

# Disorderly Surface Growth

Le Chen

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Graduate Student Seminar  
Auburn University  
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## Acknowledgment



DMS-Probability, No. 2246850  
2023 – 2026

Co-PI: Dr. Panqiu Xia  
(on market)



Collaboration grant: No. 959981  
2022 – 2027

# Plan

Discrete growth models

Continuous growth models – KPZ and SHE

More about SHE

SHE with sublinear growth – Case Study

Final remarks

# Plan

Discrete growth models

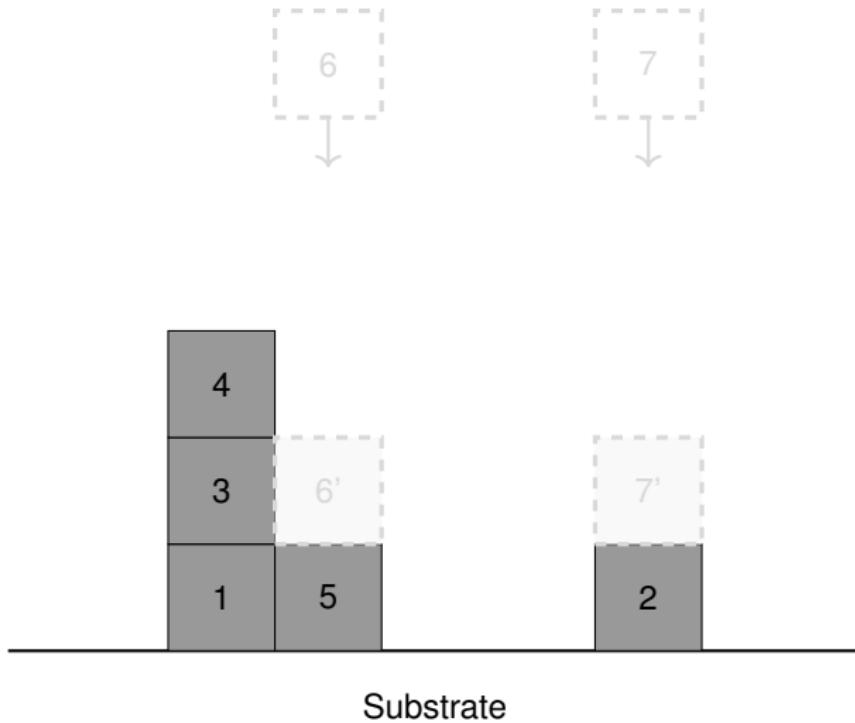
Continuous growth models – KPZ and SHE

More about SHE

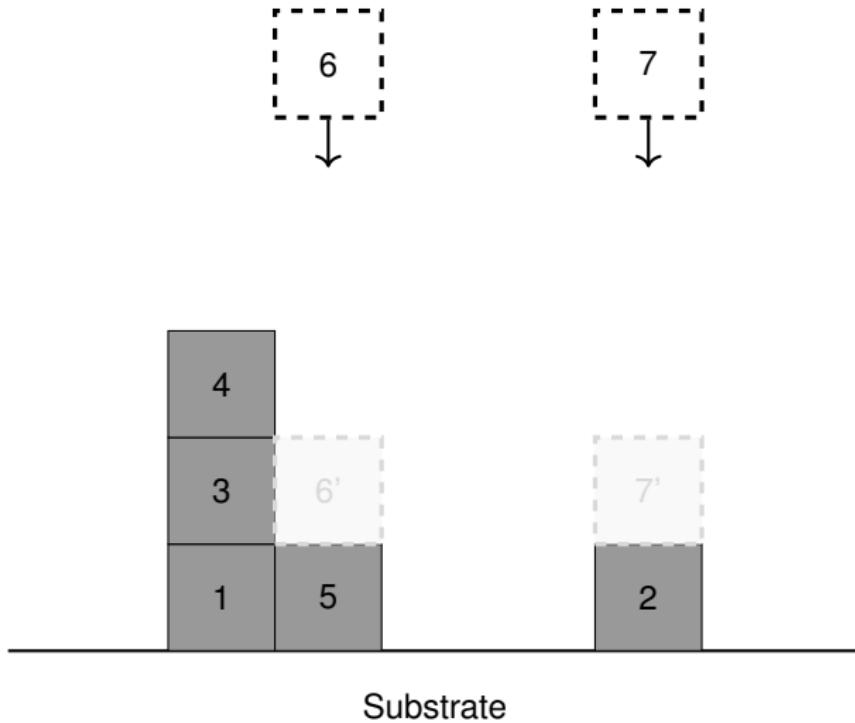
SHE with sublinear growth – Case Study

Final remarks

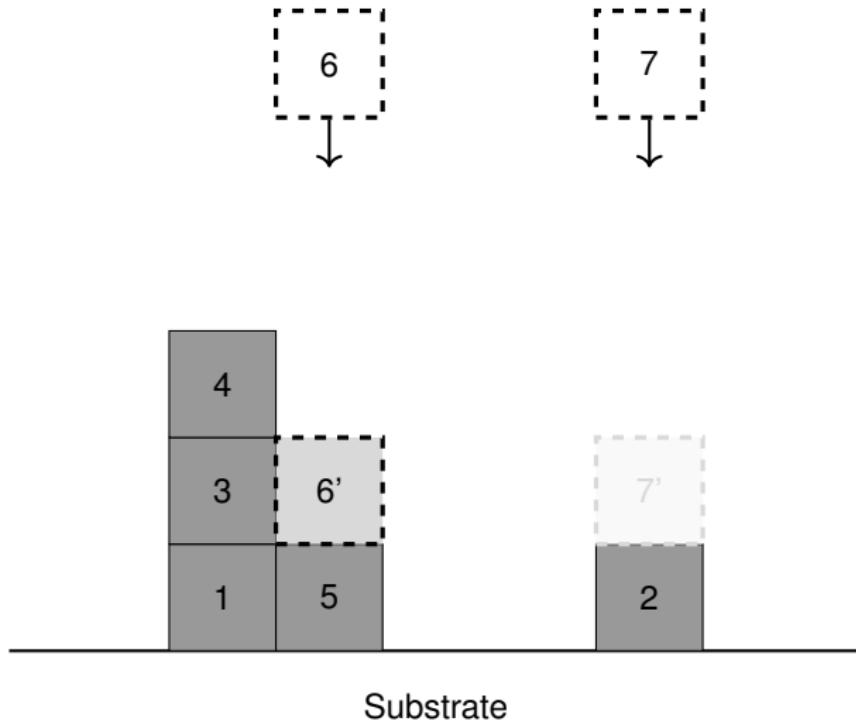
# Random deposition



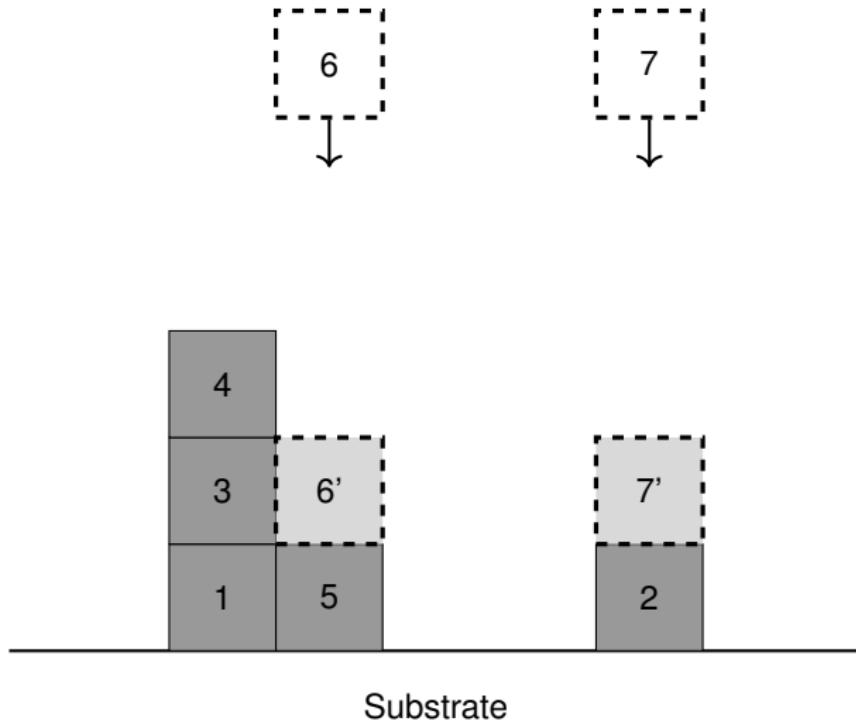
## Random deposition



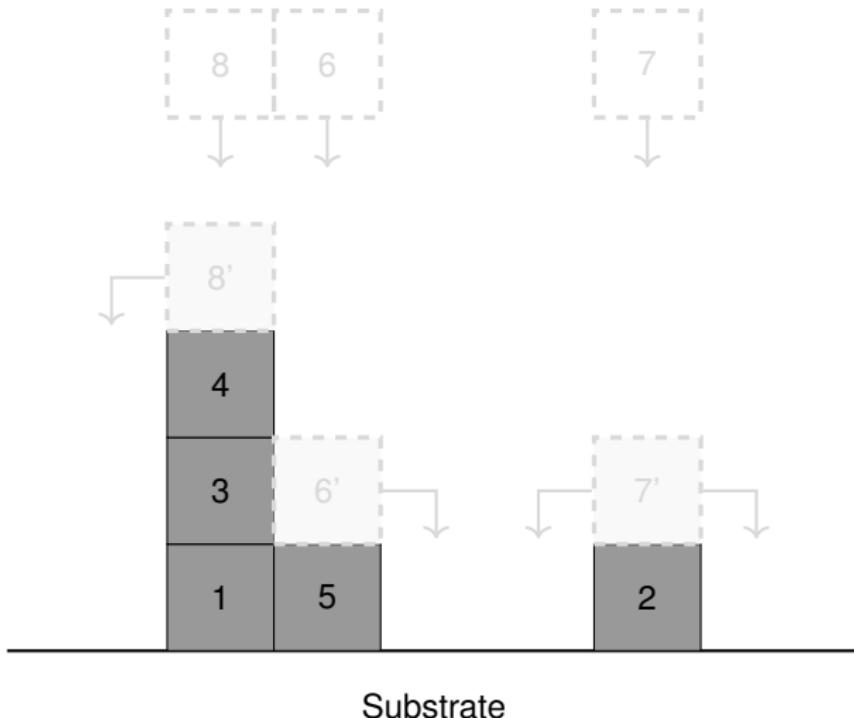
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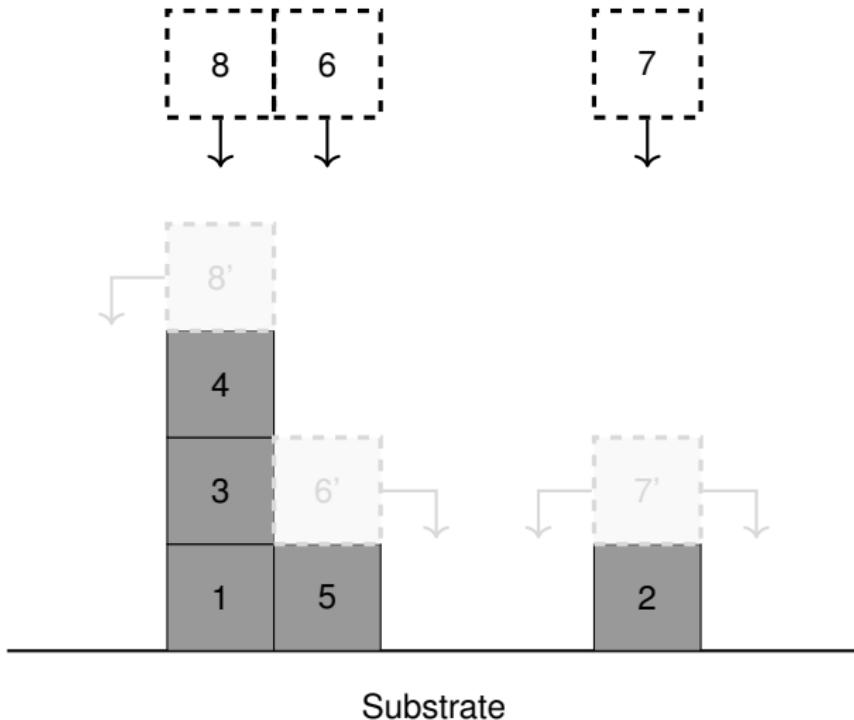
## Random deposition



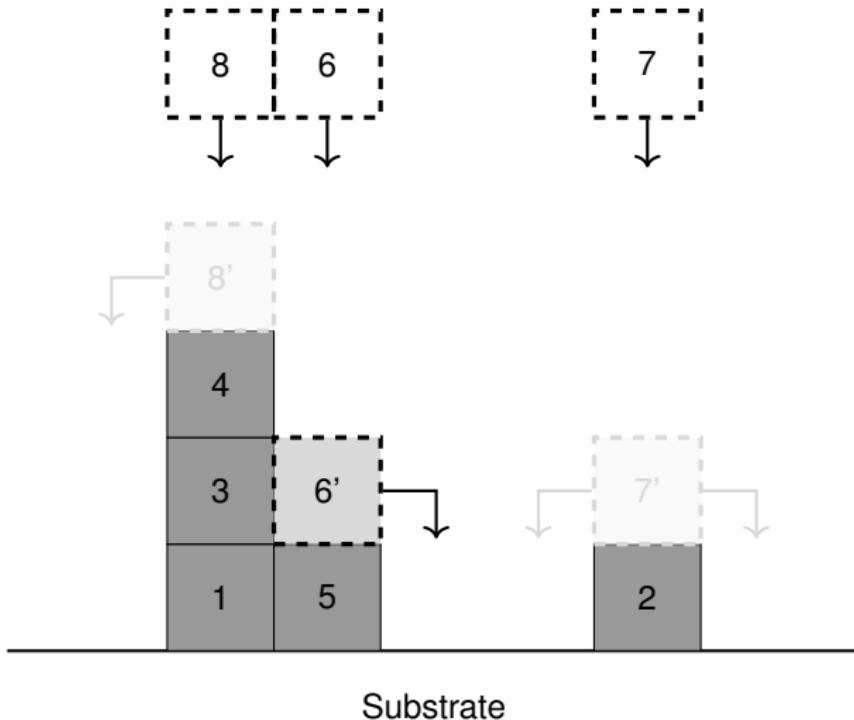
## Random deposition with surface relaxation



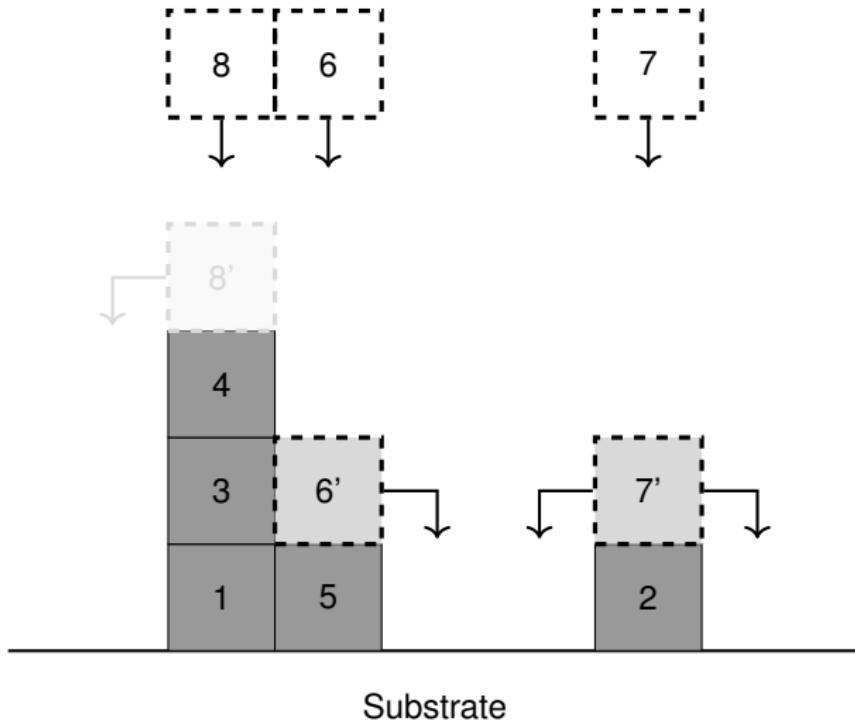
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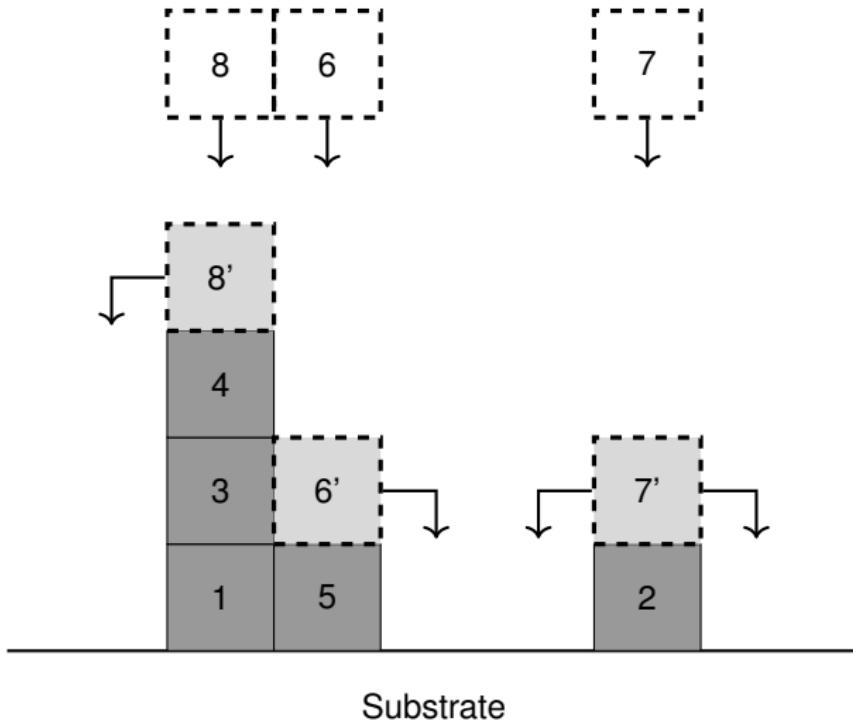
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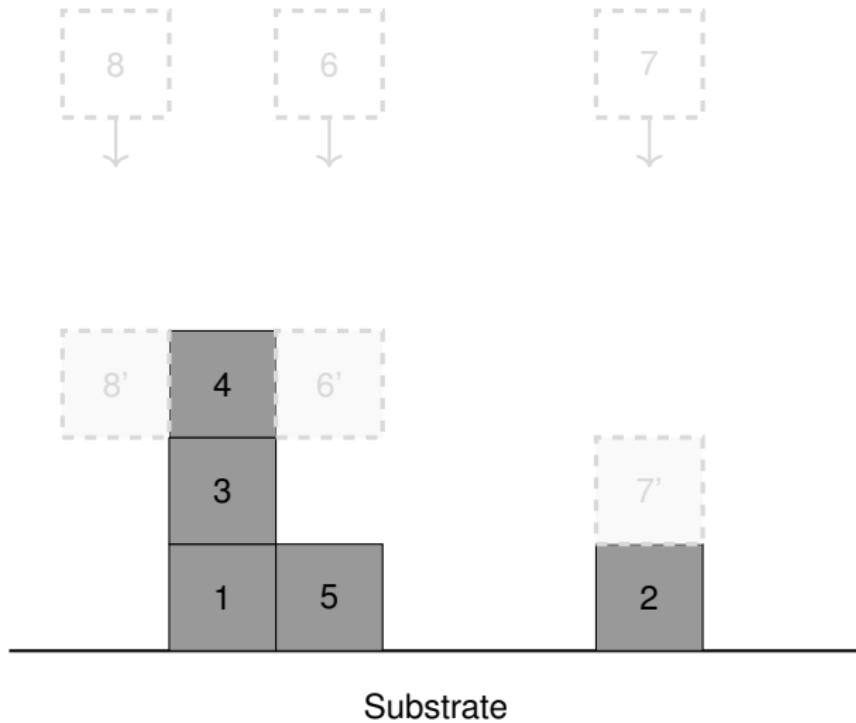
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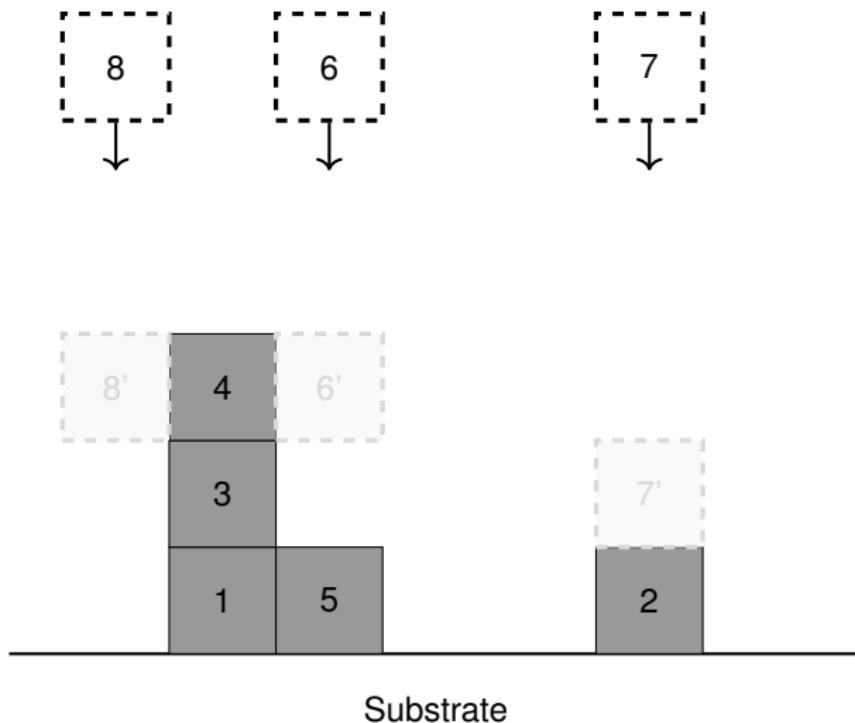
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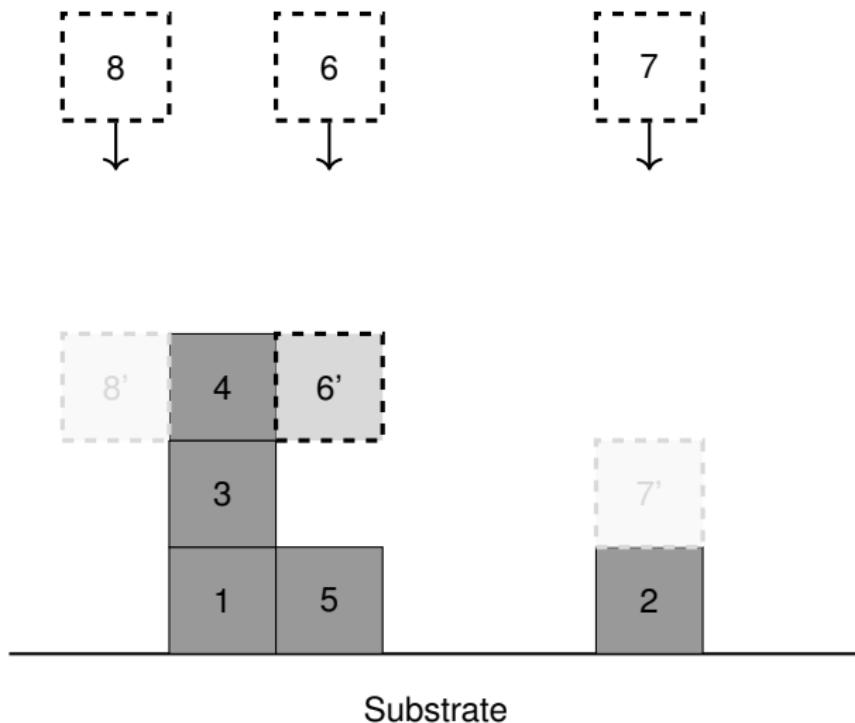
# Ballistic deposition



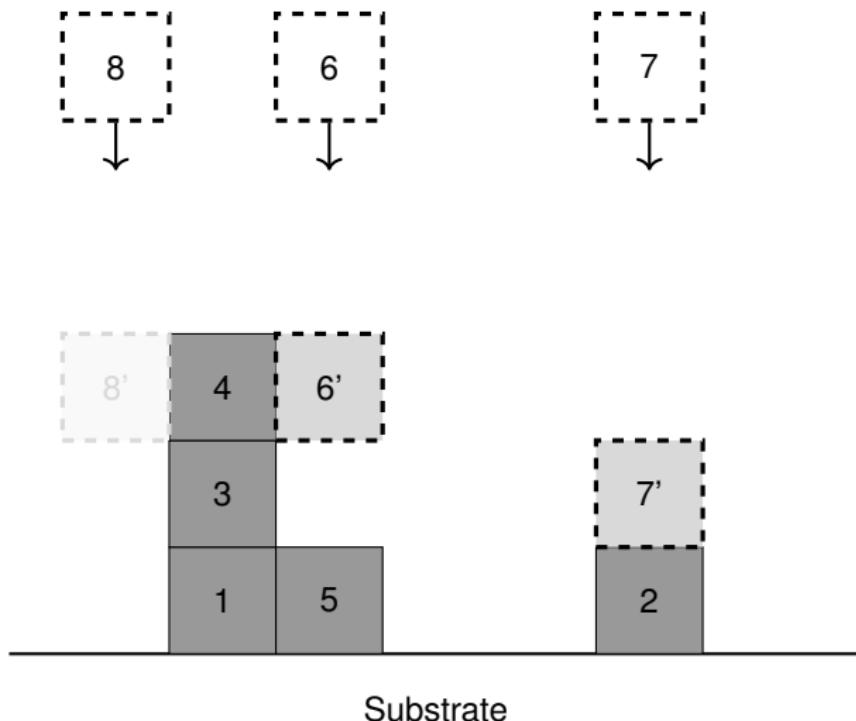
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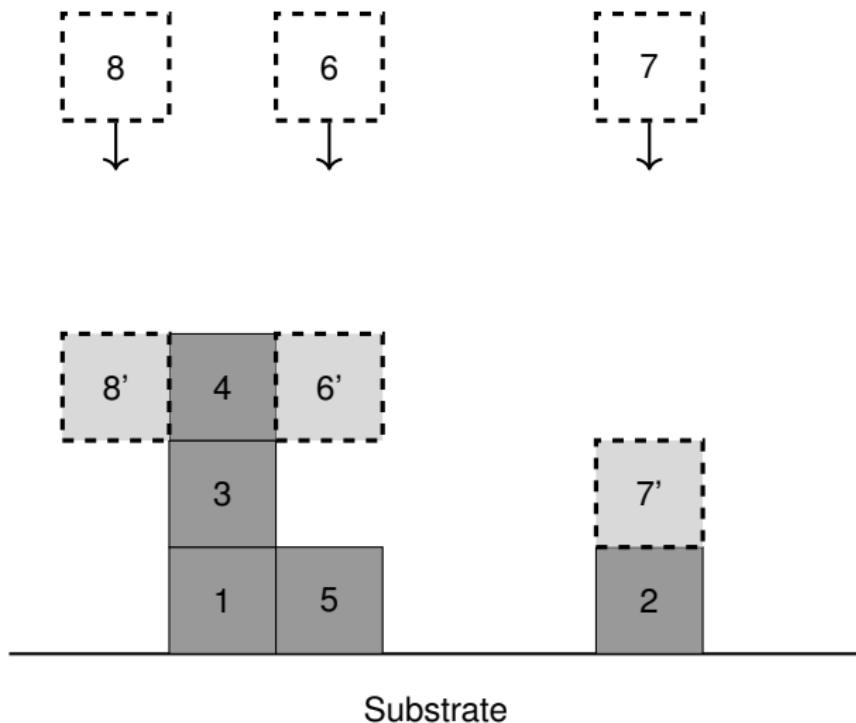
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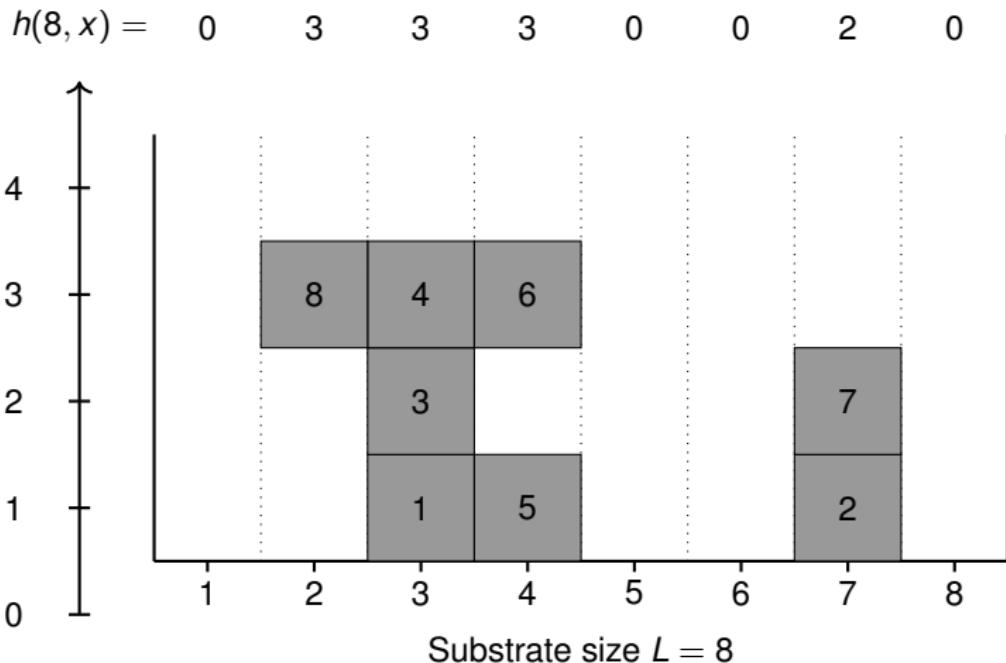
## Ballistic deposition



## Ballistic deposition



## Average height and fluctuation

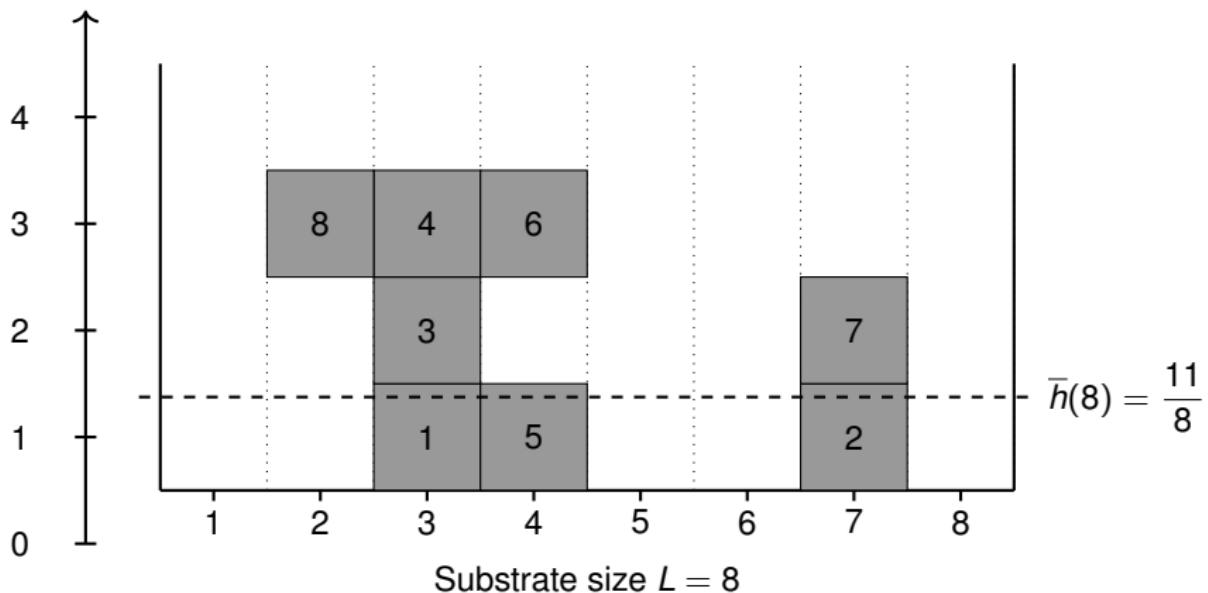


## Average height and fluctuation

$$\bar{h}(t) = \frac{1}{L} \sum_{x=1}^L h(t, x)$$

$$\text{Fluctuation } W(L, t) = \sqrt{\frac{1}{L} \sum_{x=1}^L [h(t, x) - \bar{h}(t)]^2}$$

$$h(8, x) = \begin{array}{cccccccc} 0 & 3 & 3 & 3 & 0 & 0 & 2 & 0 \end{array}$$

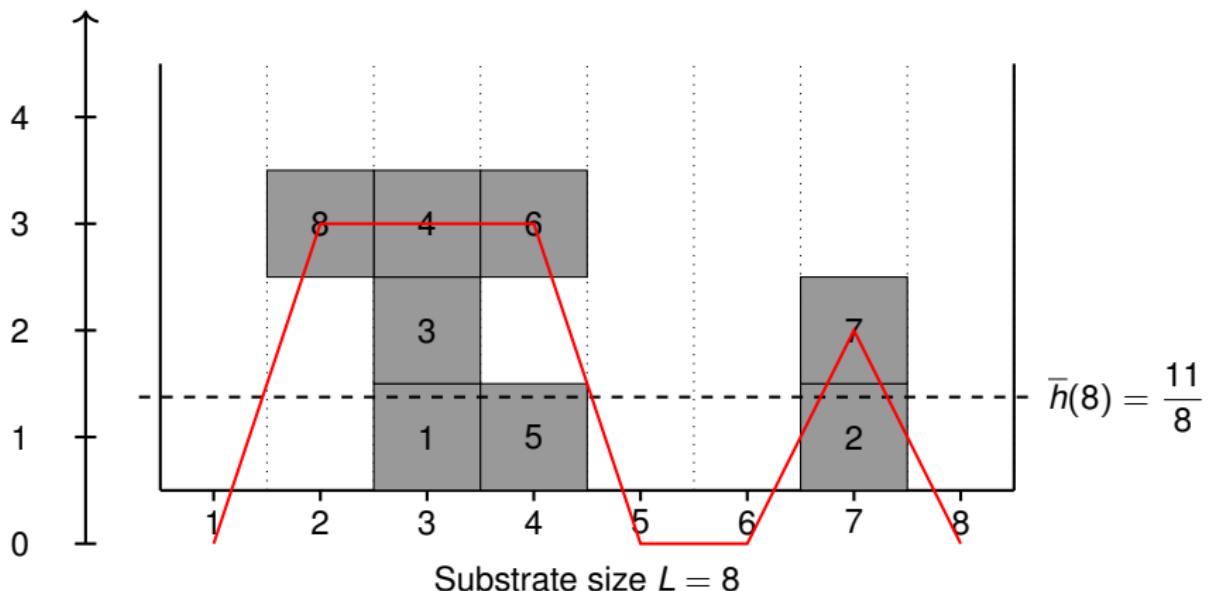


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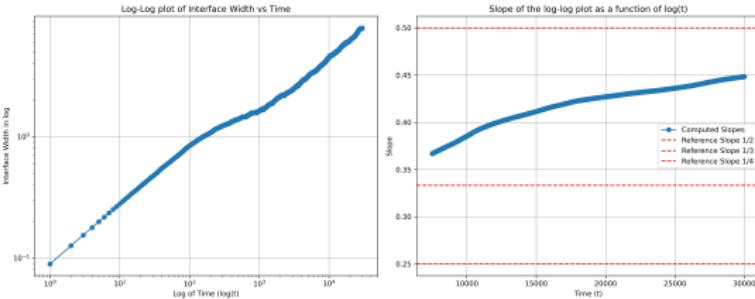
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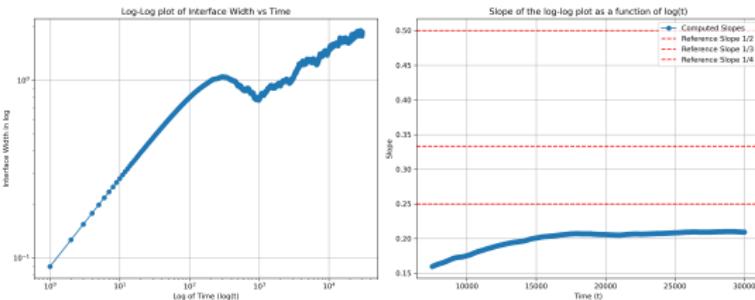
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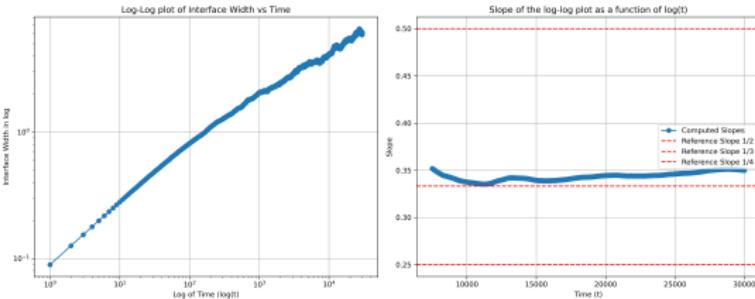
RD



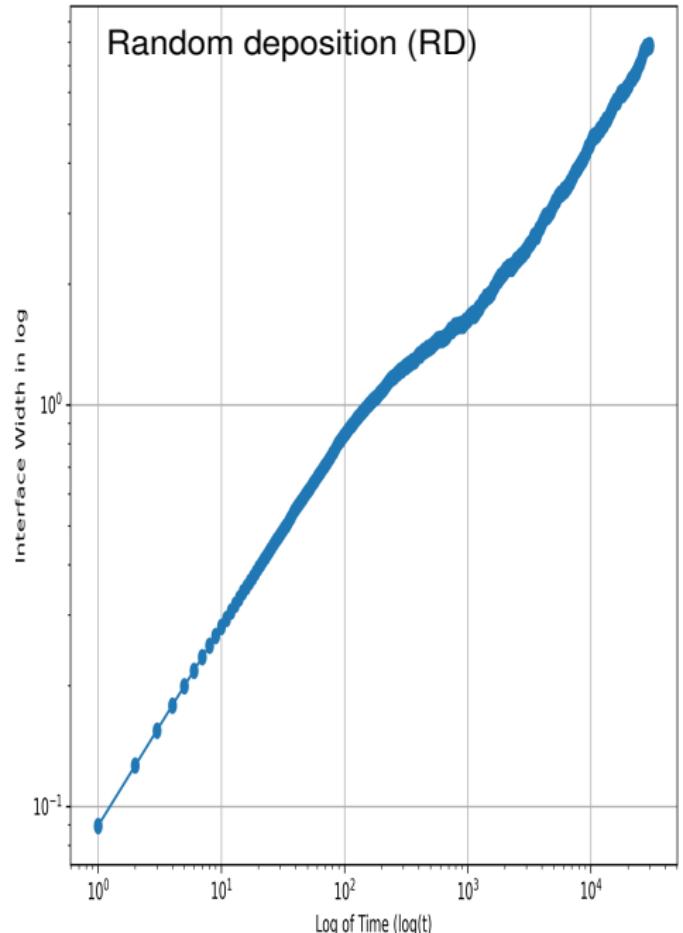
RD Relaxed



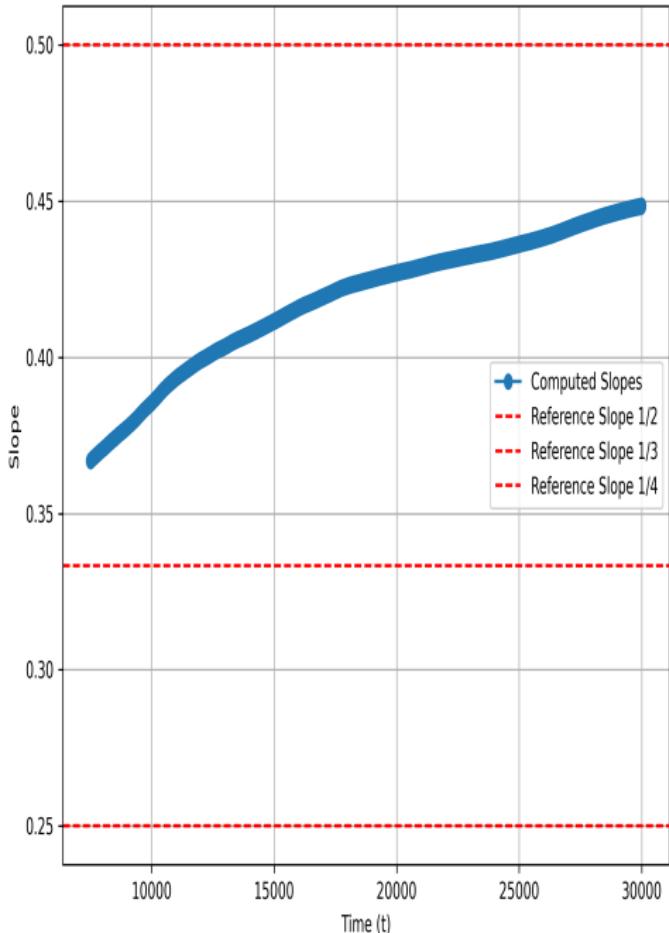
BD



Log-Log plot of Interface Width vs Time



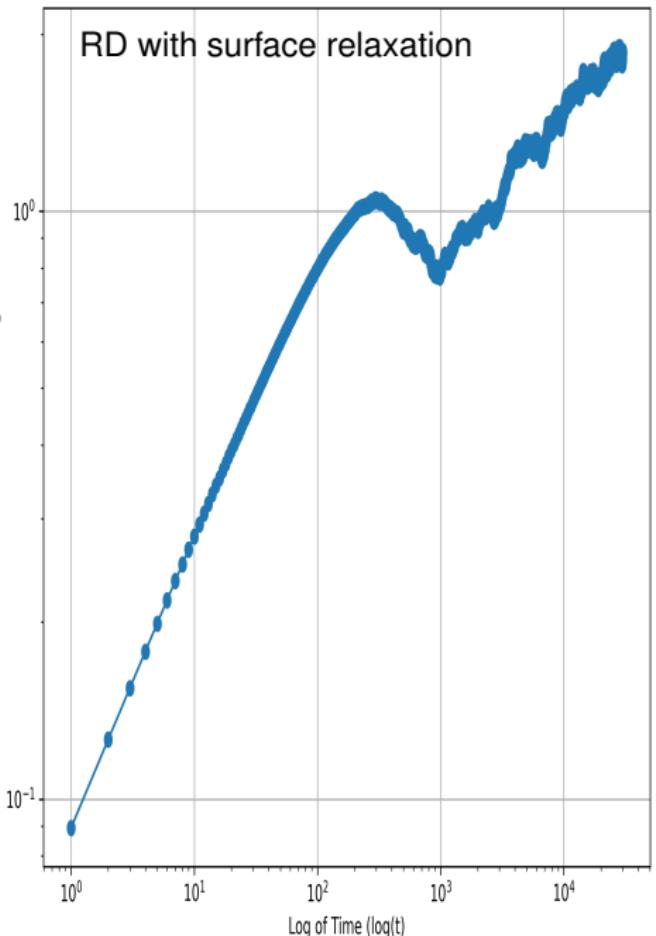
Slope of the log-log plot as a function of  $\log(t)$



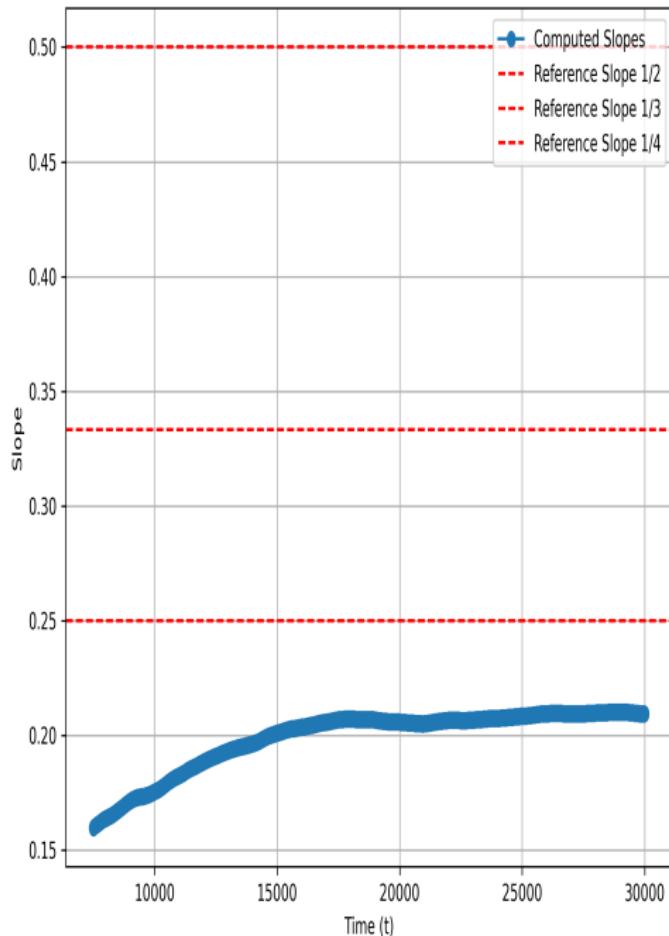
Log-Log plot of Interface Width vs Time

RD with surface relaxation

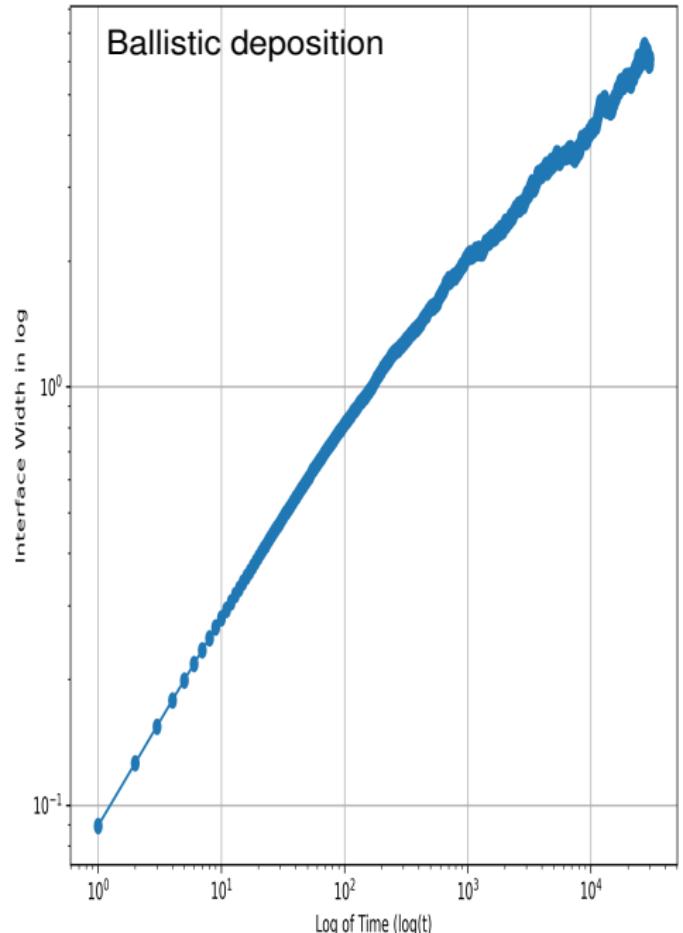
Interface Width in log



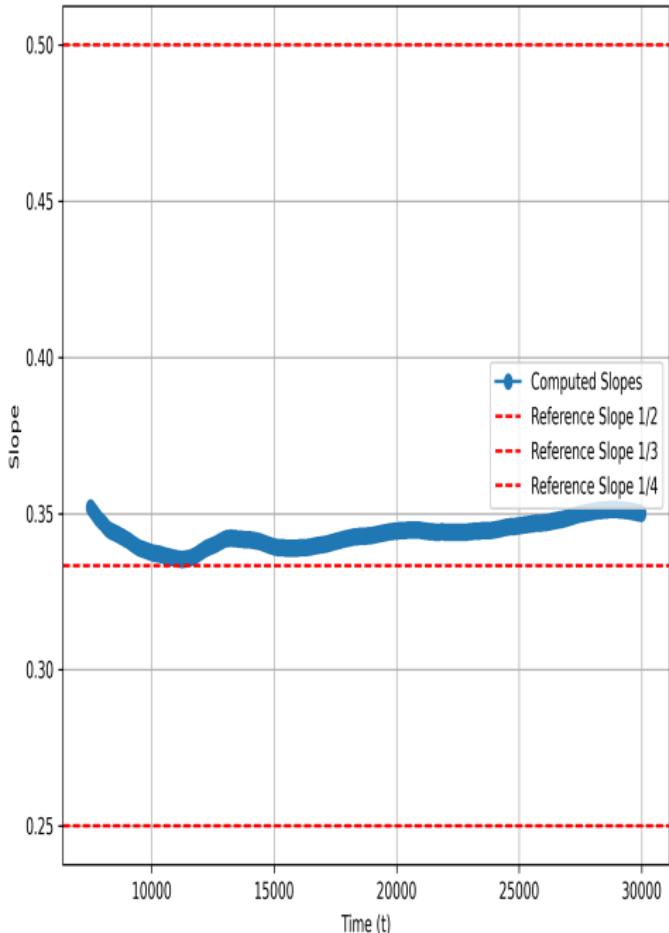
Slope of the log-log plot as a function of  $\log(t)$



Log-Log plot of Interface Width vs Time



Slope of the log-log plot as a function of  $\log(t)$



```
> ./RD_CLI.py --help  
usage: RD_CLI.py [-h] [-w WIDTH] [-e HEIGHT] [-s STEPS] [--relax] [--BD] [-m]
```

Simulate Random Deposition on a substrate.

Outputs: 1. Substrate\_WIDTHxHEIGHT\_Particles=STEPS\_[Relaxed/BD].txt  
A text file for the substrate.

2. Statistical figures, loglog plot for the interface width and the estimated slope.

Author: Le Chen (le.chen@auburn.edu, chenle02@gmail.com)

Date: 2023-10-22

options:

-h, --help show this help message and exit

-w WIDTH, --width WIDTH  
Width of the substrate (default: 100)

-e HEIGHT, --height HEIGHT  
Maximum height of the substrate (default: 60)

-s STEPS, --steps STEPS  
Number of particles to drop (default: 5000)

--relax Surface Relaxation: go to the nearest lowest neighbor (default: False)

--BD Ballistic decomposition (default: False)

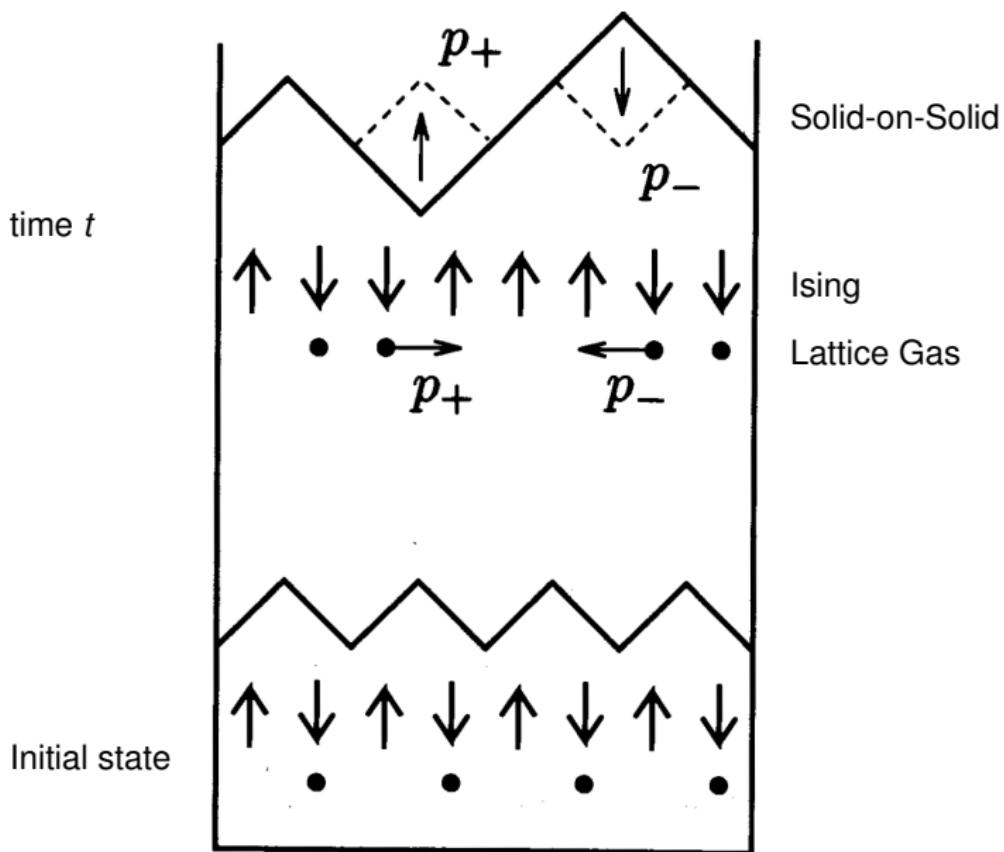
-m, --movie Generate the mp4 movie (default: False)

```
1 def Random_Deposition(width, height, steps):
2     substrate = np.zeros((height, width))
3     topmost = height - 1
4
5     for step in range(steps):
6         position = np.random.randint(0, width)
7         landing_row = np.argmax(np.where(substrate[:, position] == 0))
8         substrate[landing_row, position] = step + 1
9
10        if landing_row < topmost:
11            topmost = landing_row
12
13        if (step + 1) % 200 == 0:
14            print(f"Step: {step + 1}/{steps}, Level at {height - topmost}/{height}")
15
16        if topmost < height * 0.10 or topmost <= 2:
17            print(f"Stopped at step {step + 1}, Level at {height - topmost}/{height}")
18            break
19
20    outputfile = f'Substrate_{width}x{height}_Particles={steps}.txt'
21    np.savetxt(outputfile, substrate, fmt='%d', delimiter=',')
22    print(f"[{outputfile}] saved!")
23    return outputfile
24
25 V-LINE > master > -1 > 0.5 || 1 > RD_CLI.py
-- VISUAL LINE --
26
27 _ def Random_Deposition_Surface_Relaxation(width, height, steps):
28     substrate = np.zeros((height, width))
29     topmost = height - 1
30
31     for step in range(steps):
32         position = np.random.randint(0, width)
33
34         # Determine the landing rows for middle, left, and right columns
35         landing_row_mid = np.argmax(np.where(substrate[:, position] == 0))
36         landing_row_left = np.argmax(np.where(substrate[:, max(position - 1, 0)] == 0))
37         landing_row_right = np.argmax(np.where(substrate[:, min(position + 1, width - 1)] == 0))
38
39         # Surface relaxation
40         if landing_row_right > (max(landing_row_mid, landing_row_left)) and position < width - 1:
41             # Landing on the right column
42             substrate[landing_row_right, position + 1] = step + 1
43             landing_row = landing_row_right
44         elif landing_row_left > landing_row_mid and position > 1:
45             # Landing on the left column
46             substrate[landing_row_left, position - 1] = step + 1
47             landing_row = landing_row_left
48         else:
49             # Default, Landing in the middle column
50             substrate[landing_row_mid, position] = step + 1
51             landing_row = landing_row_mid
52
53         if landing_row < topmost:
54             topmost = landing_row
55
56         if (step + 1) % 200 == 0:
57             print(f"Step: {step + 1}/{steps}, Level at {height - topmost}/{height}")
58
59         if topmost < height * 0.10 or topmost <= 2:
60             print(f"Stopped at step {step + 1}, Level at {height - topmost}/{height}")
61             break
62
63     outputfile = f'Substrate_{width}x{height}_Particles={steps}_Relaxed.txt'
64     np.savetxt(outputfile, substrate, fmt='%d', delimiter=',')
65     print(f"[{outputfile}] saved!")
66     return outputfile
67
```

|    |    |    |    |     |    |     |     |     |     |    |
|----|----|----|----|-----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| 9  | 0, | 0, | 0, | 0,  | 0, | 0,  | 0,  | 0,  | 0,  | 0  |
| 8  | 0, | 0, | 0, | 0,  | 0, | 0,  | 0,  | 0,  | 0,  | 0  |
| 7  | 0, | 0, | 0, | 0,  | 0, | 0,  | 21, | 0,  | 0,  | 0  |
| 6  | 0, | 0, | 0, | 0,  | 0, | 0,  | 20, | 19, | 16, | 17 |
| 5  | 0, | 0, | 0, | 0,  | 0, | 0,  | 0,  | 0,  | 15, | 0  |
| 4  | 0, | 0, | 0, | 0,  | 0, | 0,  | 0,  | 0,  | 13, | 0  |
| 3  | 0, | 0, | 0, | 18, | 0, | 0,  | 0,  | 0,  | 11, | 9  |
| 2  | 0, | 0, | 0, | 14, | 0, | 12, | 0,  | 0,  | 0,  | 6  |
| 1  | 0, | 0, | 7, | 8,  | 0, | 3,  | 0,  | 0,  | 0,  | 5  |
| 10 | 0, | 0, | 2, | 0,  | 0, | 1,  | 0,  | 10, | 0,  | 4  |

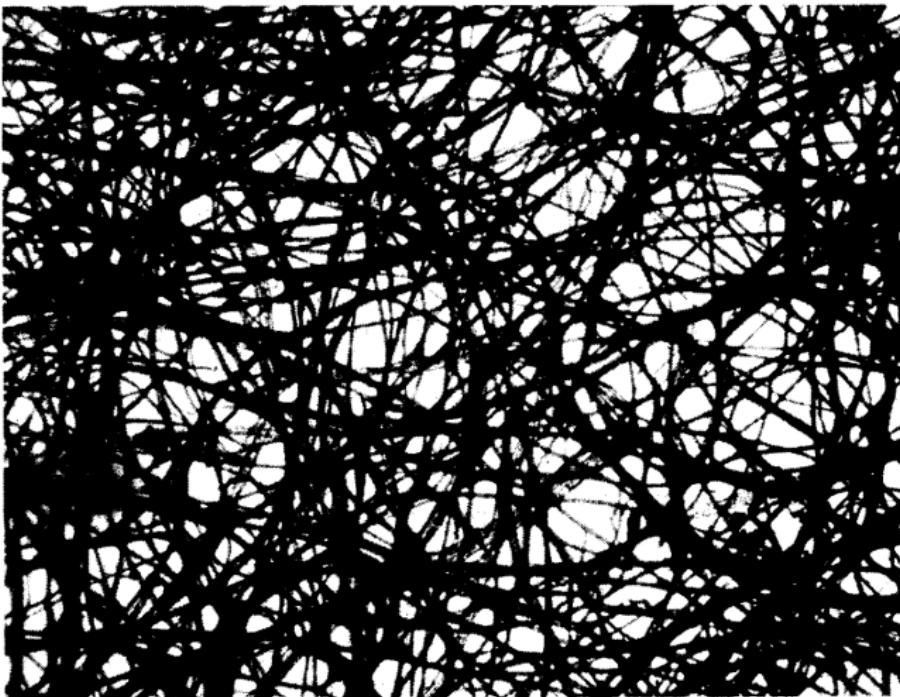
Simulations on  
Random deposition vs. Ballistic decomposition

## More models? Even more simpler?



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nh2P\\_I3SGoU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nh2P_I3SGoU)

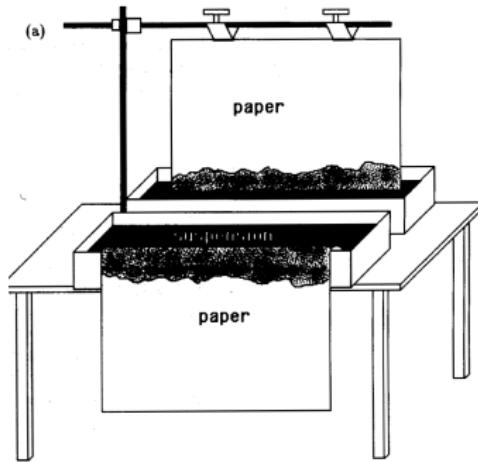
## Paper – a random environment



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Zhang, J., Zhang, Y.-C., Alstrøm, P., Levinsen, M., *Phys. A: Stat. Mech. Appl.*, 1992

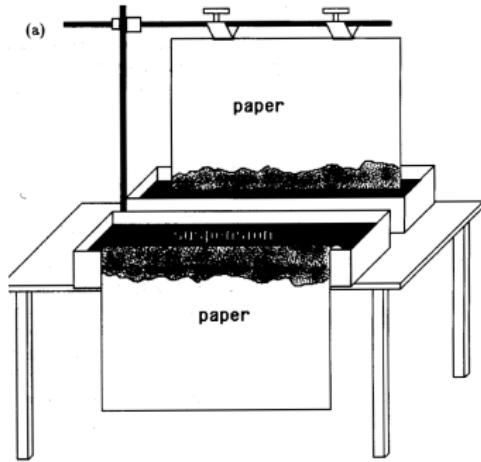
# Paper wetting experiment



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Barabási, A.-L., Stanley, H. E., 1995

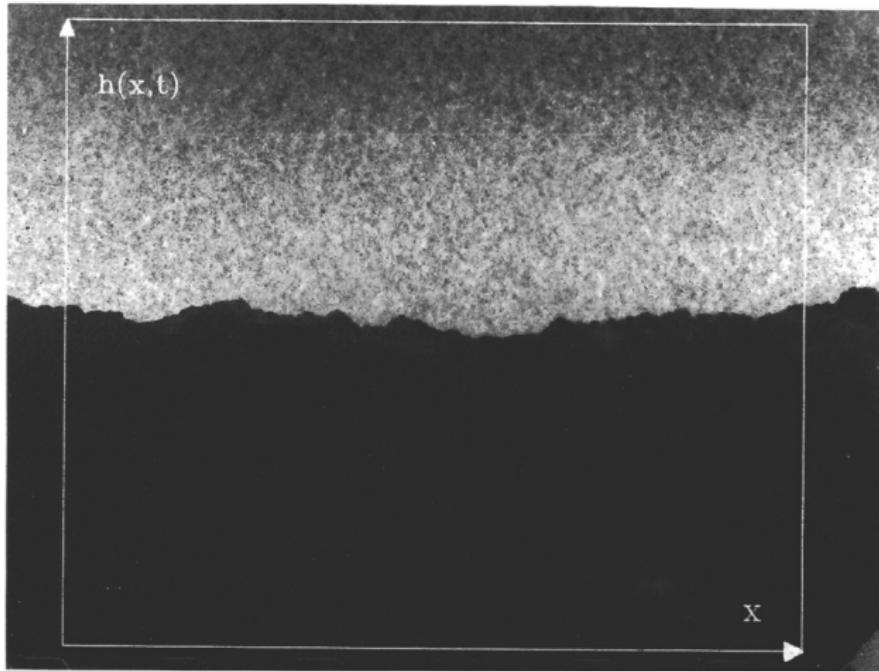
# Paper wetting experiment



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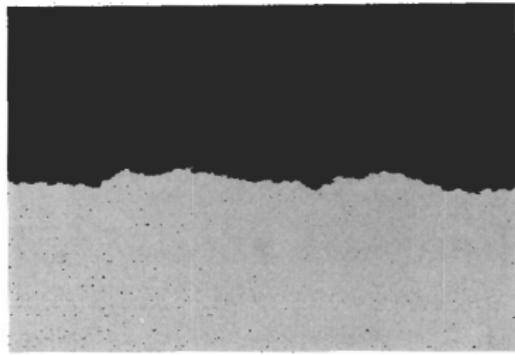
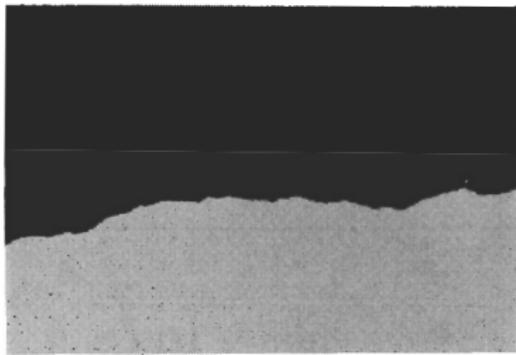
Barabási, A.-L., Stanley, H. E., 1995

# Paper burning experiment



Zhang, J., Zhang, Y.-C., Alstrøm, P., Levinsen, M., *Phys. A: Stat. Mech. Appl.*, 1992

# Paper rupture experiment

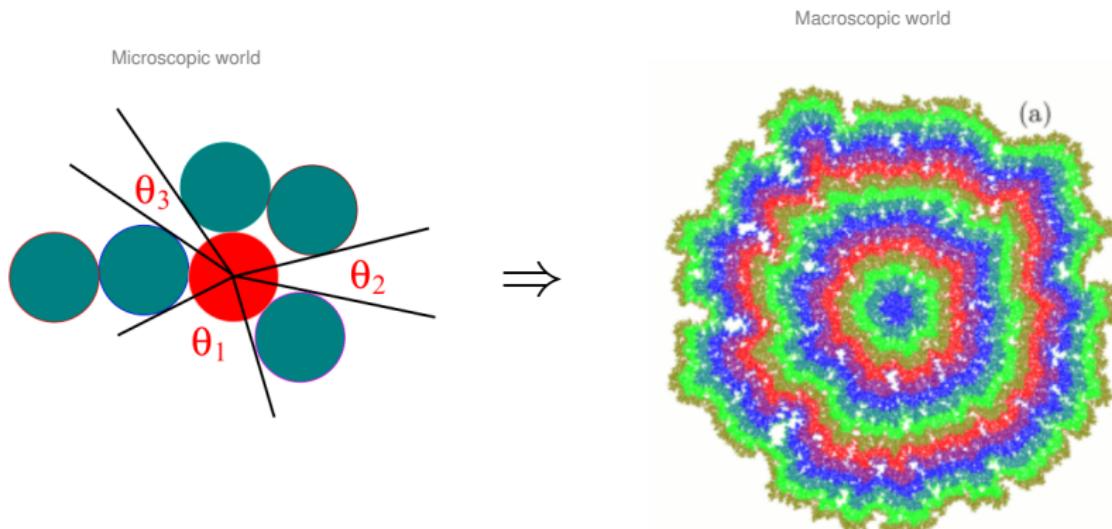


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Kertész, J., Horváth, V. k., Weber, F., *Fractals*, 1993

## Rule of replication of **cells**

Replication probability  $\propto$  Aperture angle  $\theta_i$



# Study of growing interfaces in a thin film

— Convection of nematic liquid crystal\*

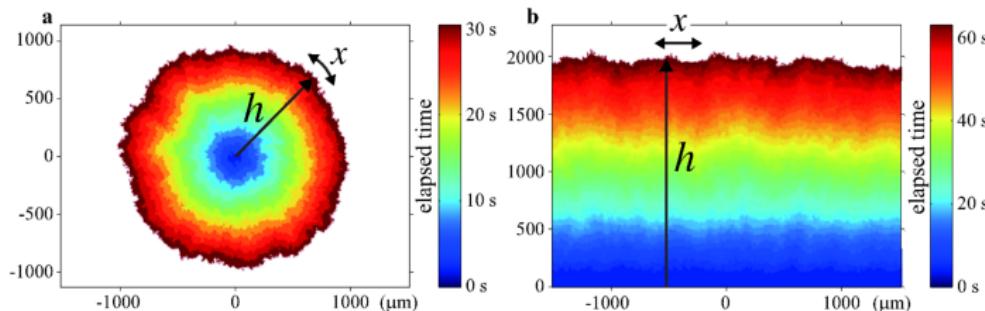
Show movies !

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Takeuchi, K. A., Sano, M., Sasamoto, T., Spohn, H., *Sci. Rep.*, 2011

# Study of growing interfaces in a thin film

— Convection of nematic liquid crystal\*



Prediction from KPZ equation:

$$h \asymp v_\infty t + (\Gamma t)^{1/3} \xi$$

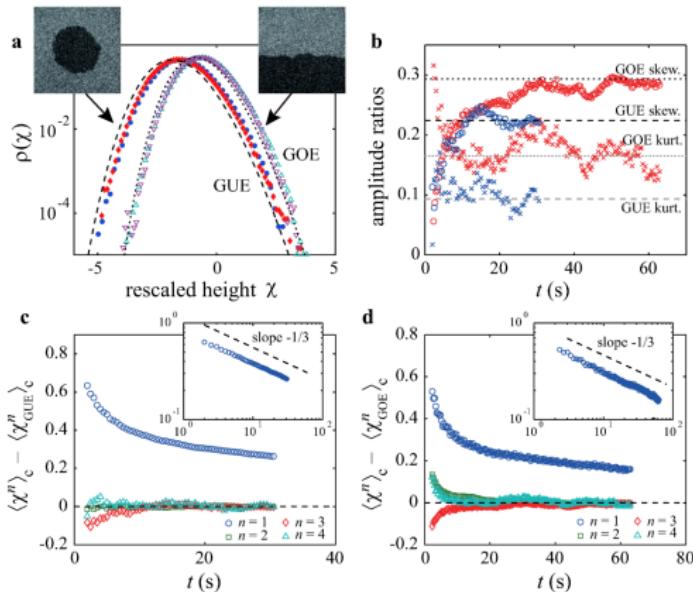
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Takeuchi, K. A., Sano, M., Sasamoto, T., Spohn, H., *Sci. Rep.*, 2011

# Study of growing interfaces in a thin film

## — Convection of nematic liquid crystal\*

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# KPZ Equation '86

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} h(t, x) = \frac{1}{2} \Delta h(t, x) + \frac{\lambda}{2} (\nabla h)^2 + \dot{W}(t, x) \quad (\text{KPZ})$$



Mehran Kardar (1957 –) Giorgio Parisi (1948 –)



Yicheng Zhang

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Kardar, M., Parisi, G., Zhang, Y.-C., *Phys. Rev. Lett.*, 1986

## Two ways to obtain KPZ

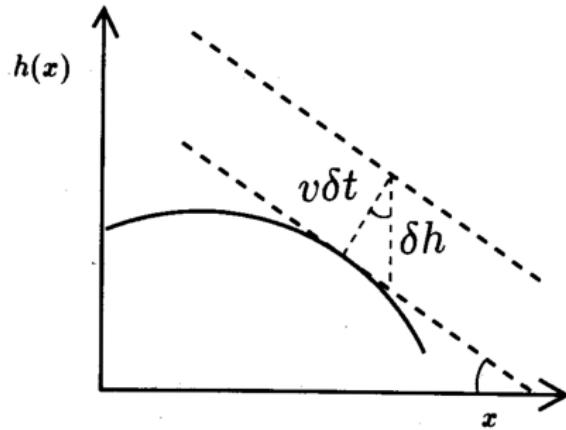
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1. Via symmetry arguments; as Barabási, A.-L., Stanley, H. E., 1995 and Kardar, M., Parisi, G., Zhang, Y.-C., *Phys. Rev. Lett.*, 1986

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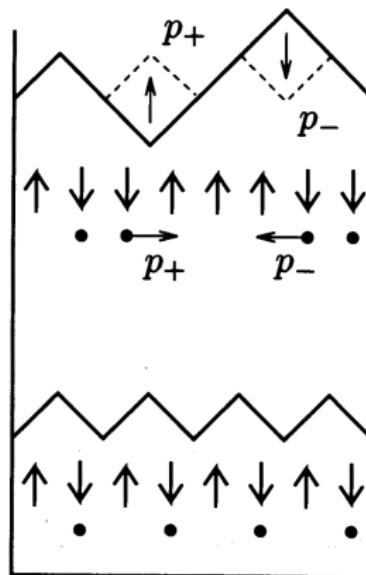


## Two ways to obtain KPZ

2. Hydrodynamic limit of SOS; as Bertini, L., Giacomin, G., *Probab. Theory Related Fields*, 1999

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## KPZ & SHE: Two Sides, One Mathematical Coin

$$h(t, x) = \log u(t, x)$$

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} h(t, x) = \frac{1}{2} \Delta h(t, x) + \frac{\lambda}{2} (\nabla h)^2 + \dot{W}(t, x) \quad (\text{KPZ})$$

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} u(t, x) = \frac{1}{2} \Delta u(t, x) + u(t, x) \dot{W}(t, x) \quad (\text{SHE})$$

# Giorgio Parisi

## Facts

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III. Niklas Elmehed © Nobel Prize Outreach

Giorgio Parisi  
The Nobel Prize in Physics 2021

Born: 4 August 1948, Rome, Italy

Affiliation at the time of the award: Sapienza University of Rome, Rome, Italy

Prize motivation: "for the discovery of the interplay of disorder and fluctuations in physical systems from atomic to planetary scales."

Prize share: 1/2

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/physics/2021/parisi/facts/>



Martin Hairer at the [Royal Society](#) admissions day in London, July 2014

**Born** 14 November 1975 (age 45)  
Geneva, Switzerland

**Citizenship** Austrian  
British

**Education** College Claparede, Geneva

**Alma mater** University of Geneva

**Spouse(s)** Xue-Mei Li (m. 2003)[\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)

**Awards** Whitehead Prize (2008)  
Philip Leverhulme Prize (2008)

Wolfson Research Merit Award  
(2009)

Fermat Prize (2013)

Fröhlich Prize (2014)

Fields Medal (2014)

Breakthrough Prize in  
Mathematics (2021)

Scientific career

**Fields** Probability theory<sup>[3]</sup>  
Analysis<sup>[3]</sup>

## Fields Medal in 2014

- ▶ Solving the KPZ equation.
- ▶ A theory of regularity structures.

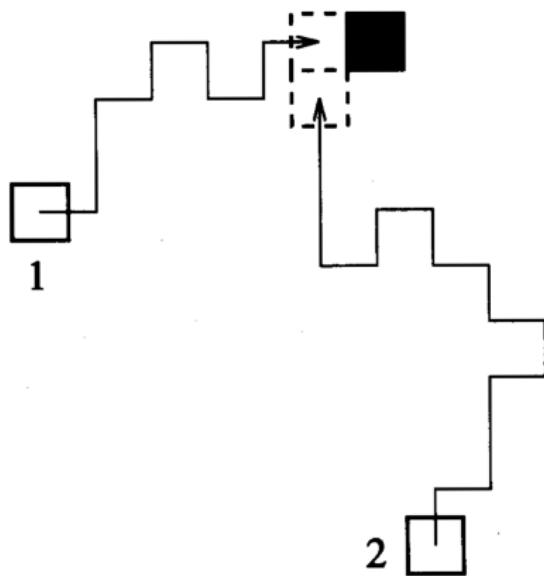
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Hairer, M., *Ann. of Math.* (2), 2013

Hairer, M., *Invent. Math.*, 2014



## Nonlocal model – Diffusion Limited Aggregation (DLA)



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Barabási, A.-L., Stanley, H. E., 1995



Self avoid random walk

*Random walk in random environment*

Percolation

Random polymers

Phase transitions



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**More about SHE**

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Final remarks

$$\frac{\partial^b}{\partial t^b} u(t, x) = \left( \frac{1}{2} \Delta + \dot{W}(t, x) \right) u(t, x)$$

$\Delta u$

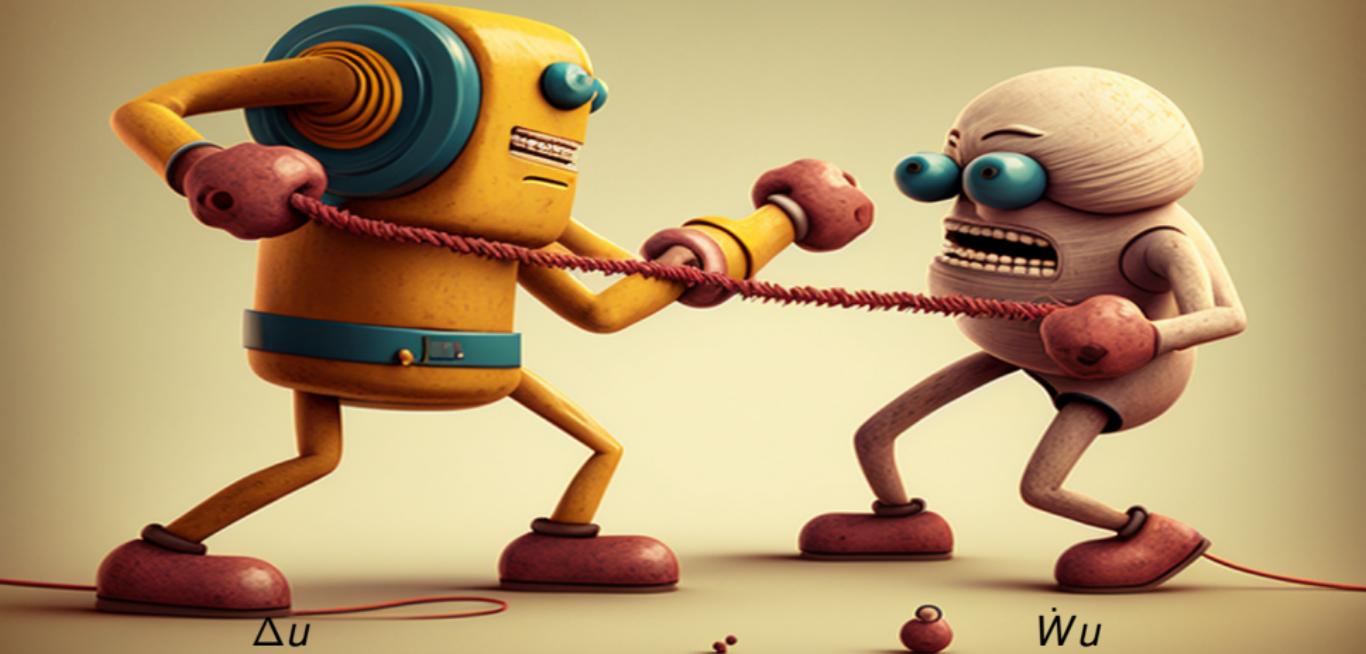
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Smoothing

$\dot{W}u$

Roughening

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} u(t, x) = \left( \frac{1}{2} \Delta + \dot{W}(t, x) \right) u(t, x)$$



Smoothing

Roughening

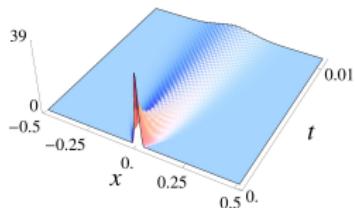
$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} u(t, x) = \left( \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} + \lambda \dot{W}(t, x) \right) u(t, x)$$

— Propagation of tall peaks\*

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} u(t, x) = \left( \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} + \lambda \dot{W}(t, x) \right) u(t, x)$$

— Propagation of tall peaks\*

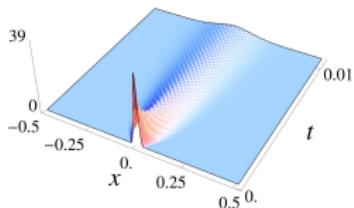
$\lambda=0$



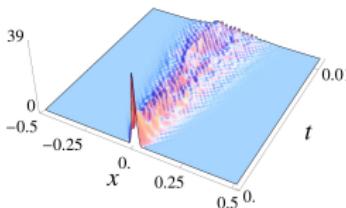
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— Propagation of tall peaks\*

$\lambda=0$



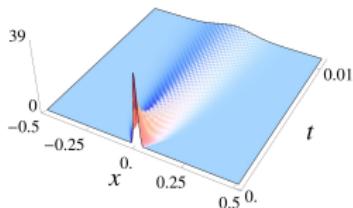
$\lambda=2$



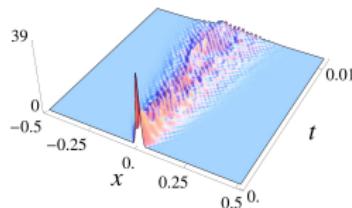
$$\frac{\partial}{\partial t} u(t, x) = \left( \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} + \lambda \dot{W}(t, x) \right) u(t, x)$$

— Propagation of tall peaks\*

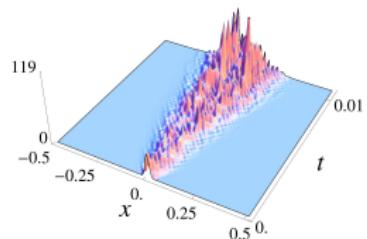
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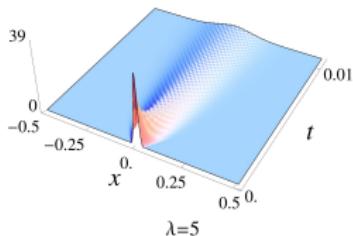
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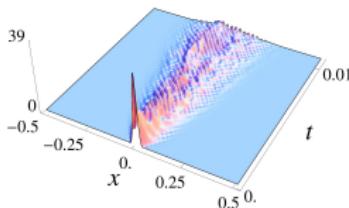
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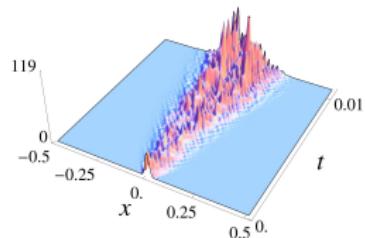
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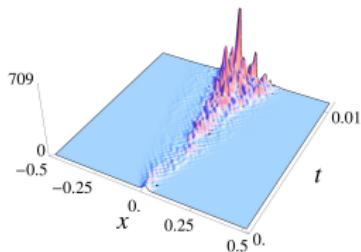
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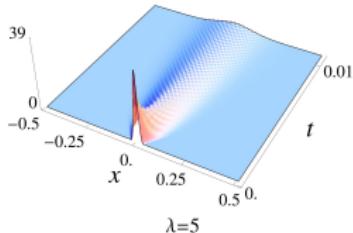
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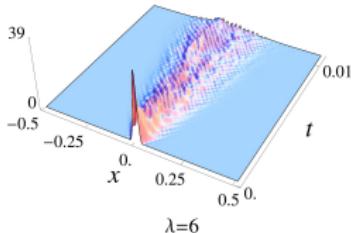
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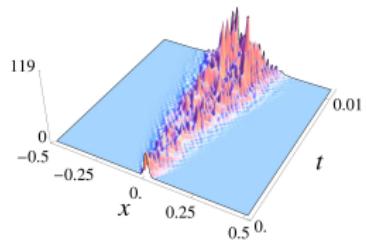
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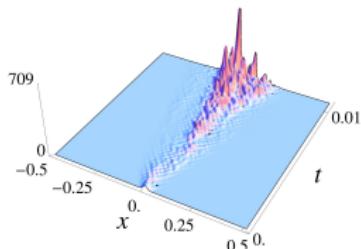
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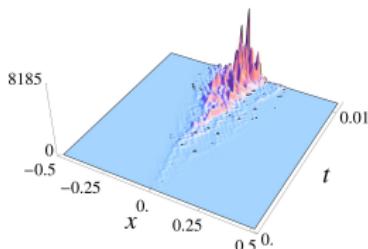
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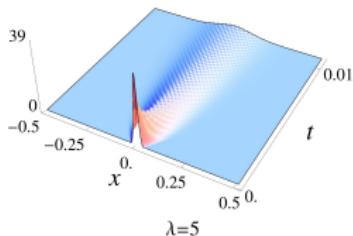
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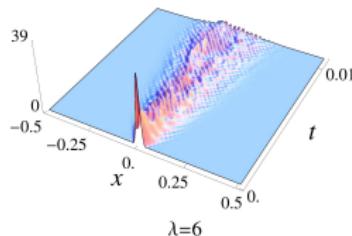
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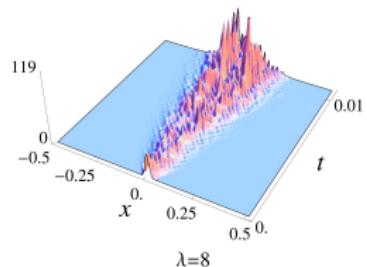
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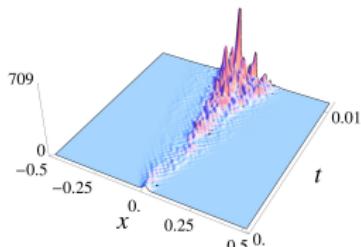
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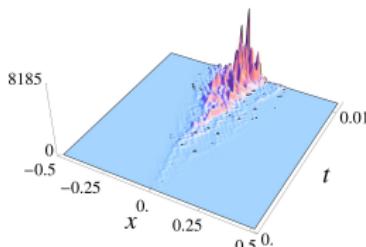
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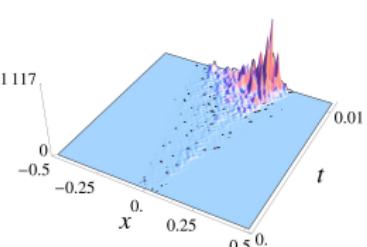
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$\lambda=6$



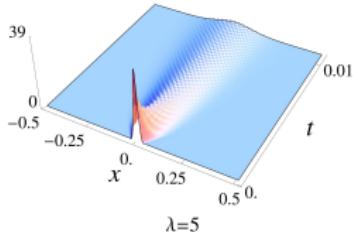
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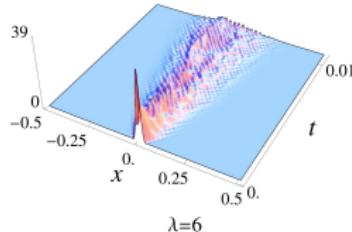
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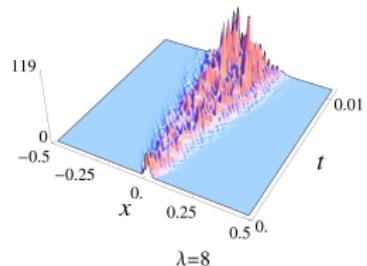
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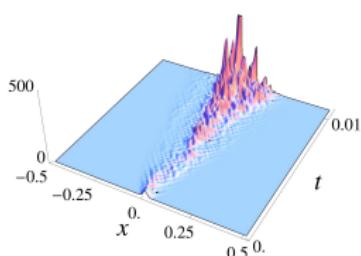
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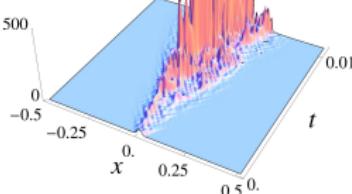
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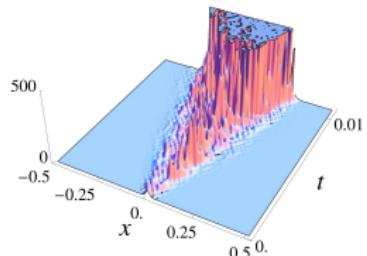
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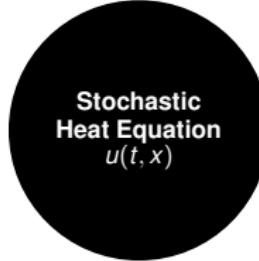


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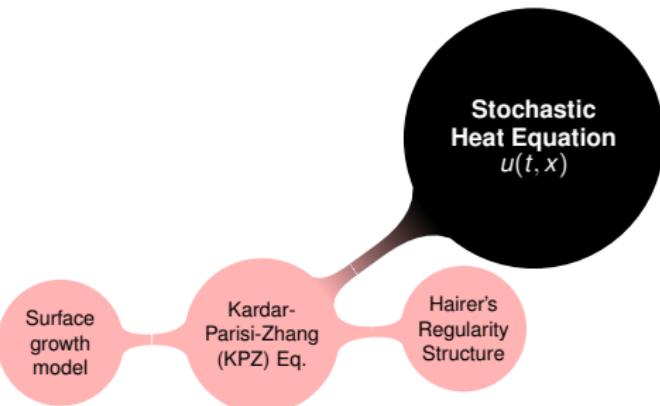


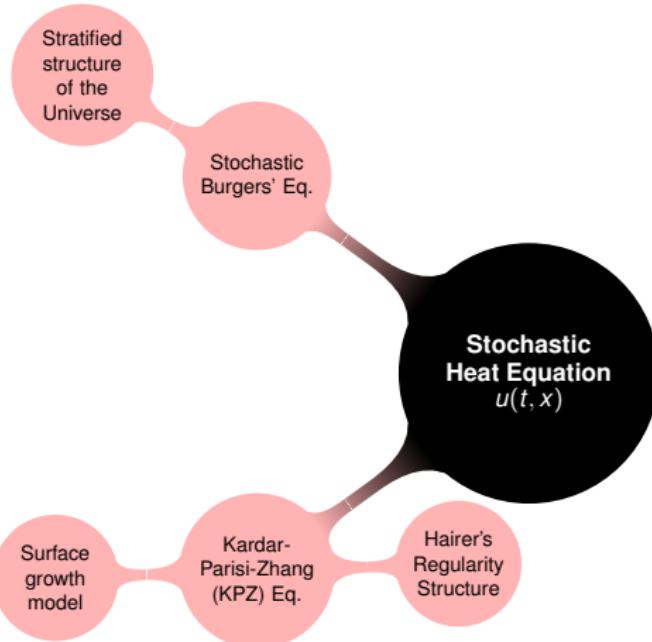
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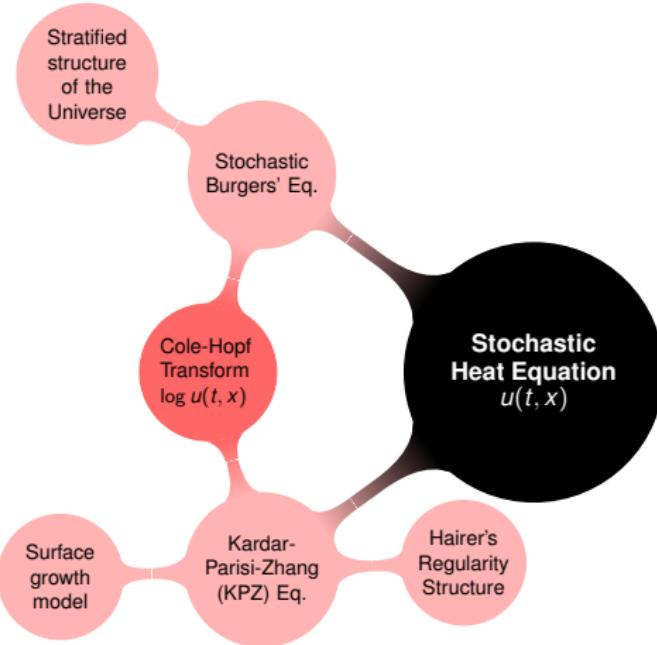


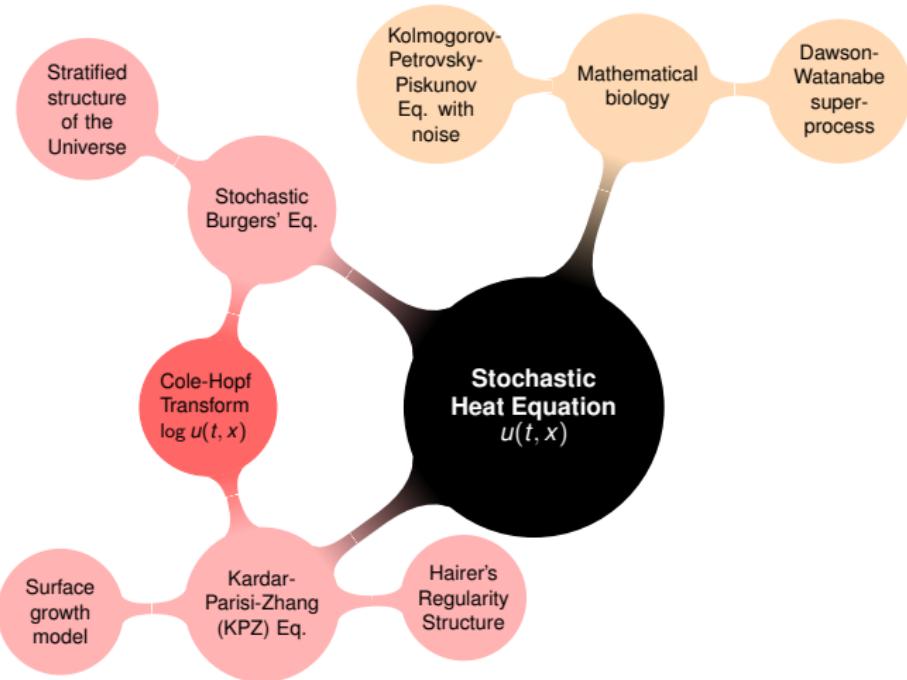


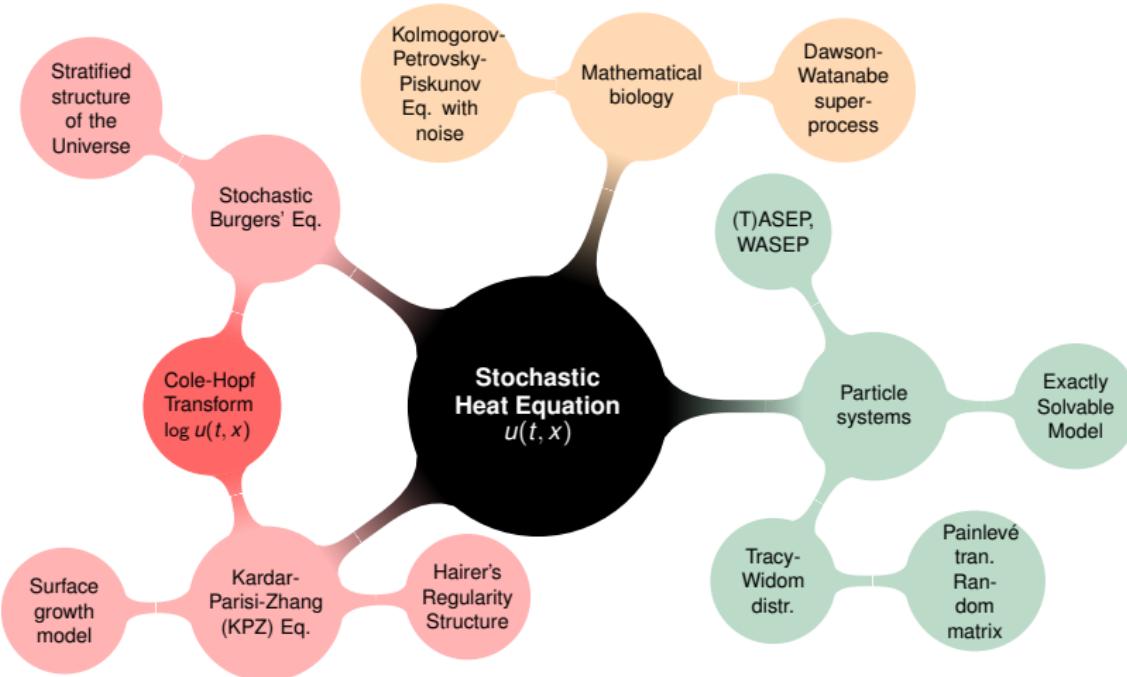
**Stochastic  
Heat Equation**  
 $u(t, x)$

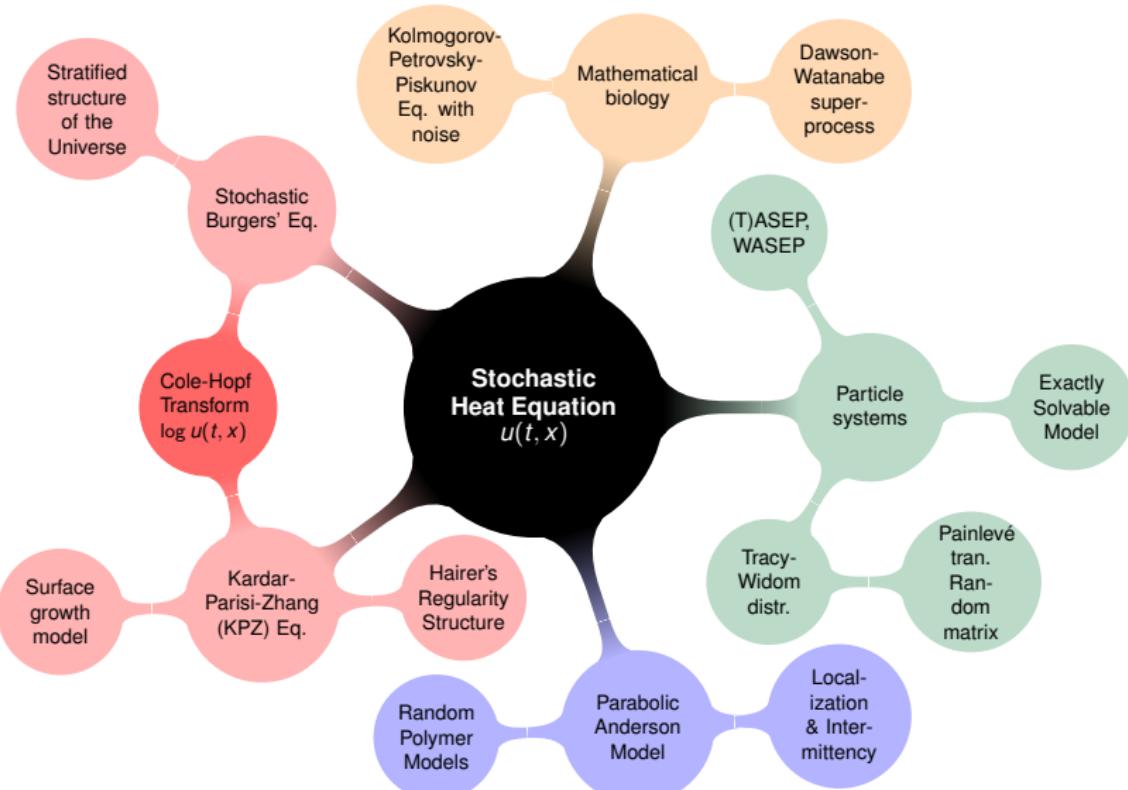












## Stochastic heat equation (SHE)

$$\begin{cases} \left( \frac{\partial}{\partial t} - \frac{1}{2} \Delta \right) u(t, x) = \rho(u(t, x)) \dot{W}(t, x), & t > 0, x \in \mathbb{R}^d \\ u(0, \cdot) = \mu \end{cases} \quad (\text{SHE})$$

$$u(t, x) = J_0(t, x) + \int_0^t \int_{\mathbb{R}^d} p_{t-s}(x-y) \rho(u(s, y)) W(ds, dy)$$

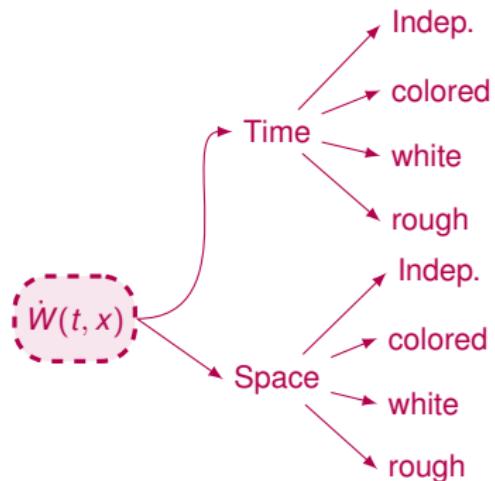
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\*  $p_t(x) := (2\pi t)^{-d/2} \exp(-|x|^2/(2t)).$

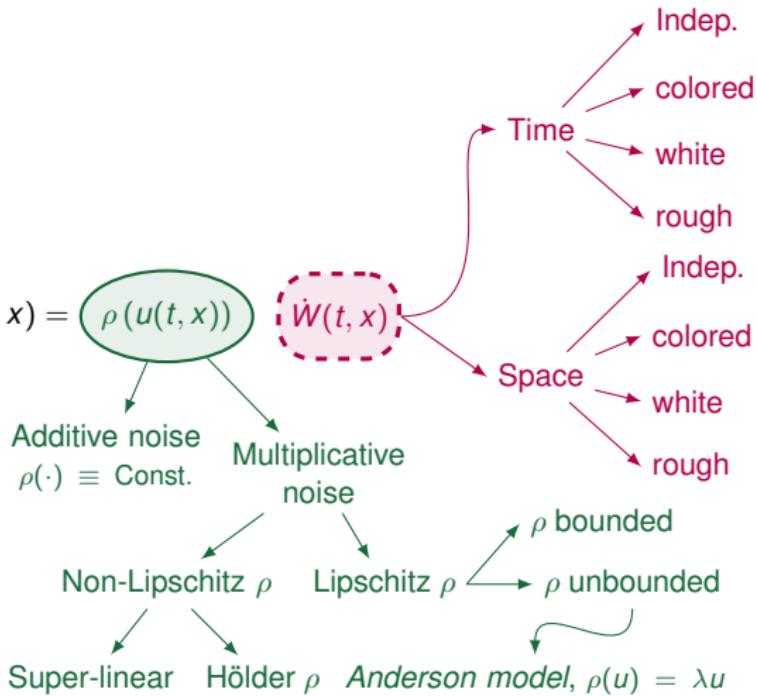
†  $J_0(t, x) := \int_{\mathbb{R}^d} p_t(x-y) \mu(dy)$  — solution to the homogeneous equation.

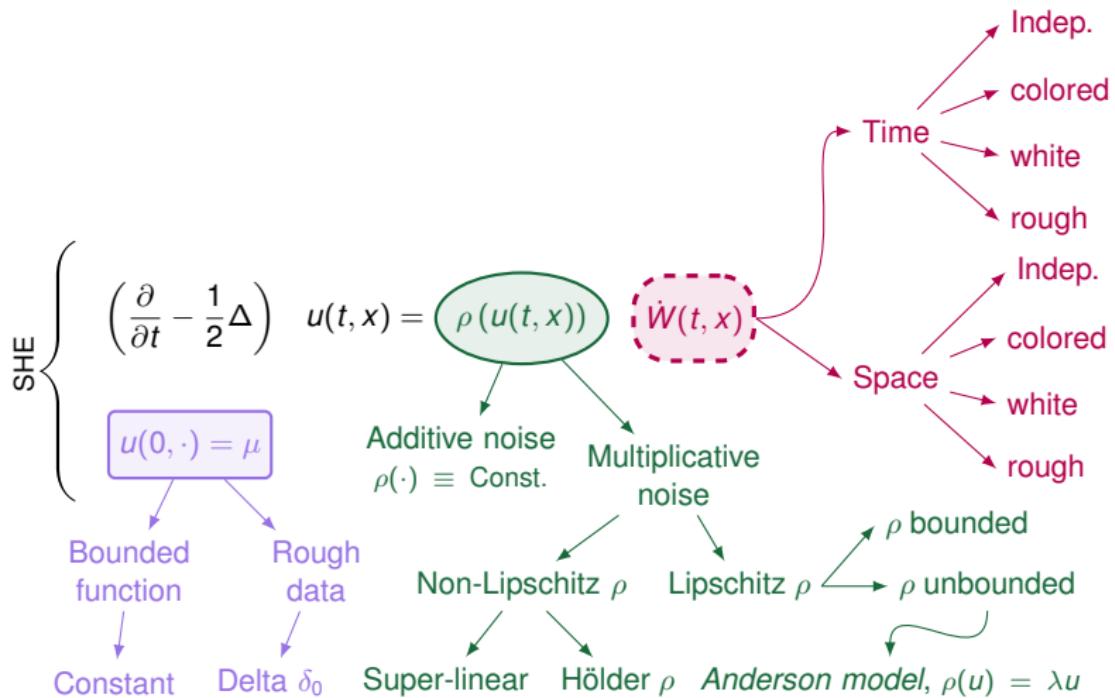
$$\text{SHE} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \left( \frac{\partial}{\partial t} - \frac{1}{2} \Delta \right) u(t, x) = -\rho(u(t, x)) \quad \dot{W}(t, x) \\ u(0, \cdot) = \mu \end{array} \right.$$

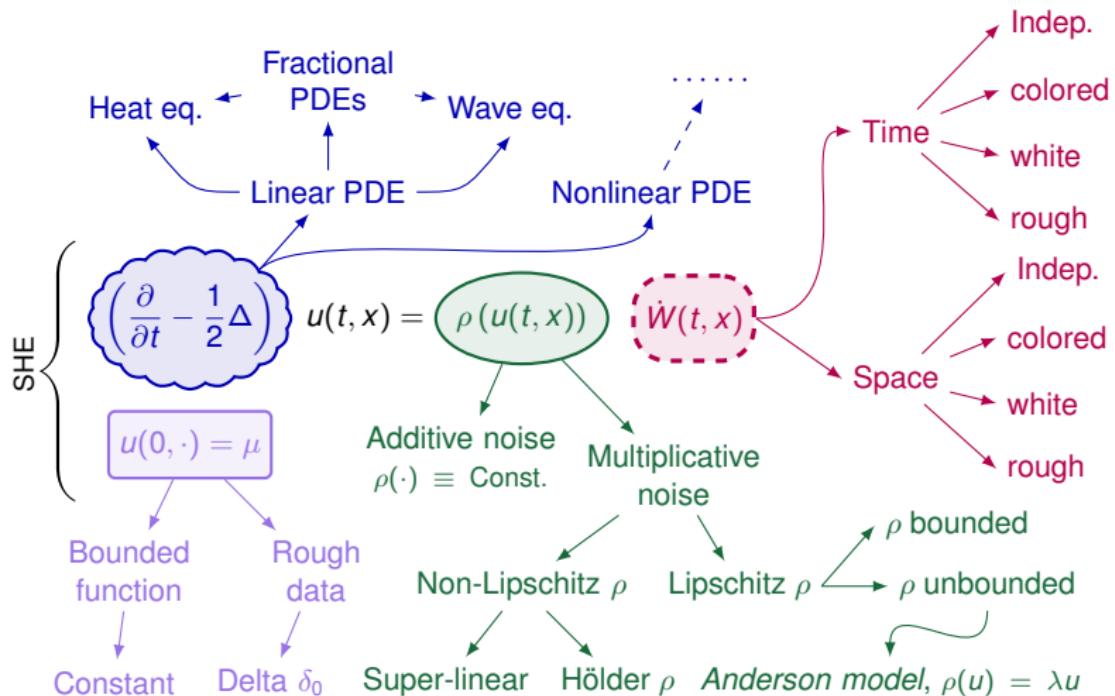
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## Moment Lyapunov exponents:

$$p \mapsto \lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{t} \log \mathbb{E} [|u(t, x)|^p]$$

The growth of  
the above mapping  $u(t, x)$

the faster the more chaotic  
the more **intermittent**  
the farther from equilibrium

# Plan

Discrete growth models

Continuous growth models – KPZ and SHE

More about SHE

SHE with sublinear growth – Case Study

Final remarks

$$(PAM) \quad \begin{cases} \left( \frac{\partial}{\partial t} - \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} \right) u(t, x) = \lambda \textcolor{violet}{u}(t, x) \dot{W}(t, x), & t > 0, x \in \mathbb{R}, \\ u(0, \cdot) = \mu. \end{cases}$$

For SHE on  $\mathbb{R}$  with space-time white noise, it is known that

$$\lim_{p \rightarrow \infty} p^{-3} \log \mathbb{E} [u(t, x)^p] = \frac{\lambda^4}{24}, \quad \text{for all } t > 0 \text{ and } x \in \mathbb{R} \text{ and,}$$

$$\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} t^{-1} \log \mathbb{E} [u(t, x)^p] = \frac{1}{24} p(p^2 - 1) \lambda^4, \quad \text{for all } p \geq 2 \text{ and } x \in \mathbb{R}.$$

Chen, X., *Ann. Inst. Henri Poincaré Probab. Stat.*, 2015

Bertini, L., Cancrini, N., *J. Statist. Phys.*, 1995

$$\text{(Additive SHE)} \quad \begin{cases} \left( \frac{\partial}{\partial t} - \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} \right) u(t, x) = \lambda \times 1 \times \dot{W}(t, x), \\ u(0, \cdot) = \mu. \end{cases}$$

$$\text{(Bounded } \rho \text{)} \quad \begin{cases} \left( \frac{\partial}{\partial t} - \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} \right) u(t, x) = \lambda \times \frac{u(t, x)}{1 + u(t, x)} \times \dot{W}(t, x), \\ u(0, \cdot) = \mu. \end{cases}$$

Bounded  $\rho$  case is called “*weak diffusion*”. The phenomenon of smaller maxima of the solution due to the smaller growth of  $\rho$  is called “*smoothing intermittency*”.

$$\mathbb{E} [u(t, x)^\rho] \asymp t^{\rho/2}.$$

## Self-excitation of a nonlinear scalar field in a random medium

Y.A. B. ZELDOVICH<sup>†</sup>, S. A. MOLCHANOV<sup>‡</sup>, A. A. RUZMAIKIN<sup>§</sup>, AND D. D. SOKOLOFF<sup>‡</sup>

<sup>†</sup>Institute of Physical Problems, Academy of Sciences, Moscow, U.S.S.R.; <sup>‡</sup>Moscow State University, Moscow, U.S.S.R.; and <sup>§</sup>Institute of Terrestrial Magnetism, Ionosphere and Radiowave Propagation, Academy of Sciences, Moscow Region, U.S.S.R.

Contributed by Ya. B. Zeldovich, April 29, 1987

**ABSTRACT** We discuss the evolution in time of a scalar field under the influence of a random potential and diffusion. The cases of a short-correlation in time and of stationary potentials are considered. In a linear approximation and for sufficiently weak diffusion, the statistical moments of the field grow exponentially in time at growth rates that progressively increase with the order of the moment; this indicates the intermittent nature of the field. Nonlinearity halts this growth and in some cases can destroy the intermittency. However, in many nonlinear situations the intermittency is preserved: high, persistent peaks of the field exist against the background of a smooth field distribution. These widely spaced peaks may make a major contribution to the average characteristics of the field.

suppression of the growth of high maxima in the solution, thus smoothing the intermittency. However, the result proves to be less trivial and depends radically on both the time behavior of the potential and the form of nonlinearity.

For the sake of simplicity, put  $\alpha = 0$ ; i.e., neglect the spatial diffusion of the field. We shall indicate the influence of a weak diffusion on the results separately. We consider two types of potentials. The first is characterized by a short correlation time

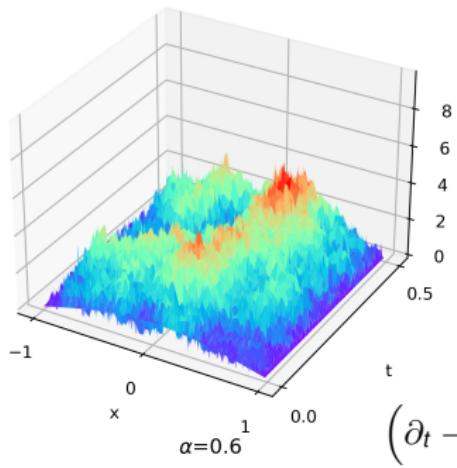
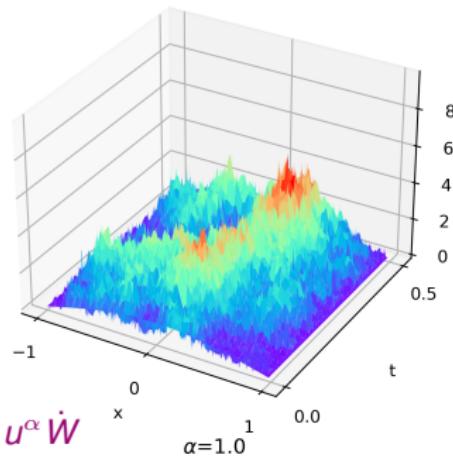
$$U(t, x, \omega) = u + \tau^{-1/2} \frac{dw_t}{dt}, \quad [2]$$

where  $u$  is the stationary value of the potential,  $\tau$  is a certain characteristic time similar to the characteristic turbulent dif-

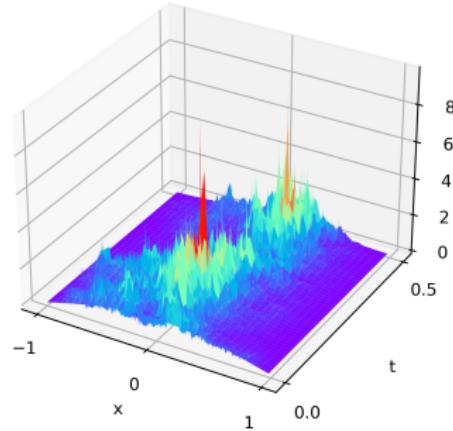
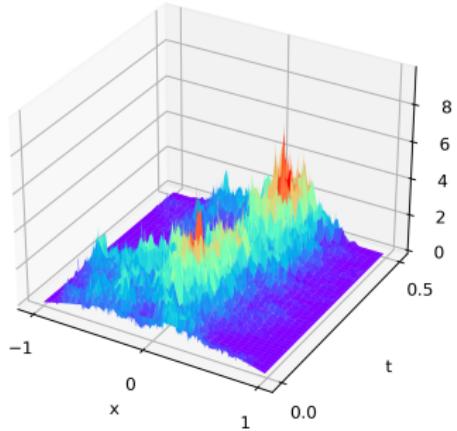
Simulations of

$$\left( \partial_t - \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} \right) u = u^\alpha \dot{W}$$

with  $\alpha = 0.01, 0.2, 0.6$  and  $\dot{W}$  is space-time white noise.

$\alpha=0.01$  $\alpha=0.2$ 

$$\left( \partial_t - \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} \right) u = u^\alpha \dot{W}$$

 $\alpha=1.0$ 

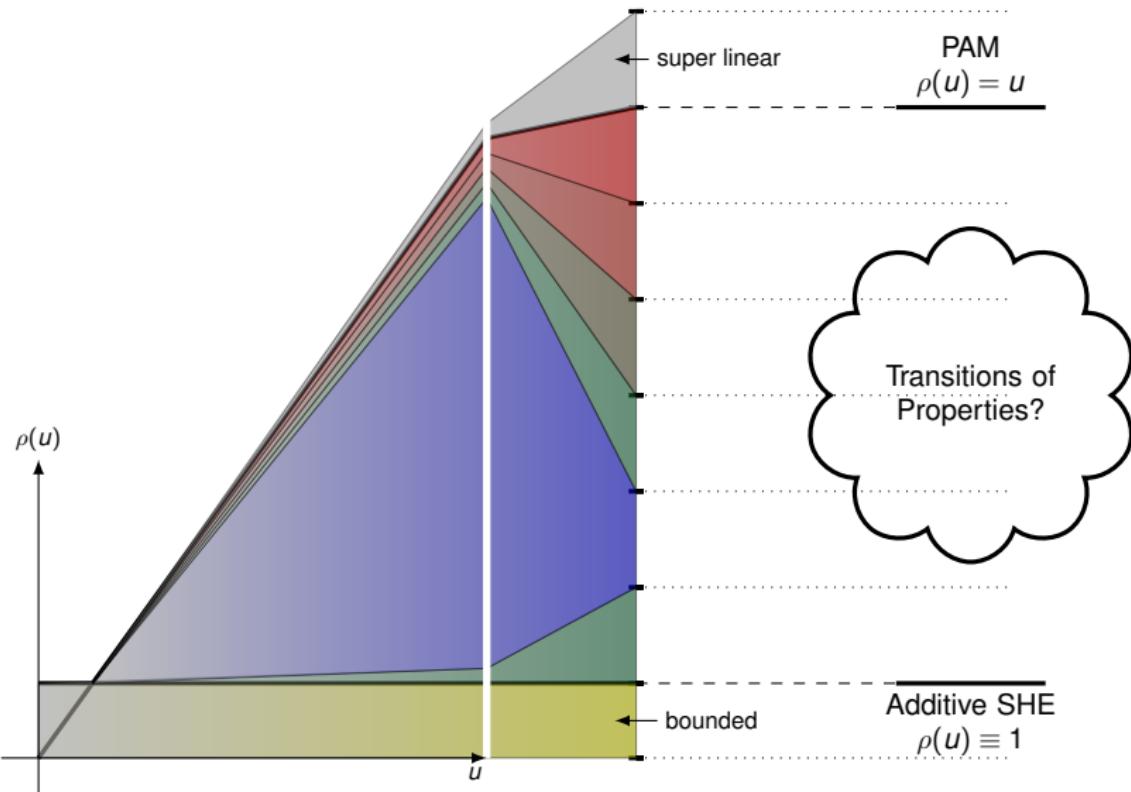
When  $d = 1$ ,  $f = \delta_0$ , &  $\mu \equiv 1$ , Conus, Joseph, Khoshnevisan, and Shiu, 2013 proved that with probability 1,

$$\begin{cases} \sup_{|x| \leq R} u(t, x) \asymp [\log R]^{1/2} & \text{SHE with bounded } \rho; \\ \log \sup_{|x| \leq R} u(t, x) \asymp [\log R]^{2/3} & \text{PAM.} \end{cases}$$

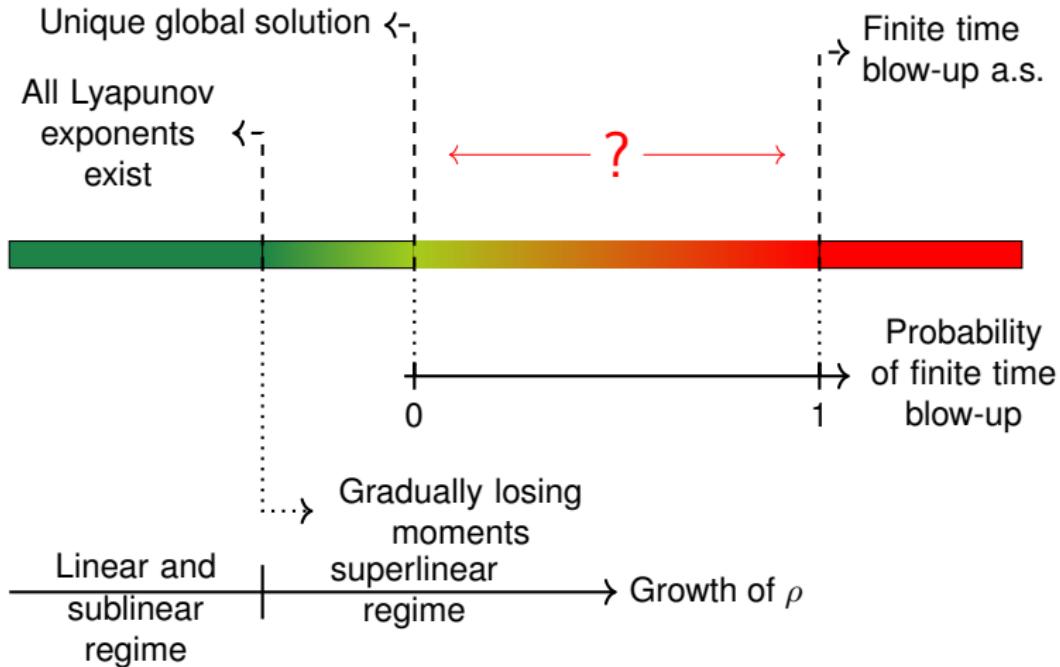
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Question: What if  $\rho$  has sublinear growth at infinity?

# PAM vs Additive SHE

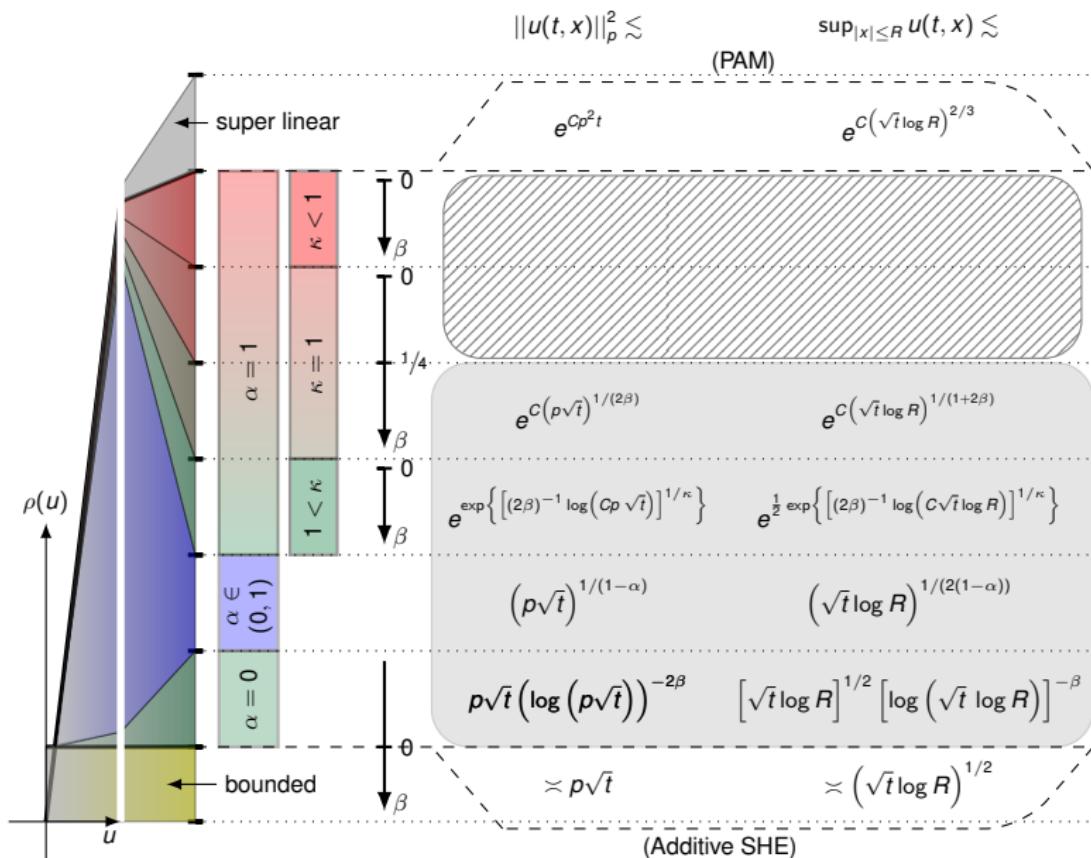


# SHE on superlinear growth regime



Chen, L., Foondun, M., Huang, J., Salins, M., preprint arXiv:2310.02153, 2023

Chen, L., Huang, J., Proc. Amer. Math. Soc., 2023



## Main References\*:

- Chen, L., & Eisenberg, N. (2022). Invariant measures for the nonlinear stochastic heat equation with no drift term. *J. Theoret. Probab.* (pending revision, preprint arXiv:2209.04771).
- Chen, L., & Eisenberg, N. (2023). Interpolating the stochastic heat and wave equations with time-independent noise: Solvability and exact asymptotics. *Stoch. Partial Differ. Equ. Anal. Comput.*, 11(3), 1203–1253.
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- Conus, D., Joseph, M., Khoshnevisan, D., & Shiu, S.-Y. (2013). On the chaotic character of the stochastic heat equation, II. *Probab. Theory Related Fields*, 156(3-4), 483–533.
- Zel'dovich, Y. B., Ruzmaikin, A. A., & Sokoloff, D. D. (1990). *The almighty chance* (Vol. 20) [Translated from the Russian by Anvar Shukurov]. World Scientific Publishing Co., Inc., River Edge, NJ.

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\* References are produced from *SPDEs-Bib*: <https://github.com/chenle02/SPDEs-Bib>

\* Download the bib file: <https://github.com/chenle02/SPDEs-Bib/blob/main/All.bib>

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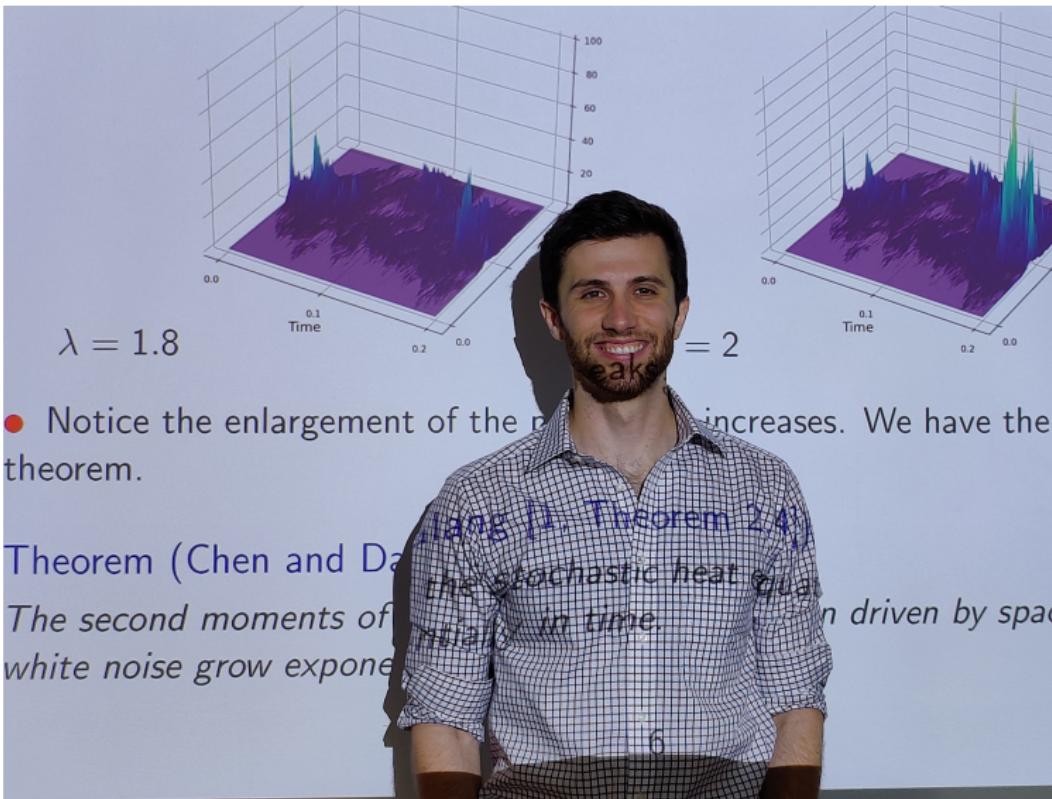
More about SHE

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**Final remarks**

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2. 2019 – 2020, via Zoom when I was at Emory (visited me once at Atlanta)
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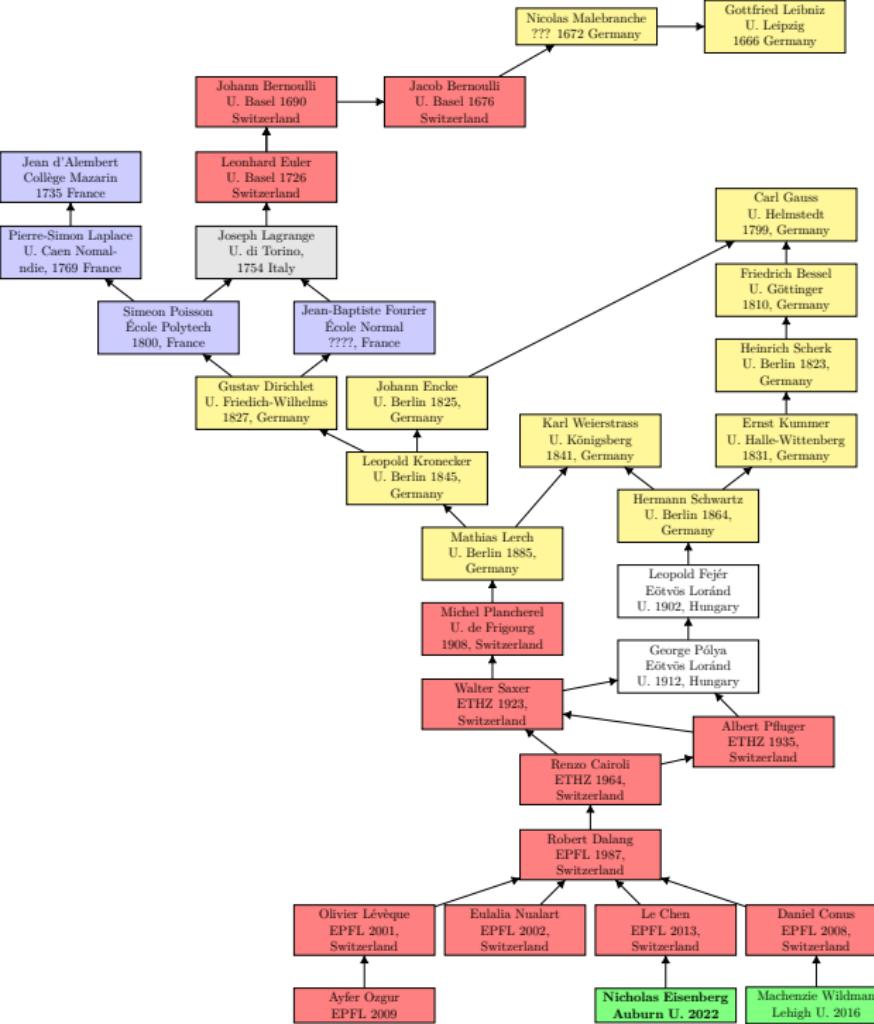
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Join our family !



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Math 7200/7210: Real Analysis

Math 7800/7810: Probability

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*A Haiku for the talk  
by OpenAI's GPT-4.0*

*(Accessed on 2023/11/01)*

*Surface patterns form,  
Fluctuations tell the tale,  
KPZ unveils.*

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Acknowledgment:

- \* ChatGPT (Code Interpreter)
- \* Midjourney
- \* Vim, RIP *Bram Moolenaar* (1961 – 2023-08-03)