

ANG LI

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

I am interested in all aspects of computer architecture, especially heterogeneous and reconfigurable architectures for both high-performance and low-power applications. I am also interested in the VLSI design methodology and software programming model for these architectures. I enjoy building chips so as to validate and evaluate my ideas with high fidelity. I am also an advocator of open-source hardware/research as they increase research credibility/reproducibility and encourage community-wide collaboration.

EDUCATION

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, USA

Ph.D. Candidate in Electrical and Computer Engineering

Advisor: Prof. David Wentzlaff

May 2023 (Expected)

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, USA

M.A. in Electrical Engineering

Advisor: Prof. David Wentzlaff

Jun. 2018

Tsinghua University, Beijing, China

B.A. in Electronic Engineering

Minor: Economics

Jun. 2016

Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA, USA

Exchange Student, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

Aug. – Dec. 2013

EXPERIENCE

Duet: Harmonious CPU-FPGA Integration for Fine-Grained Acceleration

Mar. 2021 – Present

Research Assistant, Princeton Parallel Group, Princeton University

eFPGA-based hardware acceleration balances flexibility and performance/efficiency. However, the conventional *coarse-grained acceleration* paradigm that offloads algorithms in their entirety is ill-suited for dynamic and/or irregular applications. Duet promotes eFPGAs to be equal peers with many-core processors in a hardware-coherent cache system. By innovating the interface between the NoC and the eFPGAs, Duet enables *fine-grained, collaborative execution* of the processors and the eFPGA-emulated accelerators. A paper on Duet is currently under peer review. Advised by Prof. David Wentzlaff.

PRGA: Princeton Reconfigurable Gate Array

Oct. 2017 – Present

Research Assistant, Princeton Parallel Group, Princeton University

A silicon-proven, open-source project for generating customized, synthesizable FPGAs with complementary, RTL-to-bitstream CAD toolchain [FPGA'21]. I also proposed the cycle-free FPGA routing graph which enables constraint-driven, hierarchical optimization using off-the-shelf digital EDA tools [FPL'20]. PRGA is used in three chip tape-outs (detailed below). Advised by Prof. David Wentzlaff.

CIFER: Hetero-Granular Architecture Prototype Chip Tape-out Nov. 2019 – Present
Research Assistant, Princeton Parallel Group, Princeton University; in collaboration with Computer System Laboratory, Cornell University

A heterogeneous, cache-coherent SoC integrating OS-capable processors, parallel tiny core clusters, and eFPGA fabrics, covering both ends of the parallelization-specialization spectrum via collaborative execution. Prototype chip is taped out at 12nm and tested in lab. A paper on CIFER is currently under peer review. Advised by Prof. David Wentzlaff.

DECADES: Tiled Heterogeneous Architecture Prototype Chip Tape-out Dec. 2020 – Present
Research Assistant, Princeton Parallel Group, Princeton University; in collaboration with Martonosi Research Group, Princeton University, and System-Level Design Group, Columbia University

A heterogeneous, cache-coherent SoC with OS-capable processors, specialized accelerators, intelligent storage units, bit-serial SIMD cores, and eFPGAs. Prototype chip is taped out at 12nm and tested in lab. A paper on DECADES is currently under peer review. Advised by Prof. David Wentzlaff.

ORDER: An SoC Built with Open-Source Hardware, PDK, & EDA Feb. – May. 2022
Research Assistant, Princeton Parallel Group, Princeton University

A RV32I + 512-LUT4/FF SoC designed with open-source hardware frameworks (e.g. PRGA), synthesized using an open-source EDA flow (OpenRoad) and an open-source PDK (SkyWater 130nm). ORDER is selected for the OpenMPW-6 free shuttle and will be taped out soon. Advised by Prof. David Wentzlaff.

Near-Peak-Bandwidth, All-to-All, Many-FPGA Communication over UDP/IP Jun. – Sep. 2019
Research Intern, Microsoft Research, WA, USA

Proposed an all-to-all, many-FPGA communication mechanism for a many-FPGA system over a mostly private, stable network, achieving near-peak bandwidth (~98%) of a full duplex network switch. By synchronizing FPGA clocks, characterizing clock error, and tolerating clock drifting and PLL variance, the proposed mechanism allows the FPGAs to run in lockstep epochs. Advised by Dr. Michael Papamichael.

Hardware Transactional Memory on OpenPiton Jan. – Jun. 2018
Research Assistant, Princeton Parallel Group, Princeton University

Implemented an in-cache, hardware transactional memory (HTM) on OpenPiton. The HTM employs lazy version management and lazy conflict detection. It uses each processor's private cache to buffer the read-set and write-set of a transaction, and commits to the last-level cache if a transaction is validated. Advised by Prof. David Wentzlaff.

Real-World OCR with Gated-RNN and MD-LSTM Aug. 2015 – Feb. 2016
Research Intern, Sensetime Co., Ltd., Beijing, China

Implemented Gated-RNN and MD-LSTM on the Caffe deep learning framework.

Hardware Model Research on HICAMP

Jun. 2014 – Sep. 2014

Research Intern, Computer Systems Laboratory, Stanford University

Hierarchical Immutable Content-Addressable Memory Processor (HICAMP) is an architecture that organizes the memory in a tree-like structure with content-addressability and data deduplication. I proposed and implemented a fast *compare* instruction exploiting the content-addressable tree. I improved the *iteration register file* (similar to a private cache) with intra- and inter-processor coherence. I proposed and implemented an out-of-order commit, transaction manager for the hardware-supported, software-implemented transactional memory based on HICAMP. Advised by Prof. David Cheriton.

High-Level Synthesis with Non-Volatile Memory

Apr. 2013 – Jan. 2015

Research Assistant, Nanoscale Integrated Circuits and System Lab, Tsinghua University

Proposed an algorithm to optimize loop transformation for NVM-SRAM hybrid on-chip buffer allocation. Advised by Prof. Yongpan Liu.

Interactive Projection System Based on Structured Light

Nov. 2012 – Jul. 2013

Research Assistant, Nanoscale Integrated Circuits and System Lab, Tsinghua University

Proposed an algorithm to recognize users' interactions (multi-finger tapping, dragging, pinching, etc.) using one projector and one camera, without depth sensors. Advised by Prof. Xiang Xie.

PUBLICATIONS AND PATENTS

[HPCA'23] (To appear) **Ang Li**, August Ning, and David Wentzlaff, "*Duet: Creating Harmony between Processors and Embedded FPGAs*", 29th IEEE International Symposium on High-Performance Computer Architecture, Feb. 2023

[FPGA'21] **Ang Li**, and David Wentzlaff, "*PRGA: An Open-Source FPGA Research and Prototyping Framework*", 29th ACM/SIGDA International Symposium on Field-Programmable Gate Arrays, Feb. 2021

[FPL'20] **Ang Li**, Ting-Jung Chang, and David Wentzlaff, "*Automated Design of FPGAs Facilitated by Cycle-Free Routing*", 30th International Conference on Field-Programmable Logic and Applications, Aug./Sep. 2020

[IEEE Micro] Jonathan Balkind, Ting-Jung Chang, Paul J. Jackson, Georgios Tziantzioulis, **Ang Li**, Fei Gao, Alexey Lavrov, Grigory Chirkov, Jinzheng Tu, Mohammad Shahradd, and David Wentzlaff, "*OpenPiton at 5: A Nexus for Open and Agile Hardware Design*", IEEE Micro Vol. 40, No. 1, Jul./Aug. 2020

[ASPLOS'20] Jonathan Balkind, Katie Lim, Michael Schaffner, Fei Gao, Grigory Chirkov, **Ang Li**, Alexey Lavrov, Tri M. Nguyen, Yaosheng Fu, Florian Zaruba, Kunal Gulati, Luca Benini, and David Wentzlaff, "*BYOC: A 'Bring Your Own Core' Framework for Heterogeneous-ISA Research*", 25th International Conference on Architectural Support for Programming Languages and Operating Systems, Mar. 2020

[ISLPED'15] Shuangchen Li, **Ang Li**, Yuan Zhe, Yongpan Liu, Peng Li, Guangyu Sun, Yu Wang, Huazhong Yang, and Yuan Xie, "*Leveraging emerging nonvolatile memory in high-level synthesis with loop transformations*", International Symposium on Low Power Electronics and Design, Jul. 2015

[ASPDAC'15] Shuangchen Li, **Ang Li**, Yongpan Liu, Yuan Xie, and Huazhong Yang, "*Nonvolatile memory allocation and hierarchy optimization for high-level synthesis*", 20th Asia and South Pacific Design Automation Conference (ASPDAC'15), Jan. 2015

[Patent] Xiang Xie, Lifei Ren, **Ang Li**, Yanjun Han, Guolin Li, Jun Hu, Zhong Lv, Wei Song, Yi Zheng, and Zihua Wang, “A Touch Interacting System and Method Based on Adaptive Layered Structured Light”, Chinese National Invention Patent, No. 2013103145347, Jul. 2013

POSTERS AND WORKSHOPS

[FPGA’20 (Poster)] **Ang Li**, and David Wentzlaff, “Cycle-Free FPGA Routing Graphs”, 28th ACM/SIGDA International Symposium on Field-Programmable Gate Arrays, Feb. 2020

[OSDA’19 (Workshop)] **Ang Li**, and David Wentzlaff, “PRGA: An Open-source Framework for Building and Using Custom FPGAs”, 1st Workshop on Open-Source Design Automation (OSDA), Mar. 2019

[WOSET’18 (Workshop)] Jonathan Balkind, Alexey Lavrov, Michael McKeown, Yaosheng Fu, Tri Nguyen, Mohammad Shahradd, **Ang Li**, Katie Lim, Yanqi Zhou, Ting-Jung Chang, Paul Jackson, Adi Fuchs, Samuel Payne, Xiaohua Liang, Matthew Matl, and David Wentzlaff, “OpenPiton: An Emerging Standard for Open-Source EDA Tool Development”, Workshop on Open-Source EDA Technology, Nov. 2018

TEACHING AND MENTORING

ECE 462/562 (also COS 462) – Design of Very Large-Scale Integrated (VLSI) Systems Fall 2022
Teaching Assistant

Google Summer of Code – PRGA + FASM: Open-source Bitgen for FPGAs Summer 2020
FOSSi Mentor

ECE 475/575 (also COS 475) – Computer Architecture Fall 2018
Teaching Assistant

Upgraded the labs from implementing the PARC ISA to the RISC-V (RV32IM) ISA.
Materials that I developed are still used in the course today.

Co-Advisory of Undergraduate Research 2019 – Present

Jaebyoek Yoon, *Architecture and Physical Design of Specialized FPGAs*

Marlon Escobar, *CPU-FPGA Integration*

Kevin Liu, *Creating Multimode Logic Elements for a Reconfigurable Gate Array*

AWARDS AND HONORS

First Prize Scholarship for Excellent Student (10 out of 300+) Oct. 2013

Top prize in 7th “Challenge Cup” Beijing Undergraduates’ Extracurricular
Technology Innovation Competition (40 out of 500+) Jul. 2013

First Prize Scholarship for Excellent Student (10 out of 300+) Oct. 2012

REFERENCES

Contact info available upon request.

Prof. David Wentzlaff, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Princeton University

Prof. Christopher Batten, School of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Cornell University

Prof. Vaughn Betz, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Toronto

Prof. Michael Taylor, Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering, University of Washington

Dr. Michael Papamichael, Microsoft Research