# Debugging

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**SWPP Practice Session** 

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# Typical Bugfix Process

- Notice an error
- Narrow down the line that causes the error
  - If the program crashes, look for the assertion or invalid pointer
  - If the program yields wrong output, look for the output variable
- Traceback to the line that started to go wrong

# Narrowing Down the Line

- How do you locate the exact line that crashes?
  - Guess the location
  - Insert some std::cout or std::cerr all over the code
  - Rebuild
  - Look for the last printed message
  - Repeat until you actually pinpoint the location

## Narrowing Down the Line

- This is horribly inefficient!
  - Taking a wild guess in a large codebase purely depends on luck
  - Rebuilding a large codebase may take minutes or even hours
  - And you have to repeat it until you actually find the bug
- Locating a single bug may already take hours or days

#### Traceback

- Most of the errors cannot be fixed locally
  - It is likely that the code that 'causes' the error is not a bug
  - The code that 'leads to' the error is the real verdict
  - But these two are usually far away from each other...
- You have to locate the code that first went wrong
  - Narrow down, take a step back, narrow down, again and again

## Debugger to the Rescue

- Debugger can control the execution of your program
  - Line by line
  - In and out of function
  - Pause on assertion, throw, catch, breakpoint

## Debugger to the Rescue

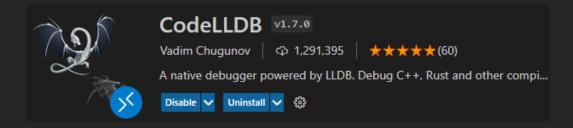
- Debugger can expose the execution context of your program
  - Call stack
  - Local/global variables and values

# Using the Debugger

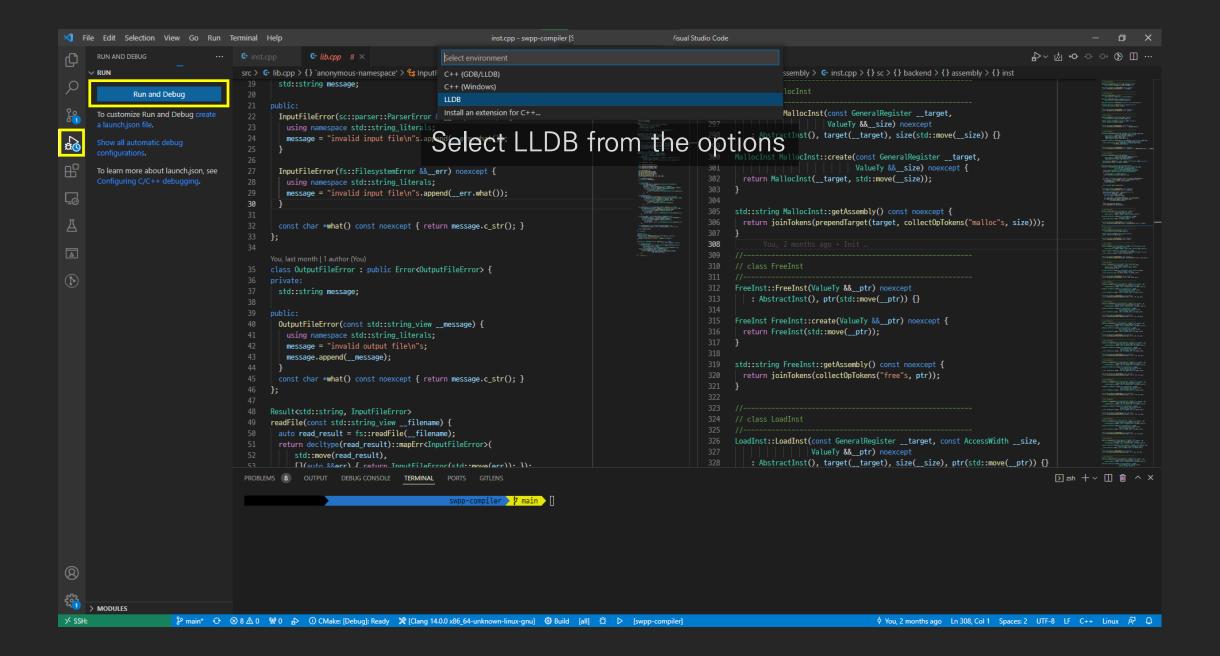
- LLDB: LLVM debugger
  - You have to enable LLDB project when building the LLVM
  - Already included if you built the LLVM using class repo script
- You must build your program with clang
- You must build your program in debug mode

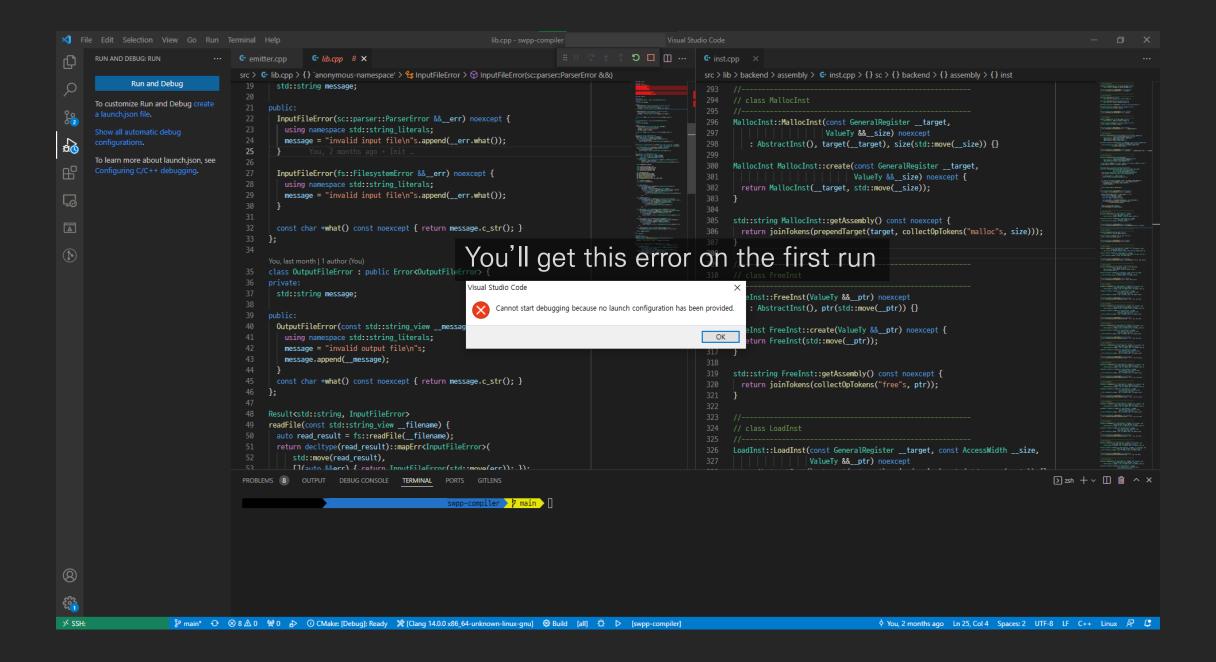
# Using the Debugger

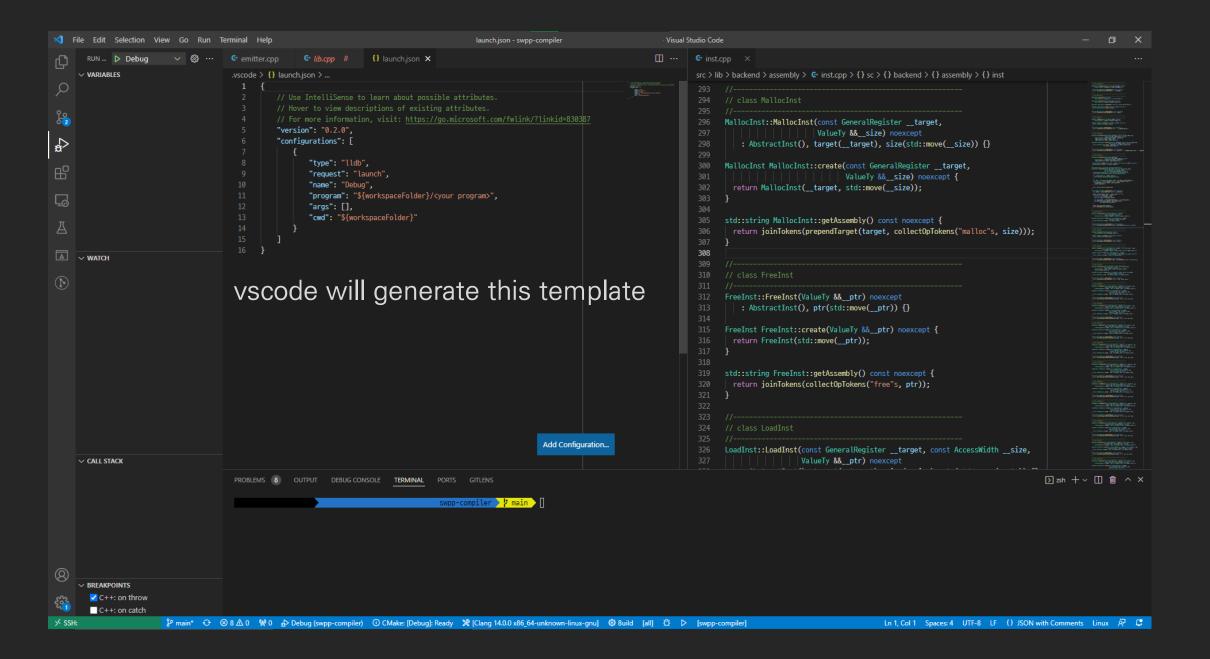
- We'll use vscode extension for convenience
  - CodeLLDB

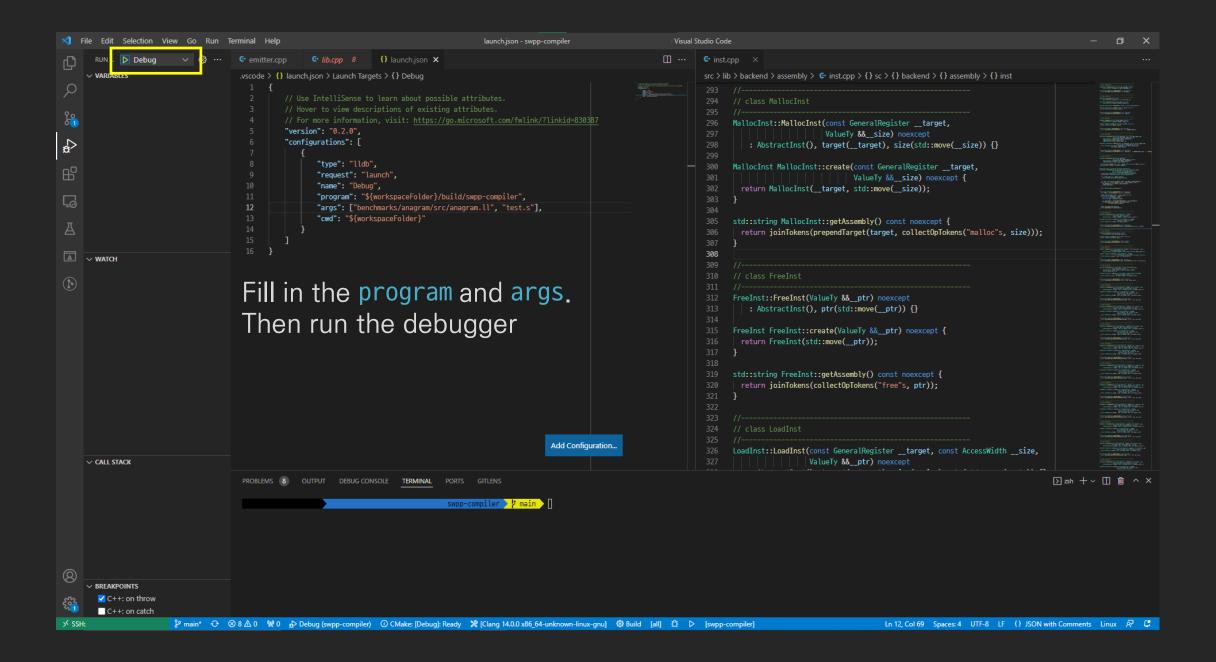


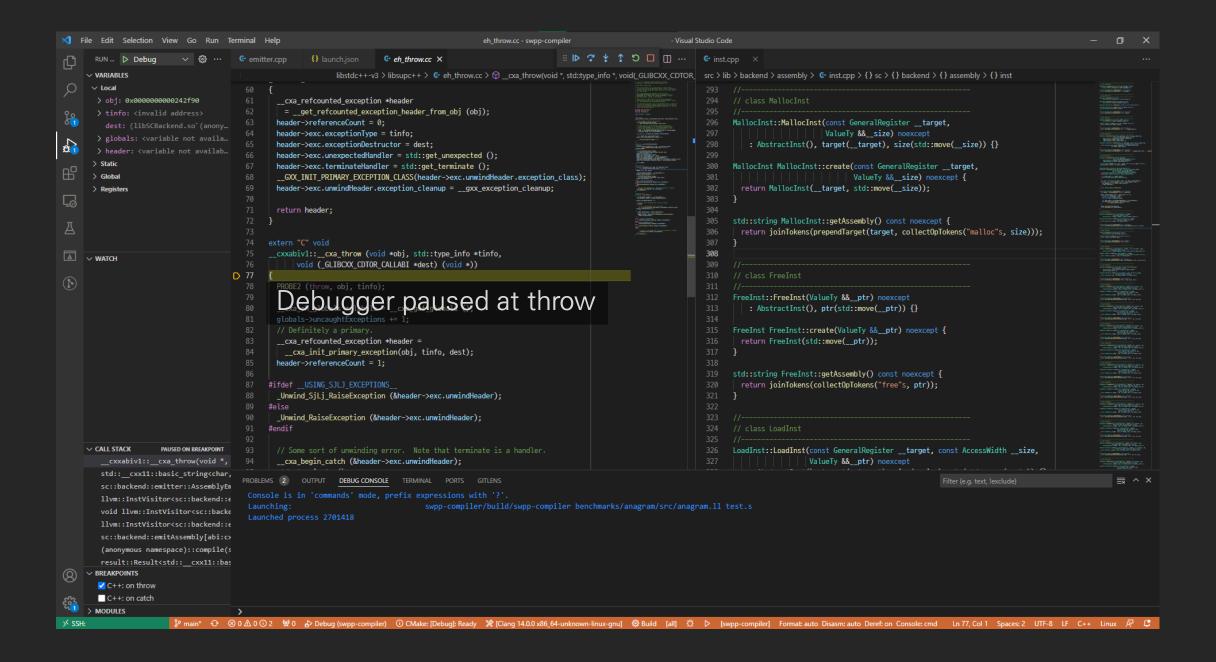
- LLDB directory should be added to your PATH
  - What is PATH?

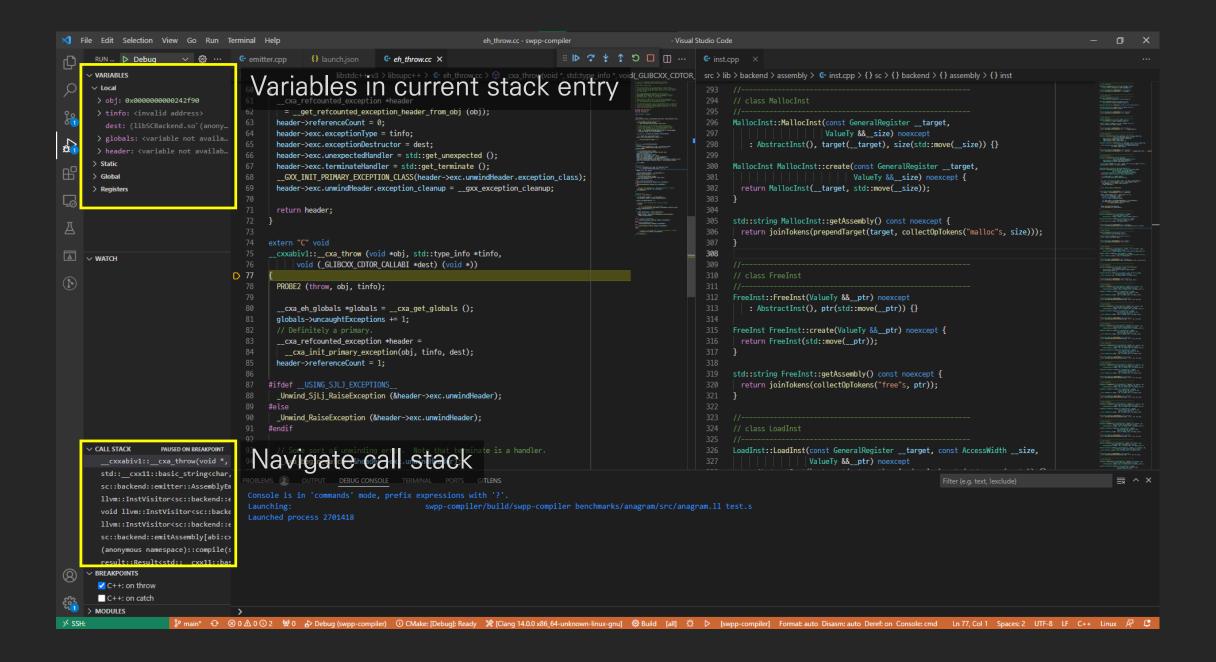


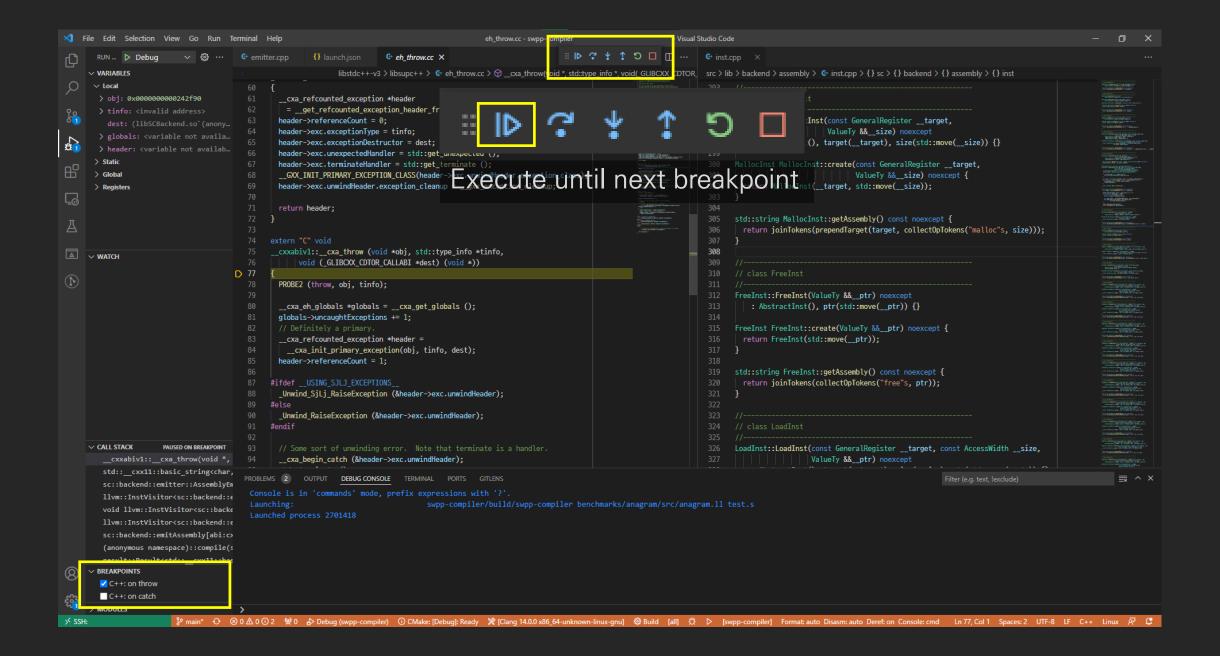


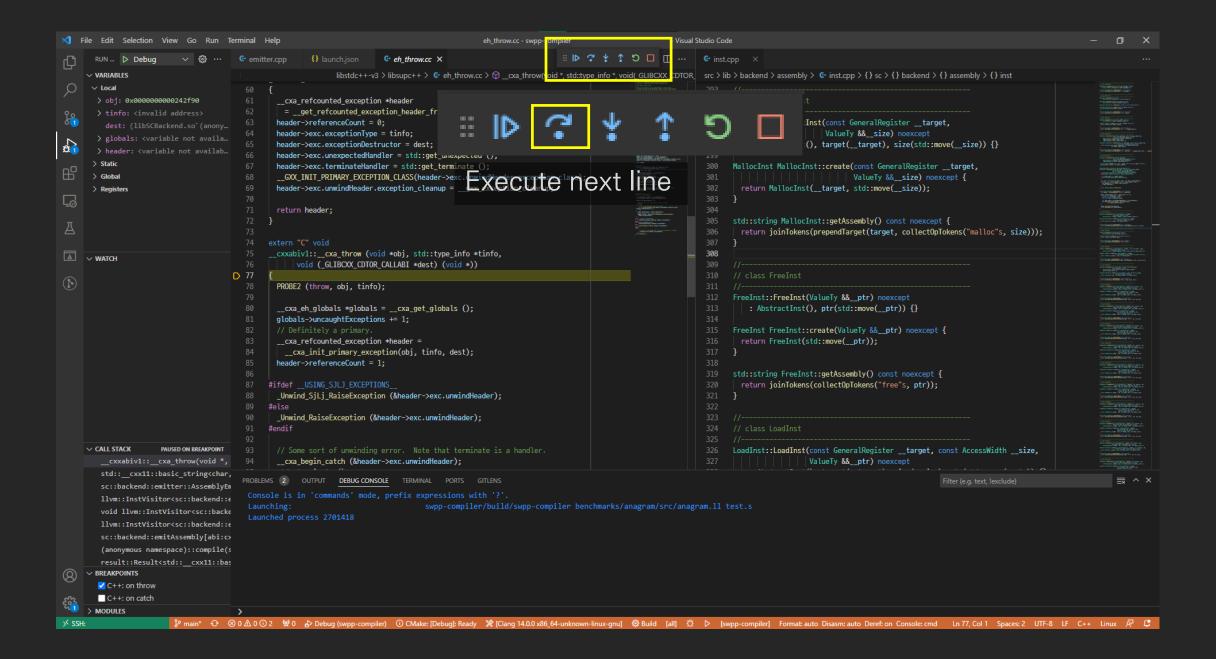


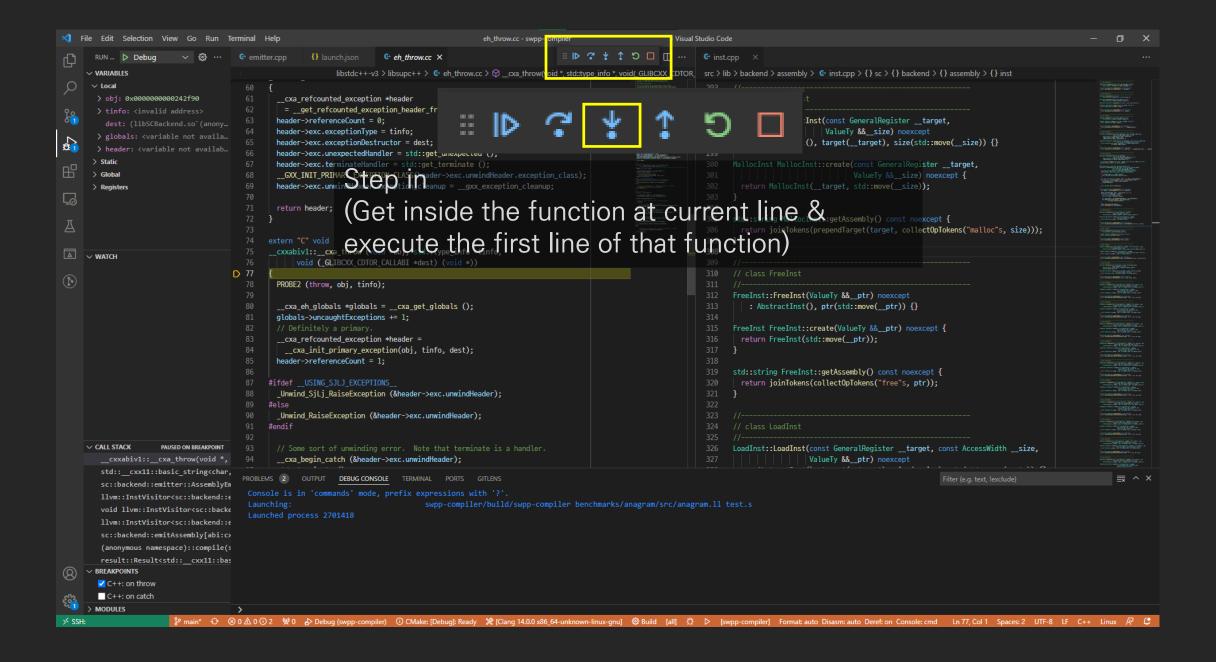


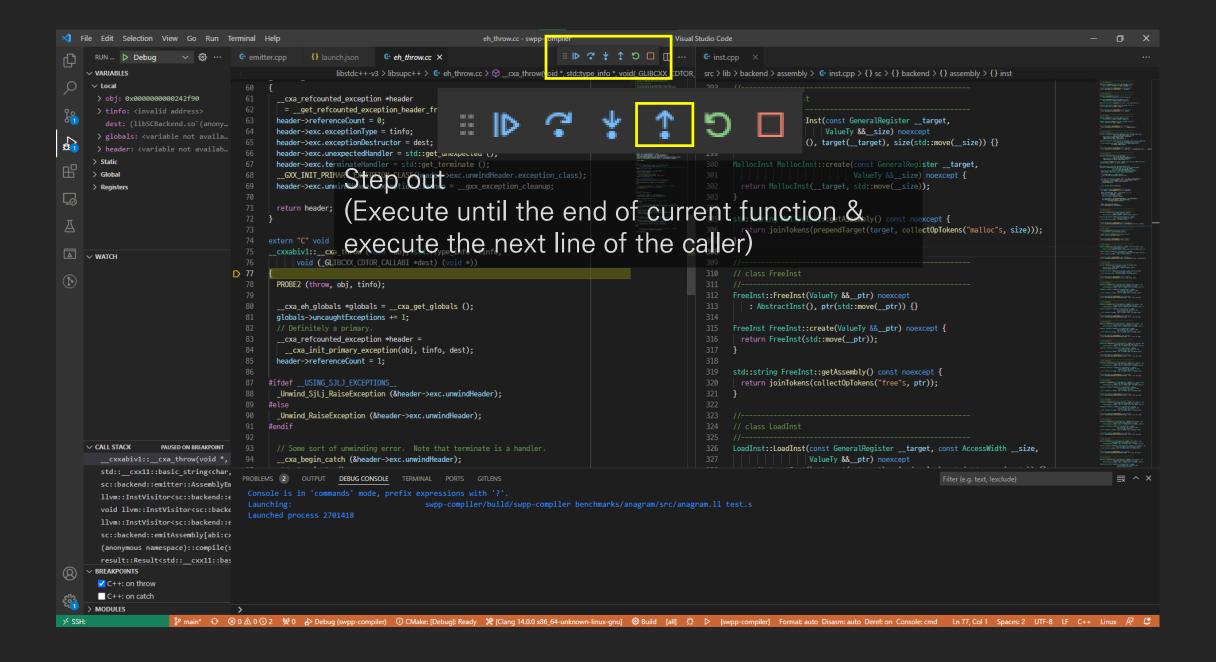


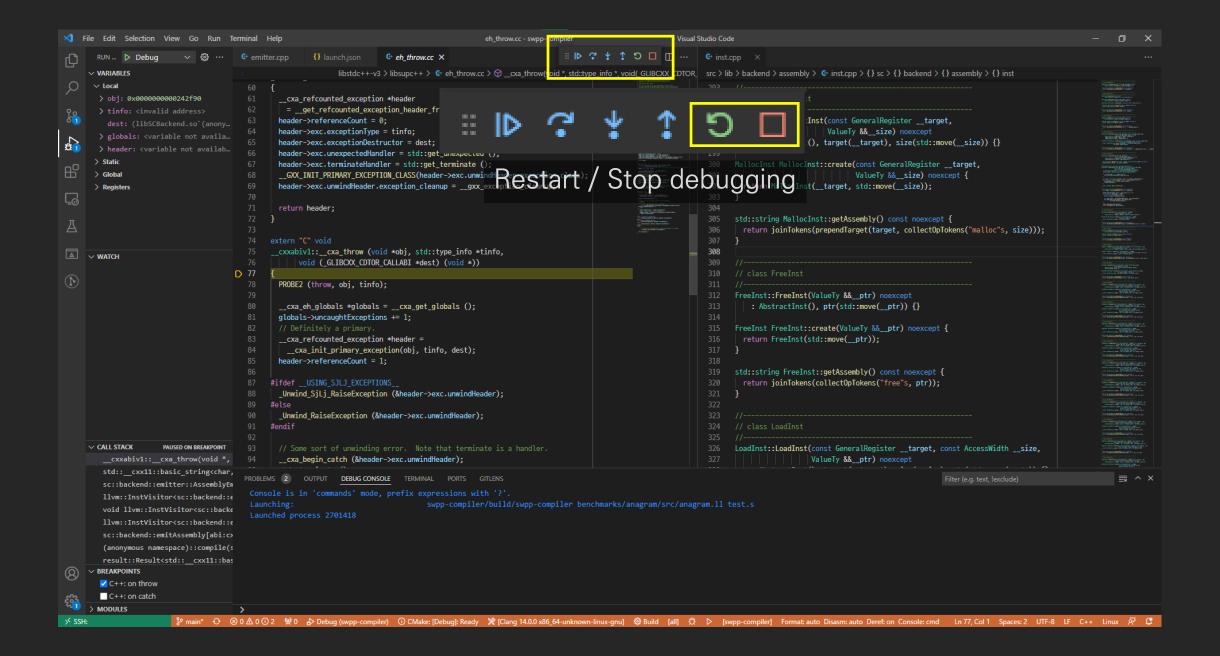












# Narrowing Down with Debugger

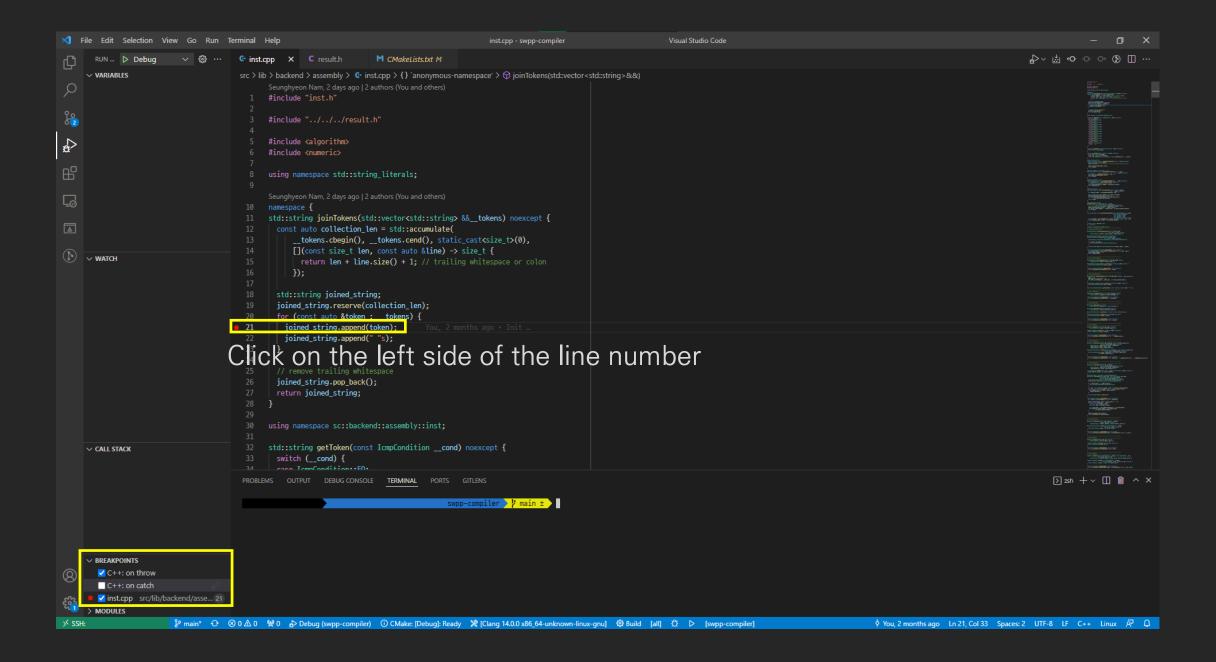
- How do you locate the exact line that crashes?
  - Debugger pinpoints (automatically pauses on) the crash site
  - No need to insert new code, rebuild, etc.

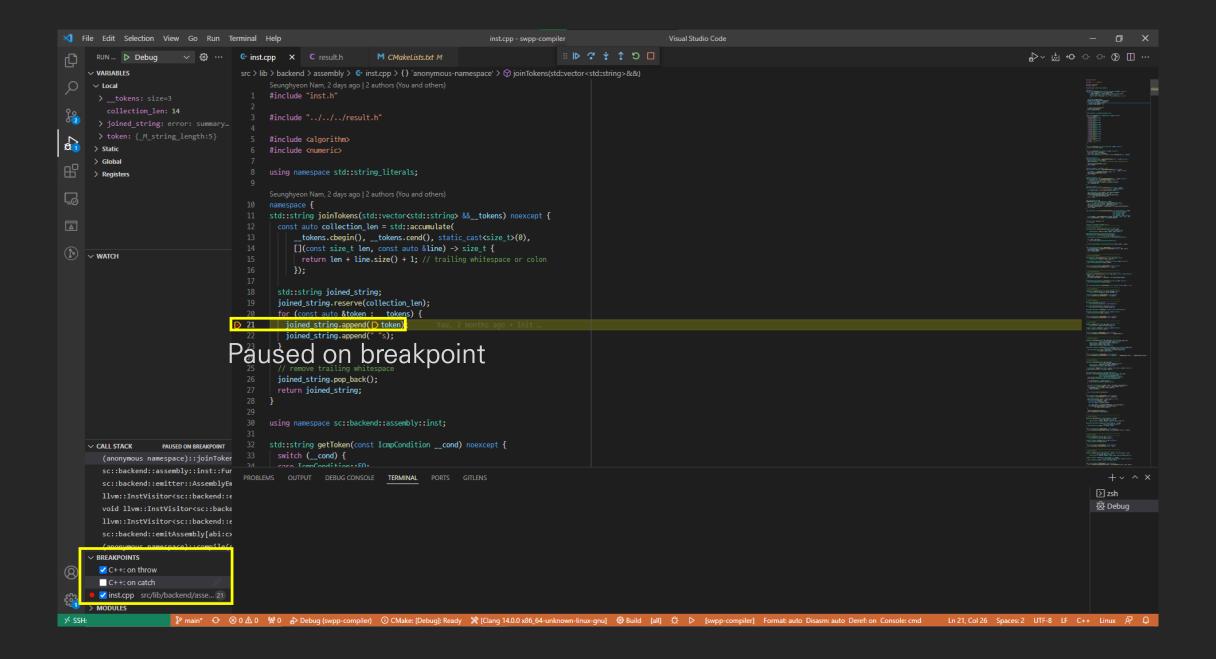
## Traceback with Debugger

- You have to locate the code that first went wrong
  - Debugger shows you the call stack at the moment of the crash
  - Clicking is all you need to navigate through the call stacks
  - Find the first call stack with unexpected value or control flow

## Traceback with Debugger

- Sometimes you have to monitor the change of values
  - If your code does not throw or crash, debugger won't pause
  - You can use breakpoint to pause execution at a certain point

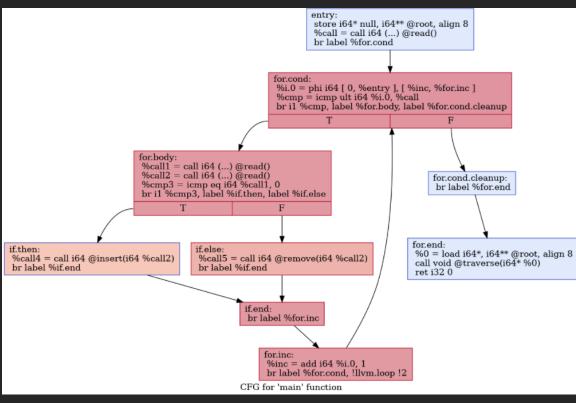




#### IR Visualization

Visualizing the control flow of your IR program can be helpful

```
define dso local i32 @main() #0 {
 store i64* null, i64** @root, align 8
 %call = call i64 (...) @read()
 br label %for.cond
 %i.0 = phi i64 [ 0, %entry ], [ %inc, %for.inc ]
 %cmp = icmp ult i64 %i.0, %call
 br i1 %cmp, label %for.body, label %for.cond.cleanup
 br label %for.end
for.body:
 %call1 = call i64 (...) @read()
 %call2 = call i64 (...) @read()
 %cmp3 = icmp eq i64 %call1, 0
 br i1 %cmp3, label %if.then, label %if.else
 %call4 = call i64 @insert(i64 %call2)
 br label %if.end
 %call5 = call i64 @remove(i64 %call2)
 br label %if.end
 br label %for.inc
```



#### IR Visualization

- Install GraphViz
  - Use the package manager to handle dependencies for you
- Run <llvm-dir>/opt --dot-cfg <IR-program.ll>
  - You'll get a .dot file for each function in the program
- Run dot <dot-file.dot> -Tpng -o <image-name.png>