Connecting the Dots: Engineering Quantum States for Technology and Fundamental Physics

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UNSW Sydney Mar. 25th 2025

My Background



Agriculture

Wine making





Construction













Quantum Matter Group

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Research Expertise

- Semiconductor
 - Opto-electronics, -phononics
 - Ultrafast dynamics
- Single & Coupled Quantum Dots
- 2D materials & atomic-emitters Research Interests
- Quantum Materials & Structures
- Coupled quantum systems
- Quantum(-enhanced) Sensing
- Fundamental-Applied Physics

Selected Projects & Programs

- Quantum-enhanced Motion sensing using spins in quantum dots (PI, UCM-NRL)
- Advanced Quantum Sensing for Geoenvironments
- Hands-on Quantum Materials Lab (PI),
 Instrumentation grant
- NRT-CONDESA (CoPI, UCM-LLNL), Lead-Core 3
- VISION-PREM (PI/Director, UCM-IMOD-stc) Venture for Innovation in Self-assembly and Integration of Optoelectronic Nanostructures
- Quantum workforce development with experiential learning





Today's program

- Introduction
 - UC Merced
 - The Quantum Matter Group (QMG) Lab
- Basics of quantum matter:
 - Focus on: Quantum Dots & Quantum Dot Molecules
- Examples of how to use quantum emitters
 - Quantum-enhanced Motion Sensing
 - (Taming) Phonons
 - Outlook

UC Merced



UC Merced – Latest Development



UC Merced has earned the prestigious R1 Carnegie research classification within the university's first 20 years.

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A Peak into the (old) QMG lab

Atomic-Force & Confocal Microscopy





Opto-mechanics







Lasers



Triple Raman Spectrometer

2020-Lab on the Move





Biomedical Sciences & Physics





... arrived: 2025 The Quantum Matter Group in the lab



Bruce, Edbertho, Hayley, Derrick, Muzzakkir, Joe, Michael

Related Projects & Programs

Quantum-enhanced motion sensing using entangled spins in quantum dots (UCM, NRL, (VT); DTRA)





Semiconductor quantum emitters for probing gravitational signatures at the quantum scale (UCM, CSUF, UWA, UNSW, UCF, NETL)

Gravitational Aharonov-Bohm effect, Chiao, et al., Phys. Rev D 109, 064073 (2024) https://doi.org/10.1103/PhysRevD.109.064073

Energy-level shift of quantum systems via the scalar electric Aharonov-Bohm effect, Chiao, et al., Phys. Rev A 107, 042209 (2023). https://doi.org/10.1103/PhysRevA.107.042209



National Research & Training Grant (NRT)

(UCM, LLNL; NSF)

Thrust 3: Advanced Quantum Sensing for Geoenvironments.

Quantum-enhanced inertial sensing:

- Mass density distributions
- Motion (water flows)
- Magnetic properties of soil (clays)



Venture for Innovation in Self-assembly and Integration of Optoelectronic Nanostructures (UCM, IMOD-STC; NSF)

- RT-1: Quantum Dot Meta-Structures
- RT-2: Atomic Emitters in 2D
- RT-3: Composite Optoelectronic Structures





Coupled quantum dots basics

From Quantum Dots to dot molecules

Working Scale



What's Quantum?

Particle/Wave in a box



Particles can exist in classically forbidden regions, tunnel, be in two or more places at once,...

(*) If walls are infinitely high

'Artificial' Quantum Matter







Spatial confinement yields a discrete atomic energy level structure Semiconductor





10-20 nm wide2-10 nm high

Quantum Dots ↔ Artificial Atoms

Atoms \rightarrow Molecules \rightarrow Crystals \rightarrow Artificial Atoms (Dots) \rightarrow Artificial Molecules \rightarrow ...

QD Growth

Molecular Beam Epitaxy of 'self-assembled' InAs QDs







MBE at the Naval Research Lab

Randomly nucleated QDs



- 10-20 nm wide
- 2-10 nm high

Vertically stacked QDs



• Strain from first QD nucleates a second

Why Stack Quantum Dots?



Quantum technology and quantum-enhanced technology

FUNCTIONALITY



D. Nash, T. Darville, the conversation.com (2020)



B. Yirka, phys.org (2020)

Coupled dots.... more control.... upscaling.... improved tools..



Quantum Dot Molecule Samples





Schottky diode device structure

Scheibner, et al., PRB 75, 245318 (07)

Optical spectroscopy



° ≡ | X

Electron-hole pair (Exciton)

•Photon:

- Absorbed by QD
 - \Rightarrow Promotes electron into conduction band
- Emitted by QD

 \Rightarrow recombination of electron-hole pair

Electric Field



- Add/subtract charges AND Spins
- Quantum Confined Stark Effect (shifts the optical transition energy)

Coupled Quantum Dots





Electric Field

Stinaff, Scheibner *et al.* Science (06), Bracker, Scheibner et al APL (06), Scheibner et al. PRL (07),...

... controllable interactions between two dots ...



Tunneling





PL-Energy (hv)

Electric Field

Tunneling and Spin



...electrically tunable spin-spin interaction...

Scheibner, et al., PRB 75, 245318 (07)

Coupled Quantum Dot Tunability



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- wave function overlap
- transition energies
- energy level

-

- state symmetry

... versatile control over quantum states...

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rel. Electric Field [kV/cm]



Two 0-dimensional solid-state systems harbor a world of opportunities!

Scheibner, et al., Nature Phys. (08)

Examples

Quantum-enhanced motion sensing



GraSP: Gravity-Spin-Probe

Dots vs. Gravity

A modern take an a Classical Experiment



Cavendish Torsion Balance Source: Wki



<u>**Gra**vity-</u>Spin-Probe

Cavendish Balance	GraSP
Two masses	Two spins & mass
Spatial separation	
Rigid connection	Entanglement
Angle resolution	Coherence
Torsion	Strain
Sensed in one way	Sensed in multiple ways



Applying strain affects all these aspects

Mechanical Micro-Resonators



SEM image of photonic crystal membrane

SEM image of tuning fork structures

QD-mechanical coupling in a membrane



Hole-Spin Coupling to Strain/Motion

Optically drive mechanical resonance and measure time-dependent changes in optical properties

InAs QD in tuning fork





• ±25% change in hole spin splitting

- No clear change in electron spin
- Hole spin transitions ~1000 times sharper than optical
- Coupling ~17 THz/strain \rightarrow g₀ ~ 2kHz
- With improved collection, estimate sensitivity of 2 \times 10⁻¹¹ strain/Hz^½ for single QD

QD emission synchronized to vibration in 6T magnetic field



S. Carter, et al., PRL 21, 246801 (2019)

Entangled Spins coupled to Strain/Motion



Entangled Spins coupled to Strain/Motion



- Singlet shifts 2.5 times more than the triplets
- 30 times higher spin-strain coupling than single hole spin

 $G_{\rm ex} \sim 340 \ {\rm THz/strain}$

With *optimal collection and* $T_2 = 1 \ \mu s$, expect *ac* strain sensitivity of ~10⁻¹² strain/Hz^{1/2}

Examples

Taming phonons

Linewidths and Tunneling



P. Kumar, C. Jennings, et al., PRB 102, 085423 (2020)

Engineering Electron-Phonon Coupling

Excitonic transition linewidth

- Resonant enhancement of linewidth at tunnel resonances
- Pronounced at tunnel resonances of ~1 meV

Model of phonon coupling between exciton states

- Deformation potential
- Piezoelectric interactions
- Piezoelectric interactions dominate for phonon energies in the range of ~1meV.







Far From Anticrossing, 1.10 V

Do enhanced piezoelectric interactions enable higher motion sensitivity or motion control?

P. Kumar, C. Jennings, et al., PRB 102, 085423 (2020)

What about higher energy phonons?



 $|X_0\rangle$ - Direct exciton (SQD-like)

 $|iX_n\rangle$ - Indirect exciton

 $|X_0,\Omega\rangle$ - (optical) Polaron

Requires excited state spectroscopy

QDM Excited States



Polaron Continuum (Ω_k : 28 – 37 meV)

> M. Grundmann et al., PRB 52, 16 (1995)

Direct Excitons

M. Kerfoot et al., Nature Communications, 5:3299 (2014)

Interference



Formation of a Molecular Polaron

M. Kerfoot et al., Nature Communications, 5:3299 (2014)

Fano Effect



A. Govorov, Ohio Univ.

Verification of Fano Effect



Wide variety of transparency windows

M. Kerfoot et al., Nature Communications, 5:3299 (2014)

Non-Linearity



Transparency tunable by bias, energy & power

M. Kerfoot et al., Nature Communications, 5:3299 (2014)

Outlook

New Application Fields, Challenges, and Opportunities

Harnessing Acoustic Phonons



Modify the density of states via **phonon** cavities:



Combine CQD and Phonon Cavity Designs

Density of states is significantly lower for acoustic phonons

High power? Maybe, but leads to broadening and heating

M. Hanif et al., Adv. Funct. Mater., 34, 2404299 (2024)

Electrical Scalar Aharonov-Bohm Effect

$$H = H_0 + eV(t).$$

$$V(t) = V_0 \cos \Omega t$$

$$i\hbar \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial t} = H\psi = [H_0 + eV(t)]\psi$$

$$\psi(\mathbf{x}, t) = X(\mathbf{x})T(t).$$

$$-eV + i\hbar \frac{d \ln T}{dt} = E \quad \text{and} \quad H_0 X = EX.$$

$$T(t) = \exp\left(-\frac{i}{\hbar}E_i t - i\alpha \sin \Omega t\right) = \exp\left(-\frac{i}{\hbar}E_i t - i\varphi(t)\right)$$

$$\alpha = \frac{eV_0}{\hbar\Omega}$$

$$\exp[-i\varphi(t)] = \exp(-i\alpha \sin \Omega t) = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} (-1)^n J_n(\alpha) \exp(in\Omega t)$$

$$\psi_i(\mathbf{r}, t) = \Psi_i(\mathbf{r}) \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} (-1)^n J_n(\alpha) \exp\left(-\frac{i(E_i - n\hbar\Omega)t}{\hbar}\right)$$

 $n = -\infty$





Temporally Periodic Potential ⇒ Jacobi-Anger Side band formation

Coupled Dots for SABE



Coupled Quantum Dots Provide:

- Multitude of states with different properties (charge, dipole moment, spin, etc.)
- Ability to coherently couple/hybridize these states
- Ability to engineer the wave functions and
 - Stabilize states against noise and decoherence
 - control the interactions
- Ability to generate coherent quantum interferences between different species
 - Different charge states
 - Opto-electronic states and phonons and/or mechanical resonator modes



Electrical Scalar Aharonov-Bohm Effect



R. Y. Chiao et al., PRA, 107, 042209 (2023)

Need:

Electric Potential Modulation without Electric Field modulation



Coupled Microwave Cavities by Michael Tobar's group @ UWA

Incorporate CQDs with cavity system

M. T. Hazton et al., Phys. Rev. Appl., 23, 024058 (2024)

Gravitational Scalar Aharonov-Bohm Effect



Pure potential variation obtained by nearly circular orbit: Perpetual free fall with potential varying as:

$$\Phi_g(t) = -\frac{GM}{r(t)}$$

$$r(t) = \frac{r_p + r_a}{2} + \frac{r_p - r_a}{2}\cos(\Omega t) \equiv A + B\cos(\Omega t)$$

$$\Phi_g(t) \approx -\frac{GM}{A} \left[1 - \frac{B}{A} \cos(\Omega t) \right]$$

Mass of quantum system is critical

$$i\hbar \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial t} = H\psi = (H_0 + m\Phi_g(t))\psi$$

$$-m\Phi_g + i\hbar \frac{1}{T}\frac{dT}{dt} = \frac{1}{X}H_0X$$

$$\begin{split} \psi_{i}(\mathbf{r},t) \\ &= \Psi_{i}(\mathbf{r}) \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} (-1)^{n} J_{n}(\alpha) \exp\left(in\Omega t\right) \exp\left(-\frac{i(E_{i} + \frac{GmM}{A})t}{\hbar}\right) \\ &= \Psi_{i}(\mathbf{r}) \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} (-1)^{n} J_{n}(\alpha) \exp\left(-\frac{i(E_{i} + \frac{GmM}{A} - n\hbar\Omega)t}{\hbar}\right). \\ & I_{i}(\mathbf{r}) = E_{i} + \frac{GmM}{A} \pm n\hbar\Omega \equiv \tilde{E}_{i} \pm n\hbar\Omega, \\ & I_{i}(\mathbf{r}) = \frac{I_{i}}{\hbar\Omega A^{2}} \quad \text{with } \mathbf{n}_{\max} \approx \alpha \end{split}$$

R. Y. Chiao et al., PRD, 109, 064073 (2024)

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ONVERGENCE OF NANO-ENGINEERED DEVICES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABLE APPLICATIONS National Research & Training Grant (NRT)

(UCM, LLNL; NSF)

Thrust 3: Advanced Quantum Sensing for Geoenvironments.

Quantum-enhanced inertial sensing:

- Mass density distributions
- Motion (water flows)
- Magnetic properties of soil (clays)



-VISION-

Venture for Innovation in Self-assembly and Integration of Optoelectronic Nanostructures

NSF Award-#: 2425230

A (Seed) Partnership for Research & Education in Materials (PREM) (UCM, IMOD-STC; NSF)

- RT-1: Quantum Dot Meta-Structures
- RT-2: Atomic Emitters in 2D
- RT-3: Composite Optoelectronic Structures















VISION-PREM

Venture for Innovation in Self-assembly and Integration of Optoelectronic Nanostructures (VISION)

A Seed Partnership for Research & Education in Materials UC Merced – IMOD-STC

Materials and Biomaterials Science & Engineering, Physics, Chemistry, Mechanical Engineering, Human Biology



VISION Leads

PI: Michael Scheibner

Leads (a) UCM Sayantani Ghosh (Co-PI, EWT-Lead) Hui Cai (Co-PI, RT-3 Lead, UG-lead) Tao Ye (RT-1 Lead, Grad-Lead) Mehmet Baykara (RT-2 Lead) Leads (a) IMOD David Ginger (Co-PI) Lisa Neshyba (Co-PI)















<u>Staff @ IMOD</u> Denise Bale

<u>Staff @ UCM</u> Korynn Maravilla



Research Topics

RT-1: Quantum Dot Meta-Structures

1.1: Molecular templated nano-assemblies of colloidal quantum dots

1.2: Structural and optoelectronic characterization1.3: Single and Cooperative Photon Emitters

RT-2: 2D-hosted atom-like structures

2.1: Optoelectronic properties of atoms and molecules in 2D materials

2.2: Strain and defect-engineered atom-like emitters in 2D materials

RT-3: Composite Optoelectronic Structures

3.1: Hierarchical integration of solid-state atomistic assemblies

3.2: Light-matter interaction by design through spatial arrangement and photonic integration









DNA-templated CQDs



work in progress...

Partnership & Collaboration

Condensed Matter Quantum Systems for

- Fundamental Physics
- Life- & Environmental Systems
 - Natural Resources Localization & Tracking
 - Structural Health Monitoring ٠
 - Geological Structure and Process Monitoring ٠
 - Medical Imaging and Diagnostics ٠
 - ۲ Energy
- Looking for partners for
 - Materials & Nanofabrication
 - Additive manufacturing & Prototyping
 - Quantum programming
 - Reciprocal, Experiential Education & Workforce Development Pathways





Path 3

Quantum Molecular Energy **Dispersion Engineering**

- Generate zero-dispersion points
- Quantum state stabilization
- Patent pending



- Fano-type Quantum interference
- **Molecular Polaron**
- Kerfoot et al., Nat. Com. (2014)
- Patent: US 9,705,081 B2



- Geometrical arrangement & controlled coupling
- C.-Y. Lai, M. Di Ventra, M. Scheibner, C.-C. Chien, EPL (2018)
- P. Dugar, M. Scheibner, & C.-C. Chien, PRA (2020)
- Y. He, C.C. Chien PLA (2023)







Summary

- Coupled dots/quantum emitters provide a rich basis for fundamental physics and functionalization.
- Enable control over charge, spin-spin, and other interactions
- Make phonons behave non-dissipative and coherent, enabling optophononics applications and fundamental physics tests.
- Promising system for sensing—strain, motion, acceleration, gravity. Couple mechanical motion to quantum mechanical spin states.

Acknowledgements

Collaborators

<u>NRL:</u> Allan Bracker, Dan Gammon, Sam Carter <u>Ohio University</u>: Alexander Govorov, Eric Stinaff

AFRL: Stefan Badescu

<u>UCM:</u> Sayantani Ghosh, Tao Ye, Chih-Chun-Chien Ray Chiao, Jay Sharping, & many more <u>CSU Fresno:</u> Doug Singleton, Nathan Inan <u>IMOD:</u> David Ginger, Lisa Neshyba, & many more <u>UCF:</u> Michael Leuenberger <u>NETL:</u> Hari Paudel <u>UNSW:</u> Stephen Bremner <u>UWA:</u> Michael Tobar **Financial Support**



AFOSR



DoD HBCU/MI









Quantum Matter Group



Thank you for your attention!





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Spinuzzi



Muzzakkir Amin



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