

Qwerty: A Basis-Oriented Quantum Programming Language

QCE '25

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Quantum Programming is Tough for Newcomers

Two leaps:

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Two leaps:

① Problem → Algorithm

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② Algorithm → Implementation

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Quantum programming languages

Example operation:

$$|+\rangle|+\rangle|+\rangle|+\rangle \mapsto -|+\rangle|+\rangle|+\rangle|+\rangle$$

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How does this look in most quantum
programming languages?

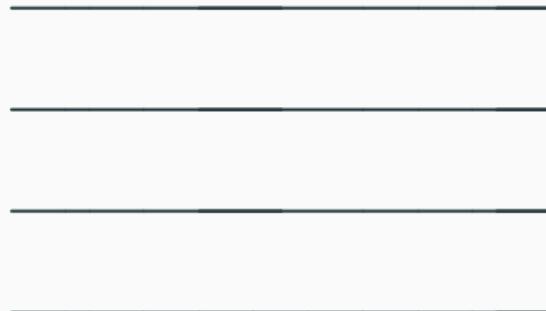
Quantum Programming Today

Step 1: Do the math

$$U = -|++++\rangle\langle++++| + (I^{\otimes 4} - |++++\rangle\langle++++|)$$

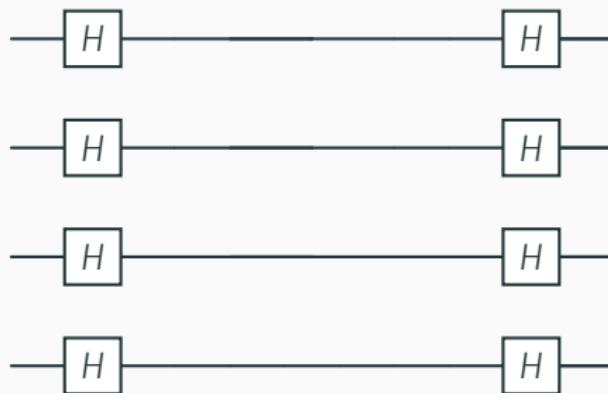
Step 2: Design a circuit

$$U = -|++++\rangle\langle++++| + (I^{\otimes 4} - |++++\rangle\langle++++|)$$



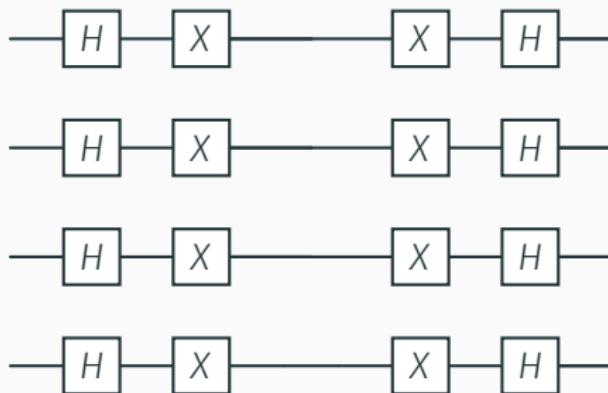
Step 2: Design a circuit

$$U = H^{\otimes 4}(-|0000\rangle\langle 0000| + (I^{\otimes 4} - |0000\rangle\langle 0000|))H^{\otimes 4}$$



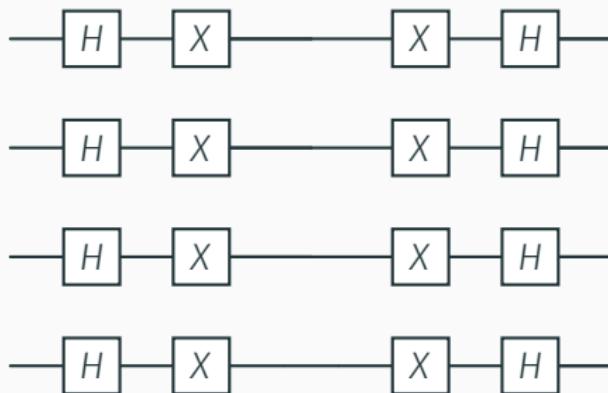
Step 2: Design a circuit

$$U = H^{\otimes 4} X^{\otimes 4} (-|1111\rangle\langle 1111| + (I^{\otimes 4} - |1111\rangle\langle 1111|)X^{\otimes 4}H^{\otimes 4})$$



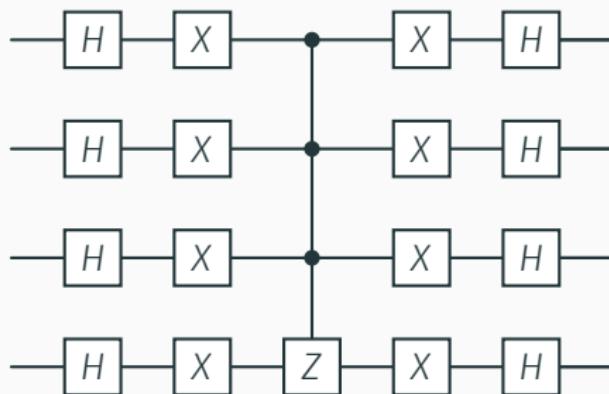
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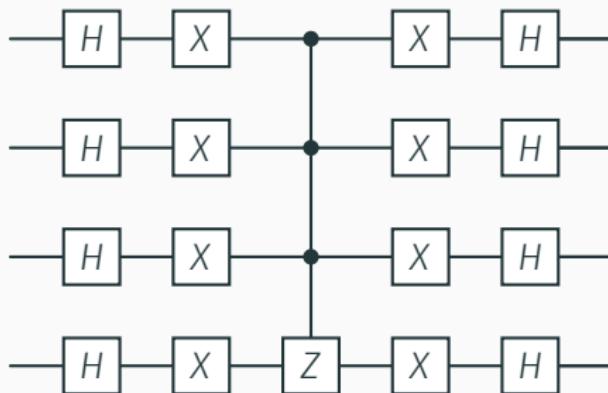
Step 2: Design a circuit

$$U = H^{\otimes 4} X^{\otimes 4} (CC CZ) X^{\otimes 4} H^{\otimes 4}$$



Step 2: Design a circuit

$$U = -|+++++\rangle\langle+++++| + (I^{\otimes 4} - |+++++\rangle\langle+++++|) \quad \checkmark$$



Step 3: Write synthesis code

QCL (2000)

```
1 operator diffuse(qureg q) {  
2     H(q);  
3     Not(q);  
4     CPhase(pi,q);  
5     !Not(q);  
6     !H(q);  
7 }
```

Step 3: Write synthesis code

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```

Q# (2025)

```
1 operation Diffuse(q : Qubit[])
2                                     : Unit {
3     for qi in q {
4         H(qi);
5         X(qi);
6     }
7     Controlled Z(Most(q),
8                     Tail(q));
9     for qi in q {
10        X(qi);
11        H(qi);
12    }
13 }
```

Step 3: Write synthesis code

QCL (2000)

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1 operator diffuse(qureg q) {
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Q# (2025)

```
1 operation Diffuse(q : Qubit[])
2                                     : Unit {
3     within {
4         for qi in q {
5             H(qi);
6             X(qi);
7         }
8     } apply {
9         Controlled Z(Most(q),
10                      Tail(q));
11    }
12 }
```

Quantum Programming Today

Step 3: Write synthesis code

QCL (2000)

```
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2     H(q);
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6     !H(q);
7 }
```

Q# (2025)

```
1 operation Diffuse(q : Qubit[])
2                                     : Unit {
3     within {
4         ApplyToEachA(H, q);
5         ApplyToEachA(X, q);
6     } apply {
7         Controlled Z(Most(q),
8                           Tail(q));
9     }
10 }
```

Quantum Programming Today

Step 3: Write synthesis code

QCL (2000)

```
1 operator diffuse(qureg q) {
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Most Quantum PLs today require circuit synthesis expertise

Grover Diffuser in Qwerty

Goal:

$$|+\rangle|+\rangle|+\rangle|+\rangle \mapsto -|+\rangle|+\rangle|+\rangle|+\rangle$$

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Qwerty syntax:

'pppp' >> -'pppp'

Grover Diffuser in Qwerty

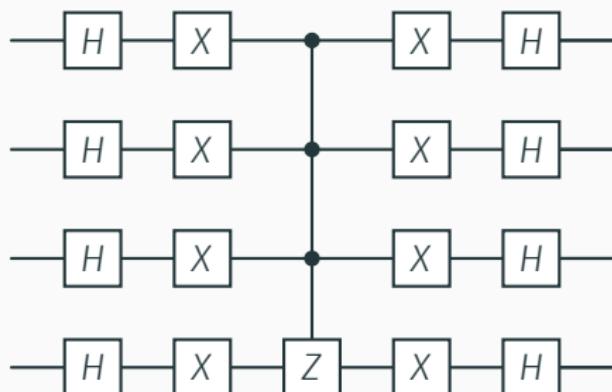
Goal:

$$|+\rangle|+\rangle|+\rangle|+\rangle \mapsto -|+\rangle|+\rangle|+\rangle|+\rangle$$

Qwerty syntax:

'pppp' >> -'pppp'

Circuit synthesized by AsDF:



Our Contributions

1. Qwerty programs expressed with **basis translations** and **qubit literals**
2. Programmers can **interpret** the behavior of Qwerty programs **without circuit synthesis experience**
3. Qwerty integrates with a popular classical PL (**Python**)

Hello World in Qwerty

```
1 from qwerty import *
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18 print(grover())
```

Hello World in Qwerty

```
1 from qwerty import *
2
3 @classical
4 def oracle(x: bit[4]) -> bit:
5     return x[0] & ~x[1] & x[2] & ~x[3]
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
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Hello World in Qwerty

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1 from qwerty import *
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7 @qpu
8 def grover_iter(q):
9     return q | oracle.sign | 'pppp' >> -'pppp'
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Hello World in Qwerty

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7 @qpu
8 def grover_iter(q):
9     return q | oracle.sign | 'pppp' >> -'pppp'
10
11 @qpu
12 def grover():
13     return ('pppp' | grover_iter
14                     | grover_iter
15                     | grover_iter
16                     | measure**4)
17
18 print(grover())
```

Qubit Initialization

Qubit Literals: String Analogy

- Standard basis: '**0**' and '**1**'

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"yee" + "haw" == "yeehaw"

Qubit Literals: String Analogy

- Standard basis: '`0`' and '`1`'
- In typical classical PLs,
`"yee" + "haw" == "yeehaw"`
- In Qwerty,
`'0' * '1' == '01'`

Qubit Literals: Tilt

- Phase $e^{i\pi/4} |1\rangle$ represented as *tilt*: '1' @ 45
- Syntax evokes '1' Ø45

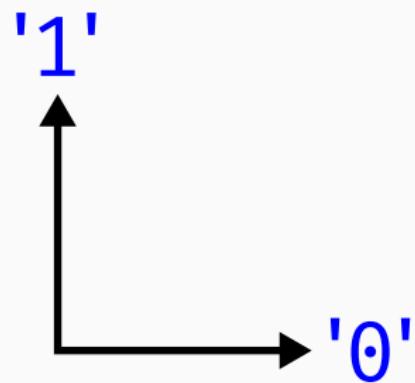
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- Fun to draw as ↗

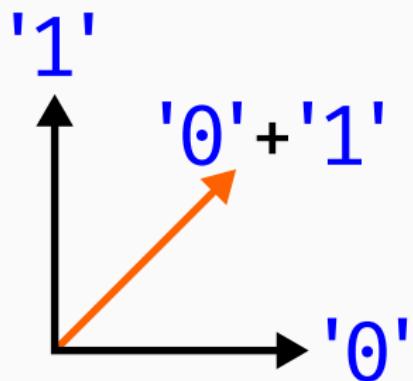
Qubit Literals: Tilt

- Phase $e^{i\pi/4} |1\rangle$ represented as *tilt*: '**1**' @ 45
- Syntax evokes '**1**' ↗45
- Fun to draw as 
- - '**1**' is syntactic sugar for '**1**'@180

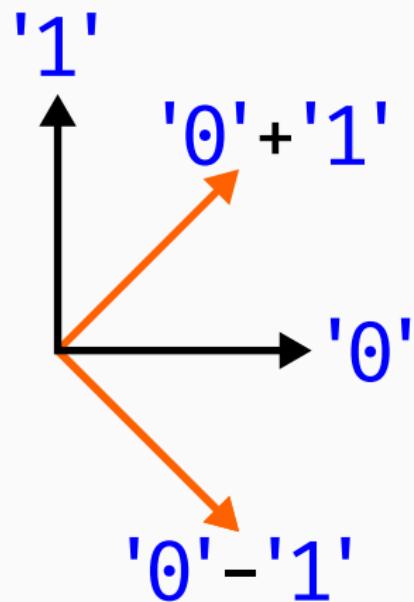
Qubit Literals: Superposition



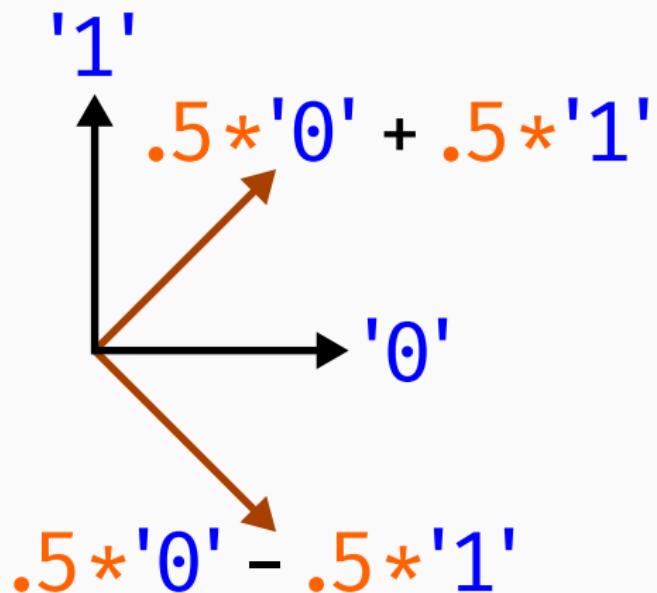
Qubit Literals: Superposition



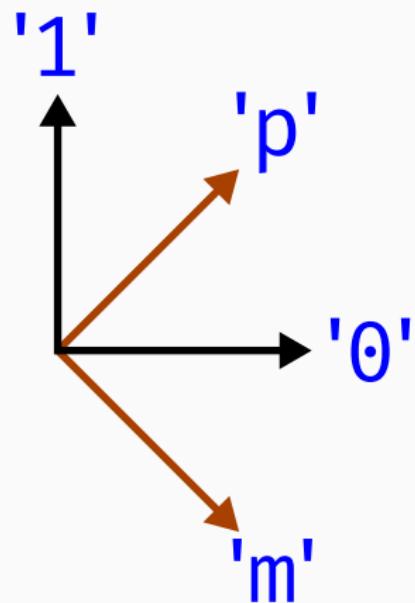
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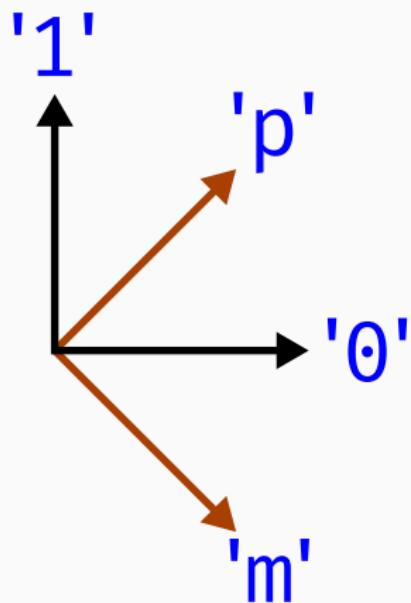
Qubit Literals: Superposition



Qubit Literals: Superposition



Qubit Literals: Superposition



Why **p** and **m** instead of **+** and **-**?

Because this looks confusing: '**+**' '**+**' '**-**' '**-**' '**-**'

State Evolution

Basis Translations

```
{'0', '1'} >> {'m', 'p'}
```

Basis Translations

```
{'0', '1'} >> {'m', 'p'}
```



Replace with

Basis Translations

```
{'0', '1'} >> {'m', 'p'}
```

Replace with
Replace with

Basis Translations

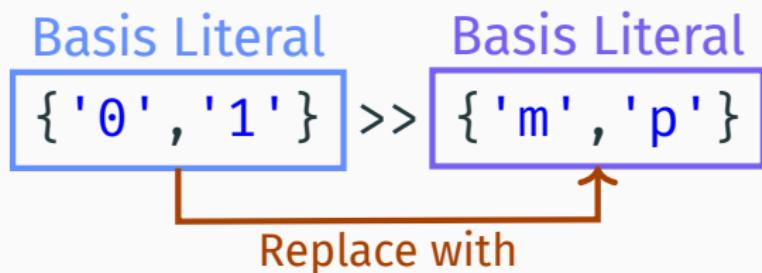
```
{'0', '1'} >> {'m', 'p'}
```

Basis Translations

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{'0', '1'} >> {'m', 'p'}
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Replace with

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Basis Literals

- Ordered list of basis vectors
- Example: `{'00', '01', '10', '11'}` is two-qubit standard basis

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Basis Literals

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- Or $\{ |0\rangle, |1\rangle \}^{**2}$

Basis Literals

- Ordered list of basis vectors
- Example: $\{ |00\rangle, |01\rangle, |10\rangle, |11\rangle \}$ is two-qubit standard basis
- Could also write $\{ |0\rangle, |1\rangle \} \otimes \{ |0\rangle, |1\rangle \}$
- Or $\{ |0\rangle, |1\rangle \}^{**2}$
- Must be an orthonormal basis
 - Example: $\{ |00\rangle, |10\rangle, -|10\rangle \}$ is invalid

Basis Translation Type Checking

Any $b_{\text{in}} \gg b_{\text{out}}$ requires $\text{span}(b_{\text{in}}) = \text{span}(b_{\text{out}})$.

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✓ `{'0','1'} >> {'0','1'@90}`

Basis Translation Type Checking

Any $b_{\text{in}} \gg b_{\text{out}}$ requires $\text{span}(b_{\text{in}}) = \text{span}(b_{\text{out}})$.

✓ `{'0','1'} >> {'0','1'@90}`

✗ `{'0'} >> {'1'}`

Measurement

- `b.measure` measures in the basis `b`
- Measure in standard basis: `{'0', '1'}.measure`

Measurement

- `b.measure` measures in the basis b
- Measure in standard basis: `{'0', '1'}.measure`
- Measure in Bell basis:
`{'00' + '11',
 '00' - '11',
 '10' + '01',
 '01' - '10'}.measure`

Superdense Coding in Qwerty

```
1 message = bit[2](θb10)
2
3 @qpu
4 def superdense():
5     bit0, bit1 = message
6     alice, bob = '00' + '11'
7
8     sent_to_bob = (alice | ({'0','1'} >> {'1','0'}
9                     if bit0 else id)
10                | ({'1'} >> {-'1'}
11                     if bit1 else id))
12
13 recovered_message = (sent_to_bob * bob
14                     | {'00'+'11', '00'-'11',
15                     '10'+'01', '01'-'10'}
16                     .measure)
17
18 return recovered_message
```

Superdense Coding in Qwerty

```
1 message = bit[2](θb10)
2
3 @qpu
4 def superdense():
5     bit0, bit1 = message
6     alice, bob = '00' + '11' Entangled pair
7
8     sent_to_bob = (alice | ({'0','1'} >> {'1','0'}
9                     if bit0 else id)
10                | ({'1'}) >> {-'1'}
11                     if bit1 else id))
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13 recovered_message = (sent_to_bob * bob
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11                     if bit1 else id))
12
13 recovered_message = (sent_to_bob * bob
14                     | {'00'+'11', '00'-'11',
15 Measure in Bell basis
16                     '10'+'01', '01'-'10'}
17                     .measure)
18
19 return recovered_message
```

Metaprogramming

metaQwerty Motivation

- Tedious:

```
{'0', '1'}.measure  
* {'0', '1'}.measure  
* {'0', '1'}.measure
```

metaQwerty Motivation

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```
{'0', '1'}.measure  
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* {'0', '1'}.measure
```

- What about {'0', '1'}.measure**3?

metaQwerty Motivation

- Tedious:

```
{'0', '1'}.measure  
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```

- What about {'0', '1'}.measure**3?
- Or std.measure**3?

metaQwerty Motivation

- Tedious:

```
{'0', '1'}.measure  
* {'0', '1'}.measure  
* {'0', '1'}.measure
```

- What about {'0', '1'}.**measure**3**?
- Or **std.measure**3**?
- Or even **measure**3**?

metaQwerty Motivation

- Tedious:

```
{'0', '1'}.measure  
* {'0', '1'}.measure  
* {'0', '1'}.measure
```

- What about `{'0', '1'}.measure**3?`
- Or `std.measure**3?`
- Or even `measure**3?`
- *metaQwerty* expands to *Qwerty*

metaQwerty Prelude: Qubit Symbols

```
'0'.sym = __SYM_STD0__()
'1'.sym = __SYM_STD1__()
```

metaQwerty Prelude: Qubit Symbols

```
'0'.sym = __SYM_STD0__()
'1'.sym = __SYM_STD1__()
'p'.sym = '0' + '1'

'm'.sym = '0' + '1'@180
```

metaQwerty Prelude: Qubit Symbols

```
'0'.sym = __SYM_STD0__()
'1'.sym = __SYM_STD1__()
'p'.sym = '0' + '1'
'i'.sym = '0' + '1'@90
'm'.sym = '0' + '1'@180
'j'.sym = '0' + '1'@270
```

metaQwerty Prelude: Bases

```
std = {'0', '1'}
pm = {'p', 'm'}
ij = {'i', 'j'}
bell = {'00'+'11',
        '00'-'11',
        '10'+'01',
        '01'-'10'}
```

metaQwerty Prelude: Bases

```
std  = {'0', '1'}
pm   = {'p', 'm'}
ij   = {'i', 'j'}
bell = {'00'+'11',
        '00'-'11',
        '10'+'01',
        '01'-'10'}

fourier[1] = pm
fourier[N] = fourier[N-1] // std.revolve
```

metaQwerty Prelude: Convenience Functions

```
id = {'0','1'} >> {'0','1'}
flip = {'0','1'} >> {'1','0'}
measure = std.measure
```

metaQwerty Example: N-Qubit Grover's

```
1 def grover2(oracle, num_iter):
2     @qpu[[N]]
3     def grover_iter(q):
4         return (q | oracle.sign
5                 | 'p'**N >> -'p'**N)
6
7     @qpu[[N]]
8     def kernel():
9         return ('p'**N
10            | (grover_iter
11                for i in range(num_iter))
12                | measure**N)
13
14    return kernel()
```

metaQwerty Example: N-Qubit Grover's

```
1 def grover2(oracle, num_iter):
2     @qpu[[N]] ← Polymorphism
3     def grover_iter(q):
4         return (q | oracle.sign
5                 | 'p'**N >> -'p'**N)
6
7     @qpu[[N]]
8     def kernel():
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5                 | 'p'**N >> -'p'**N)
6
7     @qpu[[N]] ← Macros
8     def kernel():
9         return ('p'**N
10                | (grover_iter
11                  for i in range(num_iter))
12                | measure**N)
13
14     return kernel()
```

Predication

Predication Example

Flip right qubit if left is '**1**':

```
flip if '1_' else id
```

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Flip right qubit if left is '1':

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flip if '1_' else id  
Basis pattern
```

Predication Example

Flip right qubit if left is '**1**':

```
flip if '1_' else id  
Basis pattern
```

Performs:

'00' \mapsto '00'
'01' \mapsto '01'
'10' \mapsto **'11'**
'11' \mapsto **'10'**

Another Predication Example

```
pm >> std if {'p_p', 'm_m'} else id
```

Performs:

'ppp' \mapsto 'p0p'

'pmp' \mapsto 'p1p'

'mpp' \mapsto 'mpp'

'mmp' \mapsto 'mmp'

'ppm' \mapsto 'ppm'

'pmm' \mapsto 'pmm'

'mpm' \mapsto 'm0m'

'mmm' \mapsto 'm1m'

Full Example: Bernstein–Vazirani

Bernstein-Vazirani Algorithm

Input: Black box for $f(x) = \underbrace{x_1 s_1}_{\text{AND}} \oplus \underbrace{x_2 s_2}_{\text{XOR}} \oplus \cdots \oplus x_n s_n$

Output: Secret bitstring s used to build oracle

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Output: Secret bitstring s used to build oracle

- Any classical algorithm needs to run the black box n times:

$$s_1 = f(1000 \cdots 00)$$

$$s_2 = f(0100 \cdots 00)$$

⋮

$$s_n = f(0000 \cdots 01)$$

Bernstein-Vazirani Algorithm

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- Any classical algorithm needs to run the black box n times:

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⋮

$$s_n = f(0000 \dots 01)$$

- Quantum algorithm only needs 1 query!

Bernstein–Vazirani in Qwerty

```
1 from qwerty import *
2
3 def bv(secret_string):
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14     return kernel()
15
16 secret_string = bit[4](0b1101)
17 print(bv(secret_string))
```

Bernstein–Vazirani in Qwerty

```
1 from qwerty import *
2
3 def bv(secret_string):
4     @classical
5     def f(x):
6         return (secret_string & x).xor_reduce()
7
8
9
10
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9     def kernel():
10        return ('p'**N | f.sign
11                  | pm**N >> std**N
12                  | measure**N)
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10        return ('p'**N | f.sign
11                  | pm**N >> std**N
12                  | measure**N)
13
14    return kernel()
15
16 secret_string = bit[4](0b████)
17 print(bv(secret_string))
```

Tracing Bernstein–Vazirani in Qwerty

$$\begin{aligned} & (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) * (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) \\ & * (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) * (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) \end{aligned}$$

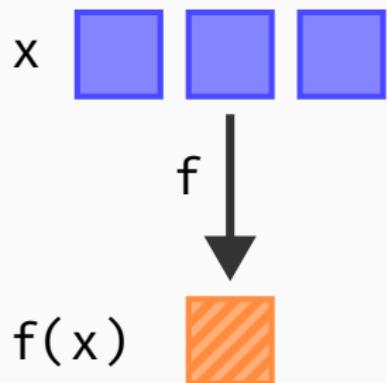
Tracing Bernstein–Vazirani in Qwerty

$$(\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) * (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) \\ * (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) * (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'})$$

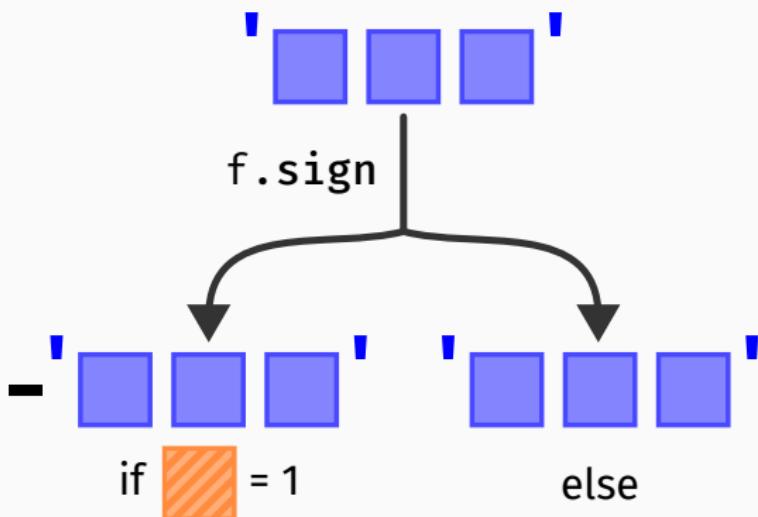
①  f.sign

Sign Embedding

Classical Function:



Sign Embedding:



```
f.sign == f_1.sign  
    * f_2.sign  
    * f_3.sign  
    * f_4.sign
```

where

$$f_i(x_i) = \underbrace{x_i s_i}_{\text{AND}}$$

Tracing Bernstein–Vazirani in Qwerty

$$(\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) * (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) \\ * (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) * (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'})$$

①  f.sign

$$(\text{'0'} + -\text{'1'}) * (\text{'0'} + -\text{'1'}) \\ * (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) * (\text{'0'} + -\text{'1'})$$

Tracing Bernstein–Vazirani in Qwerty

$$(\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) * (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) \\ * (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'}) * (\text{'0'} + \text{'1'})$$

①  f.sign

	'm'	*	'm'
*	'p'	*	'm'

Tracing Bernstein–Vazirani in Qwerty

```
( '0' + '1' ) * ( '0' + '1' )
* ( '0' + '1' ) * ( '0' + '1' )
```

① ↓ f.sign

	'm'	*	'm'
*	'p'	*	'm'

② ↓ pm***4 >> std***4

	'1'	*	'1'
*	'0'	*	'1'

Tracing Bernstein–Vazirani in Qwerty

```
( '0' + '1' ) * ( '0' + '1' )
* ( '0' + '1' ) * ( '0' + '1' )
```

① ↓ f.sign

	'm'	*	'm'
*	'p'	*	'm'

② ↓ pm***4 >> std***4

	'1'	*	'1'
*	'0'	*	'1'

③ ↓ measure***4

bit[4](0b**1101**)

More Examples in Paper

- Teleportation
- Quantum phase estimation (with tracing)
- Period finding (with tracing)
- Shor's (order finding)

Conclusion

In this talk, I presented Qwerty, a *basis-oriented* quantum programming language that allows non-experts to reason about quantum computation without knowing bra–ket notation or circuit synthesis.

Conclusion

In this talk, I presented *Qwerty*, a *basis-oriented* quantum programming language that allows non-experts to reason about quantum computation without knowing bra–ket notation or circuit synthesis.

Compiler (AsDF) paper:



CGO '25

Source code (GitHub):



github.com/gt-tinker/qwerty

Backup Slides

Fourier Basis Details

Fourier Basis: Motivation

QFT:

```
std**N >> fourier[N]
```

QFT[†]:

```
fourier[N] >> std**N
```

Fourier Basis

`fourier[1]`



```
{ ('0' + '1'),  
  ('0' + '1') }
```

The list contains two elements, both of which are strings consisting of a single quote character followed by a plus sign and another quote character. The first element is '0' + '1', and the second element is also '0' + '1'. Both of these strings are highlighted with a blue rectangular box.

Fourier Basis

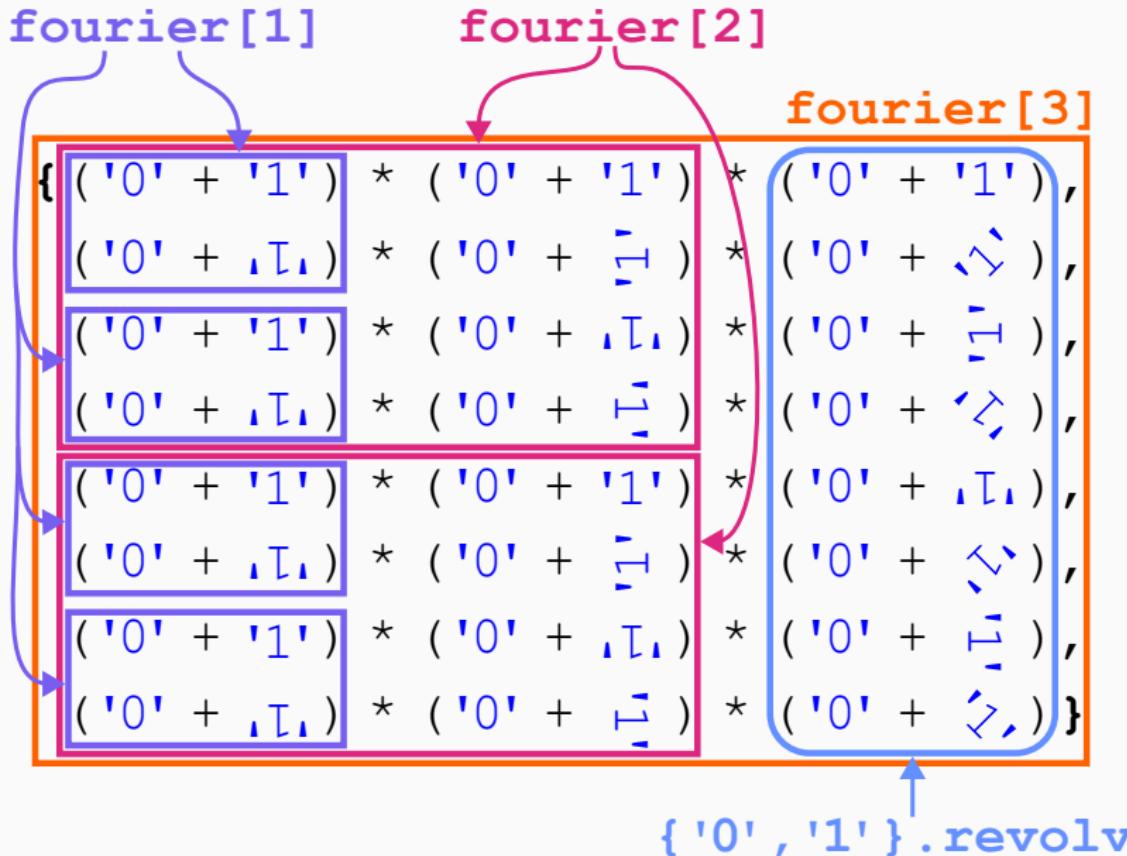
fourier[1] fourier[2]

```
{ ('0' + '1') * ('0' + '1'),  
  ('0' + '1') * ('0' + '-1'),  
  ('0' + '1') * ('0' + '1'),  
  ('0' + '1') * ('0' + '-1')}
```

Fourier Basis

```
fourier[1]        fourier[2]        fourier[3]  
{ ('0' + '1') * ('0' + '1') * ('0' + '1'),  
  ('0' + 'I') * ('0' + '1') * ('0' + '1'),  
  ('0' + '1') * ('0' + 'I') * ('0' + '1'),  
  ('0' + 'I') * ('0' + '1') * ('0' + '1'),  
  
  ('0' + '1') * ('0' + '1') * ('0' + '1'),  
  ('0' + 'I') * ('0' + '1') * ('0' + '1'),  
  ('0' + '1') * ('0' + 'I') * ('0' + '1'),  
  ('0' + 'I') * ('0' + '1') * ('0' + '1') }
```

Fourier Basis



metaQwerty Prelude: Fourier Basis

```
fourier[1] = pm
fourier[N] = fourier[N-1] // std.revolve
```

metaQwerty Prelude: Fourier Basis

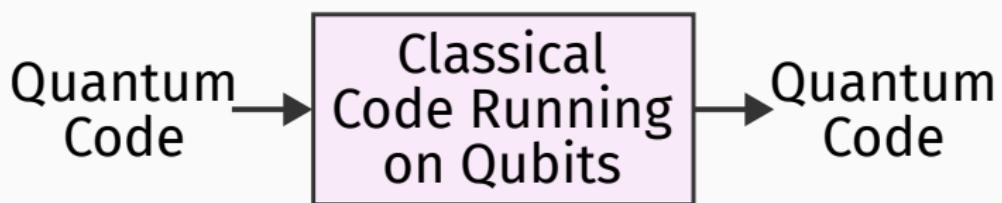
```
fourier[1] = pm
fourier[N] = fourier[N-1] // std.revolve
                           Basis generator
```

metaQwerty Prelude: Fourier Basis

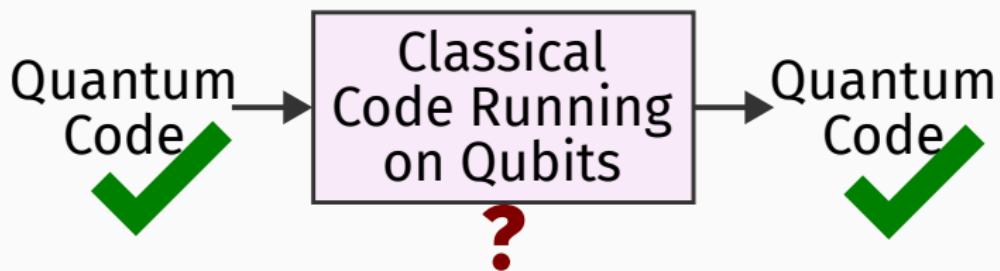
```
fourier[1] = pm  
fourier[N] = fourier[N-1] // std.revolve  
                         ↑  
                         Basis generator  
                         Apply basis generator
```

Embedding Classical Functions

Plugging the Oracle Hole



Plugging the Oracle Hole



Revisiting Grover's in Qwerty: Classical Embeddings

Revisiting Grover's in Qwerty: Classical Embeddings

```
1 from qwerty import *
2
3 @classical
4 def oracle(x: bit[4]) -> bit:
5     return x[0] & ~x[1] & x[2] & ~x[3]
6
7 @qpu
8 def grover_iter(q):
9     return q | oracle.sign | 'pppp' >> -'pppp'
10
11 @qpu
12 def grover():
13     return ('pppp' | grover_iter
14                     | grover_iter
15                     | grover_iter
16                     | measure**4)
17
18 print(grover())
```

Classical func. def.

Revisiting Grover's in Qwerty: Classical Embeddings

```
1 from qwerty import *
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```

Classical func. def.

Embedding

Revisiting Grover's in Qwerty: Classical Embeddings

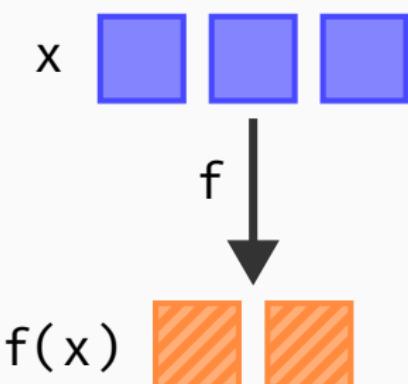
```
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3 @classical
4 def oracle(x: bit[4]) -> bit:
5     return x[0] & ~x[1] & x[2] & ~x[3]
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16                     | measure**4)
17
18 print(grover())
```

Classical func. def.

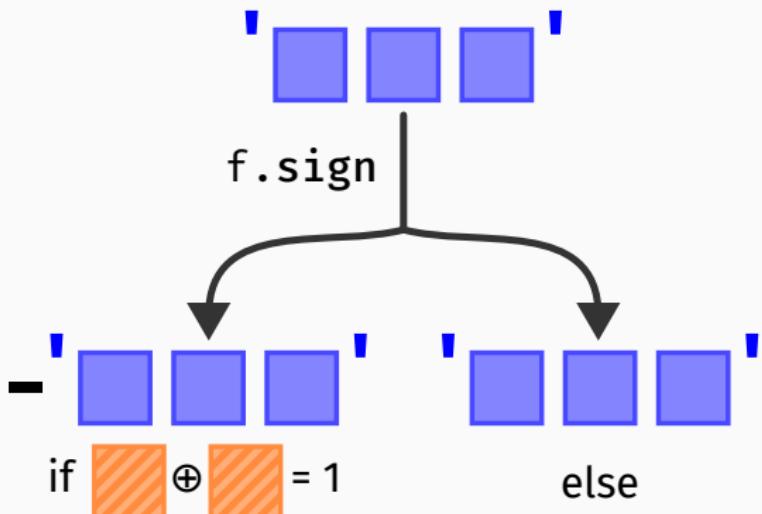
Embedding → 3 kinds

Sign Embedding

Classical Function:

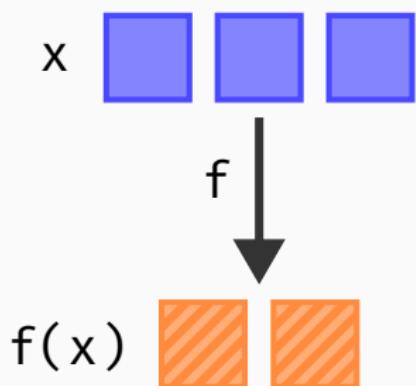


Sign Embedding:

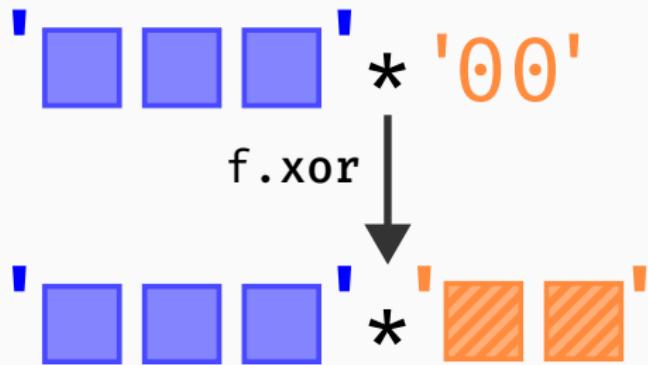


XOR Embedding

Classical Function:

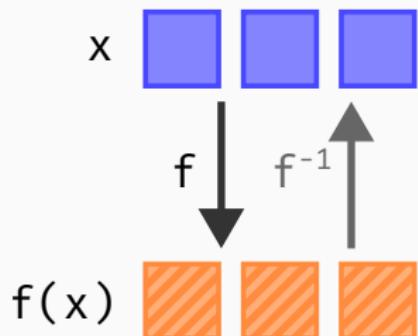


XOR Embedding:



In-Place Embedding

Classical Function:



In-Place Embedding:

