In complex Virasoro-Liouville CFT, they correspond to closed and open Verlinde lines.



Classical phase space of $SL(2, \mathbb{C})$ CS theory on \mathcal{C}

$$F(\mathcal{A}) = d\mathcal{A} + \mathcal{A} \wedge \mathcal{A} = 0$$

$$(\partial - \mathcal{A})\Psi = 0$$

We parametrize the holonomy M around the equator and the values of the constant section Ψ at the north and south poles via

$$M = \text{P exp} \oint_A \mathcal{A} = \begin{pmatrix} e^{i\theta} & 0 \\ 0 & e^{-i\theta} \end{pmatrix} \quad \theta = \frac{\pi}{2}(1 - \alpha)$$

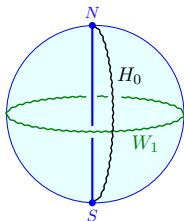
α = deficit angle

$$s = \Psi|_S = \begin{pmatrix} s_1 \\ s_2 \end{pmatrix}, \quad n = \Psi|_N = \begin{pmatrix} s_1 e^u \\ s_2 e^{-u} \end{pmatrix}$$

The gauge invariant holonomies are then given by²

$$W_1 = \text{Tr} M = 2 \cos \theta \quad H_k = n \wedge M^k s = \frac{\sinh(u + ik\theta)}{\cos \theta}$$

²Here we choose to normalize the section Ψ such that $s \wedge M s = n \wedge M n = 1$.



Classical Skein and Ptolemy relations

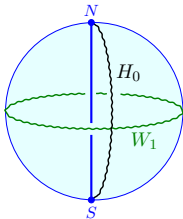
$$H_0 W_1 = H_{-1} + H_1 \quad (\text{Skein})$$

$$H_1 H_{-1} = 1 + H_0^2 \quad (\text{Ptolemy})$$

$SL(2, \mathbb{C})$ Wilson line operator in CS theory satisfy the classical skein rule

$$\begin{array}{c} W_1 \\ \text{---} \\ S \quad N \\ H_0 \end{array} = \begin{array}{c} H_1 \\ \text{---} \\ S \quad N \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} H_{-1} \\ \text{---} \\ S \quad N \end{array}$$

Quantum Skein algebra



$$H_0 W_1 = q^{1/2} H_{-1} + q^{-1/2} H_1$$

$$H_1 H_{-1} = 1 + q H_0^2$$

$$H_0 H_{\pm 1} = q^{\pm 1/2} H_{\pm 1} H_0$$

$SL(2, \mathbb{C})$ Wilson line operator in CS theory satisfy the local skein rule

$$\begin{array}{c} \diagup \diagdown \\ \diagdown \diagup \end{array} = q^{\frac{1}{2}} \begin{array}{c} \frown \\ \smile \end{array} + q^{-\frac{1}{2}} \begin{array}{c} \smile \\ \frown \end{array}$$

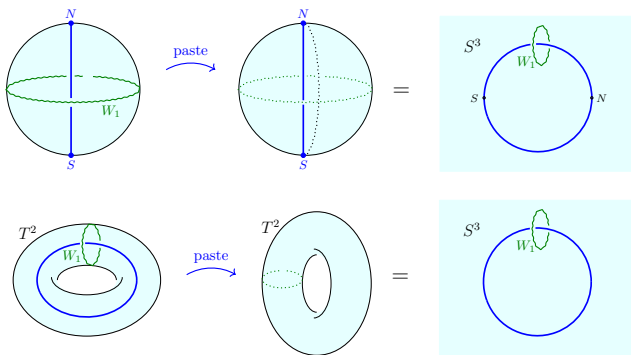
SYK-Schur duality is based on the isomorphism between the Skein algebra of line operators on \mathcal{C} and the q -deformed oscillator algebra via the identifications

$$\mathbf{H} = W_1, \quad q^{-n} = H_0, \quad \mathbf{a} = q^n H_1, \quad \mathbf{a}^\dagger = H_{-1} q^n$$

The hermiticity properties of the q -oscillators match with the $*$ -structure and Hilbert space representation of the Skein algebra that follows from Schur quantization of SW theory.

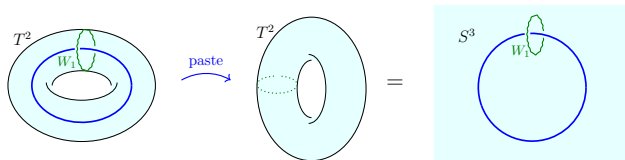
\Rightarrow Note that the vacuum condition $\mathbf{a}|\text{vac}\rangle = 0$ implies that classically $n = Ms$. \Leftarrow

Let us compute the DSSYK partition function from the 3D gravity side! This can be done via the following relatively standard surgery argument:



In general, we should allow for torus bundles with a non-trivial framing. These can be included by gluing the tori together via a non-trivial Dehn twist.

We associate wavefunctions $|\Psi_A\rangle$ and $|\Psi_B\rangle$ to the two tori

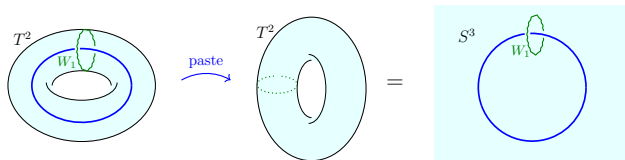


For $|\Psi_A\rangle$ we take a weighted superposition of W_1 eigenstates

$$|\Psi_A(\beta)\rangle = \int_{\gamma} dp e^{-\beta \mu_b(p)} |\Psi_A(p)\rangle \quad \mu_b(p) = 2 \cos(2\pi b p)$$

representing the state for which the blue circle has total geodesic length β .

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The innerproduct can be evaluated in terms of \mathbb{C} LCFT modular S and T matrix:

$$\mathcal{Z}_n(\beta) = \langle \Psi_B(\beta) | \hat{T}^n | \Psi_A(\mathbb{1}) \rangle = \int_{\gamma} dp e^{-\beta\mu_b(p)} (T_p)^n S_{\mathbb{1}p}$$

$$S_{\mathbb{1}p} = \sin(\pi b p) \sin(\pi b^{-1} p) \quad T_p = e^{2\pi i p^2}$$

The special cases $n = 0, 2$ reproduce the $\mathbb{C}\text{LS}$ and SYK partition functions

$$\mathcal{Z}_0(0) = c_0 \int_0^\pi d\theta \sin \theta \sinh\left(\frac{2\pi\theta}{\lambda}\right) = \mathcal{Z}_{\mathbb{C}\text{LS}}(0)$$

$$\mathcal{Z}_2(0) = c_2 \int_0^\infty d\theta e^{-\frac{2}{\lambda}\theta^2} \sin \theta \sinh\left(\frac{2\pi\theta}{\lambda}\right) = \mathcal{Z}_{\text{SYK}}(0)$$

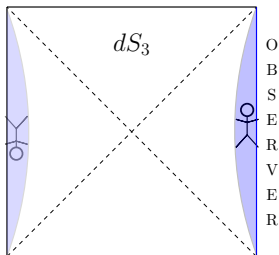
Introducing $\psi = \pi - 2\theta$ and taking the semi-classical limit, we can write

$$\mathcal{Z}_{\mathbb{C}\text{LS}}(0) = \int d\psi e^{S_{\mathbb{C}\text{LS}}(\psi)}, \quad S_{\mathbb{C}\text{LS}} = S_0 - \frac{2\pi\psi}{\lambda}$$

$$\mathcal{Z}_{\text{SYK}}(0) = \int d\psi e^{S_{\text{SYK}}(\psi)}, \quad S_{\text{SYK}} = S_0 - \frac{2\psi^2}{\lambda}$$

Can we interpret these formulas from the gravity side?

The Schwarzschild-de Sitter spacetime of an observer with energy E



$$ds^2 = (1 - \rho^2) d\tau^2 + \frac{d\rho^2}{1 - \rho^2} + \rho^2 d\varphi^2$$

$$\varphi \simeq \varphi + 2\pi - \psi \quad ; \quad \tau \simeq \tau + 2\pi$$

$$2\pi - \psi = 2\pi \sqrt{1 - 8G_N E}$$

The GH entropy S_{GH} and observer energy E depend on the deficit angle via

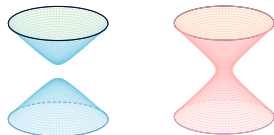
$$S_{\text{GH}} = \frac{2\pi - \psi}{4G_N} \quad ; \quad \beta_{\text{dS}} E = \frac{1}{16\pi G_N} (4\pi\psi - \psi^2)$$

Comparing with the formulas on the previous slide, we see that, after equating $\lambda = 8\pi G_N$ and modulo the overall constant shift by S_0 , the entropies are related via

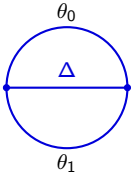
$$S_{\text{CLS}}(\psi) = S_{\text{GH}}(\psi) = S_{\text{SYK}}(\psi) - \beta_{\text{dS}} E(\psi)$$

Things I did not have time to talk about:

- q -Schwarzian, Schur TFT
- $\mathbb{CLS} = \text{Schur} \times \text{WP}$
- dS isometries, $SL(2)_q$
- dS two-point function
- Cosmological correlators
- Possible generalisations
- OTOCs, gravitational interactions
- dS interpretation of the fake disk
- Inflation and dark energy in DSSYK
- Topological minimal string realization of DSSYK



DSSYK 2pt-function = Zamolodchikov's formula = Schur index of trinion SCFT

$$\mathcal{A}_3(\Delta, \theta_1, \theta_2) = \frac{\vartheta_1(b^2 \Delta, q) \prod_i \vartheta_1(2\theta_i, q)}{\vartheta_1(b^2 \Delta \pm \theta_1 \pm \theta_2, q)} = \text{Diagram}$$


More general n -point functions take the form

$$\mathcal{A}_{1,\dots,n} = \sum_{\Gamma} \frac{1}{|\text{Aut}(\Gamma)|} \prod_e \int dp_e p_e \prod_v \mathcal{A}_{\text{TFT}}^{(b)}(p_v) \mathcal{V}_{g_v, n_v}^{(b)}(p_v)$$

Collier et al

