



# fastplotlib

*Augmenting our scientific imagination*



Caitlin Lewis

@caitlinllewis



clewis7



Kushal Kolar

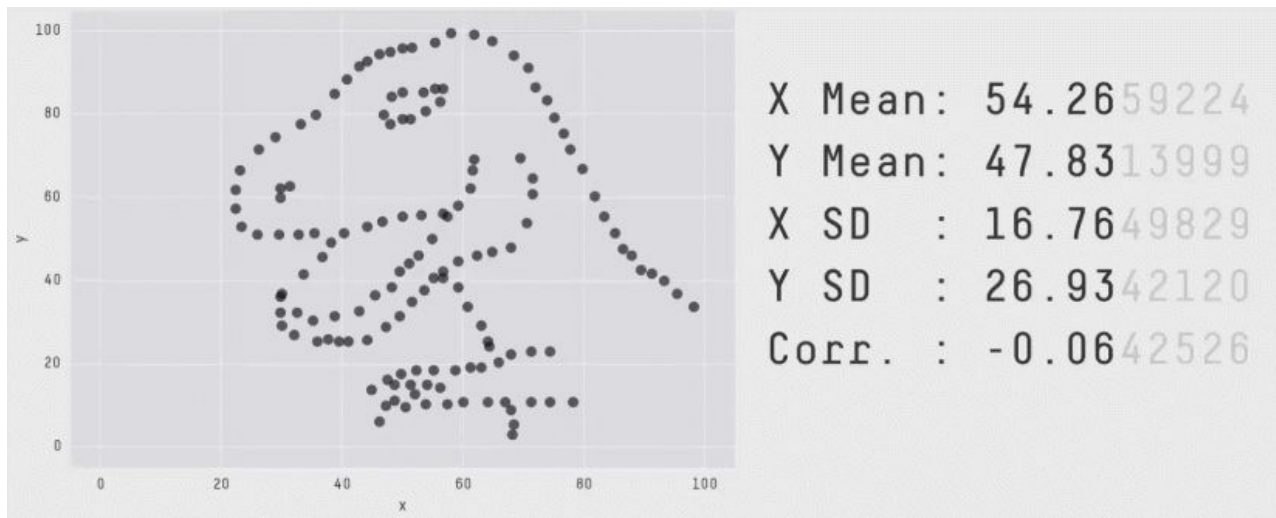
@kushalkolar

kushalkolar



# It is important to look at your data!

- Statistics are not sufficient
- “All models are wrong, some are useful”
- All algorithms are approximations



Matejka, Justin, and George Fitzmaurice. "Same stats, different graphs: generating datasets with varied appearance and identical statistics through simulated annealing." *Proceedings of the 2017 CHI conference on human factors in computing systems*. 2017.

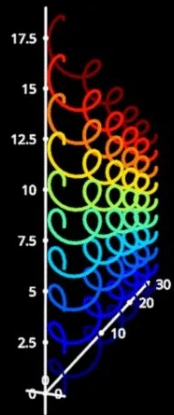
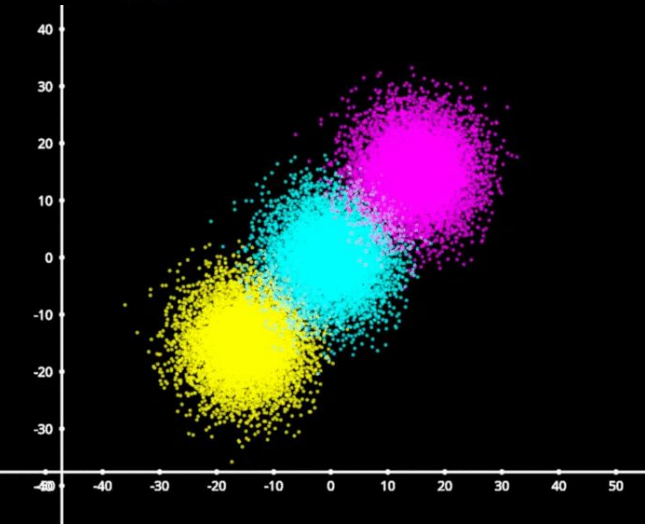
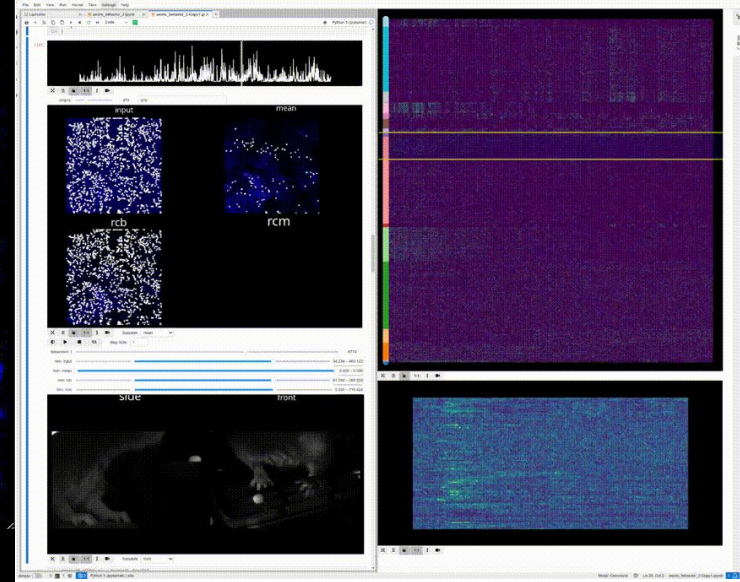
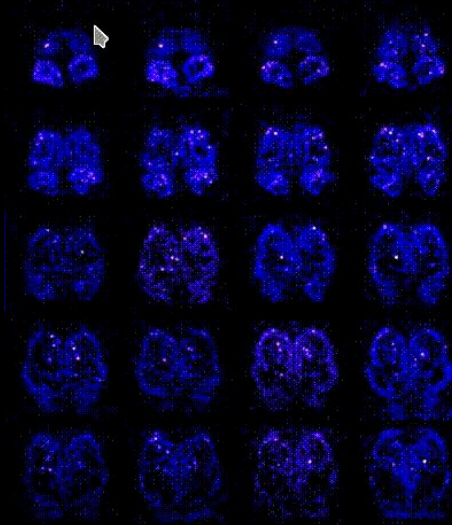
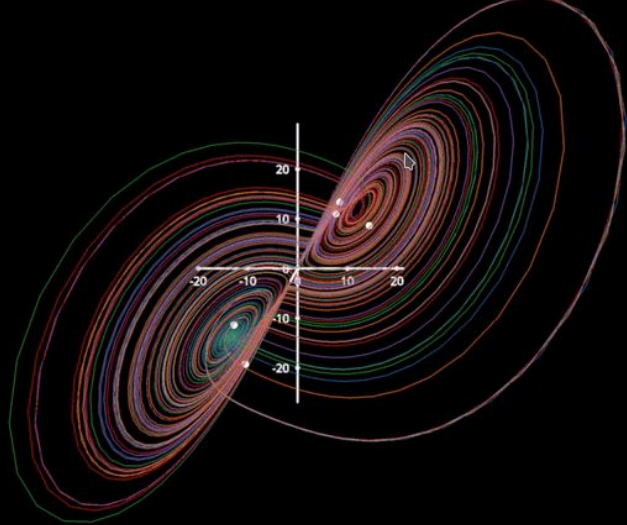
# Why don't scientific plots look as good as modern video games?

Graphics ~20 years ago



Graphics today

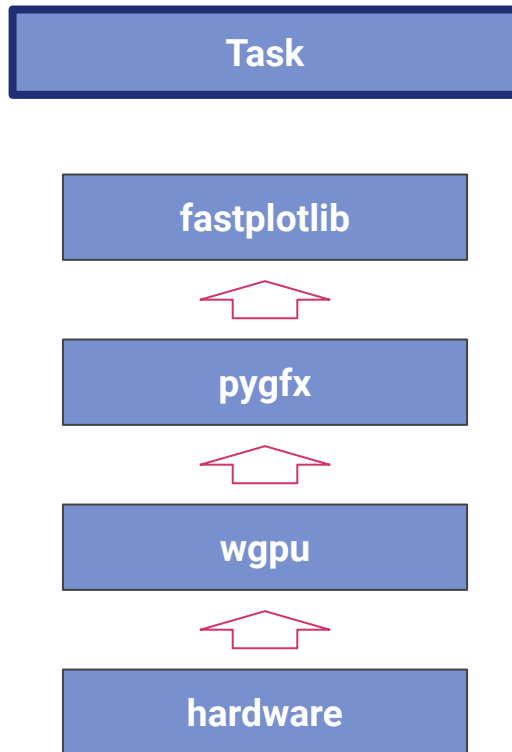






# fastplotlib-pygfx-wgpu Stack

Image

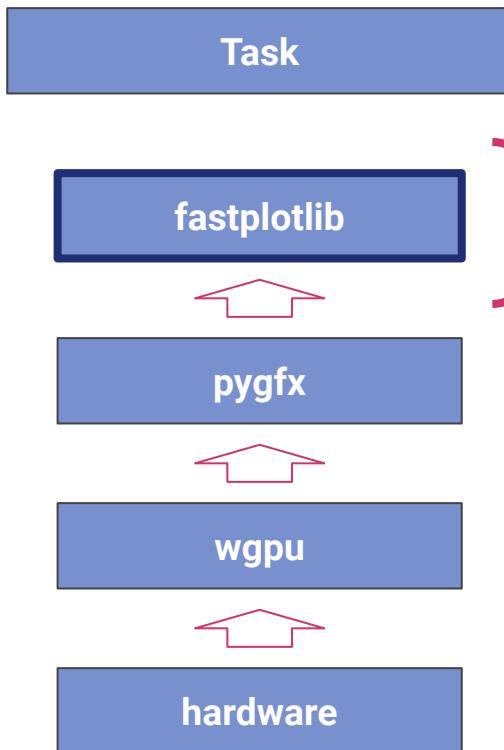


# fastplotlib-pygfx-wgpu Stack

Image



```
fig = fpl.Figure() # create a figure
data = iio.imread("imageio:astronaut.png") # data
fig[0, 0].add_image(data=data) # plot an image
fig.show() # show the figure :D
```



Core devs:

- Kushal Kolar
- Caitlin Lewis
- Almar Klein
- Amol Pasarkar



# fastplotlib-pygfx-wgpu Stack

```
# create a canvas
canvas = WgpuCanvas()

renderer = gfx.DefaultRenderer(canvas)

scene = gfx.Scene()

# create a camera
camera = gfx.Camera()
camera.position = [0, 0, 10]
camera.scale.y = 1
camera.position = [0, 0, 10]

colormap1 = gfx.Colormap(
    # 512x512 array
    img_data = img_data

# define Geometry
image_obj = gfx.Geometry(
    gfx.GeometryData(
        img_data, dim=2)),
    (255), map=colormap1),

scene.add(image_obj)

def animate():
    renderer.render(scene, canvas)
    canvas.request_draw()
    canvas
```

```
1 # create a canvas
2 canvas = WgpuCanvas()
3
4 # create a renderer
5 renderer = gfx.DefaultRenderer(canvas)
6
7 # create a scene
8 scene = gfx.Scene()
9
10 # create a camera
11 camera = gfx.Camera()
12 camera.position = [0, 0, 10]
13 camera.scale.y = 1
14 camera.position = [0, 0, 10]
15
16 colormap1 = gfx.Colormap(
17     # 512x512 array
18     img_data = img_data
19
20 # define Geometry
21 image_obj = gfx.Geometry(
22     gfx.GeometryData(
23         img_data, dim=2)),
24     (255), map=colormap1),
25
26 scene.add(image_obj)
27
28 def animate():
29     renderer.render(scene, canvas)
30     canvas.request_draw()
31     canvas
```

```
scene
renderer(canvas)

# center of image
(12, 512)
# center of the scene
# center of the scene

# create a colormap

# create a Texture using the image data
img_data, dim=2)),
(255), map=colormap1),
```

sk

lotlib

gfx

pu

ware

Core devs:



pygfx

- Almar Klein
- Korijn van Golen



# fastplotlib-pygfx-wgpu Stack

Image



Task

fastplotlib



pygfx



wgpu



hardware



- Vulkan
- Metal (Mac)
- DX12 (Windows)

*New technologies:  
very fast, efficient, &  
leverage modern  
GPU hardware better  
than OpenGL*

*This is also what  
newer games use!*





# fastplotlib-pygfx-wgpu Stack

Image



Task

fastplotlib

~4 lines



pygfx

~15 lines - rendering engine



wgpu

~400 lines



hardware

~700 lines

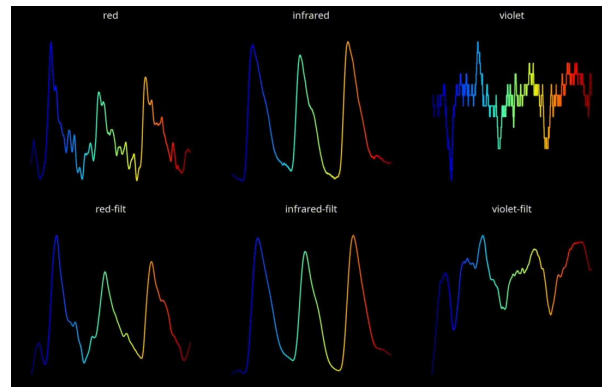


# fastplotlib

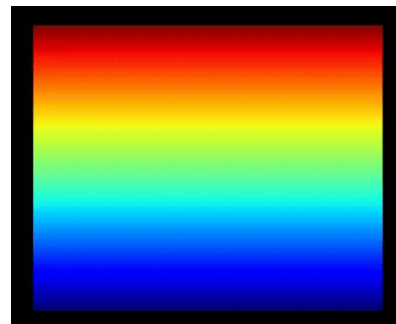
- High-level API for scientific plotting - inspiration from *pyqtgraph* and other libs
  - ❤️ *pyqtgraph*
- Uses the *pygfx* rendering engine
- Very new - 2 years old
- Goals: fast visualization, **expressive & elegant API** - we'll tell you what this means!
- Core developers & leadership:
  - **Kushal Kolar - Flatiron Institute/NYU**
  - **Caitlin Lewis - Duke University**
- Major developers:
  - **Almar Klein - Independent/funded by Flatiron Institute**
  - **Amol Pasarkar - Columbia University**

# What can I do with fastplotlib?

- GPU accelerated visualization
  - Modern integrated graphics is sufficient for many use-cases!
- Rapid prototyping and algorithm design
  - Examples: matrix decompositions, time series exploration
  - Design, develop, evaluate and ship machine learning models
- Exploration and fast rendering of large-scale data
- Create real-time acquisition systems for instruments



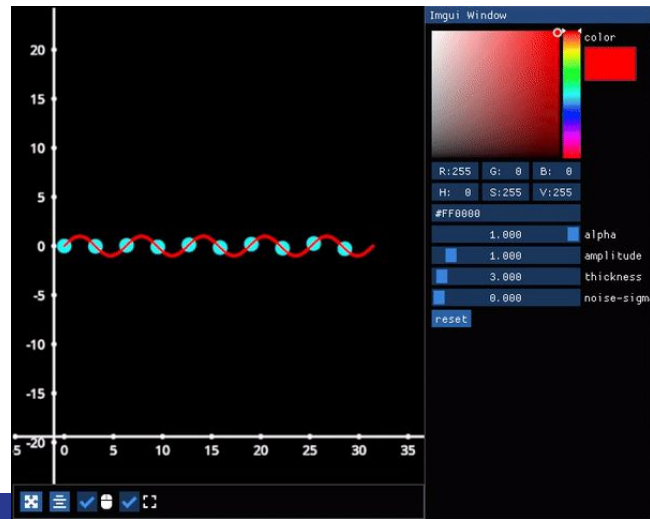
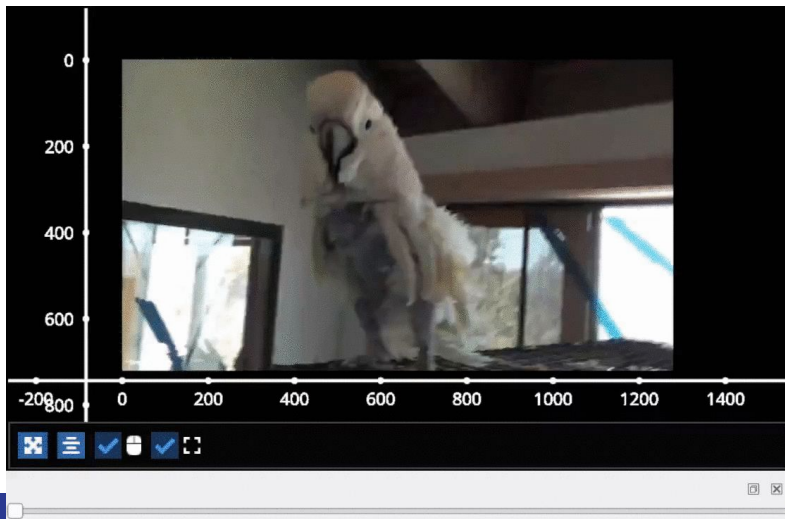
3 million points - fastplotlib  
midrange 2017 GPU



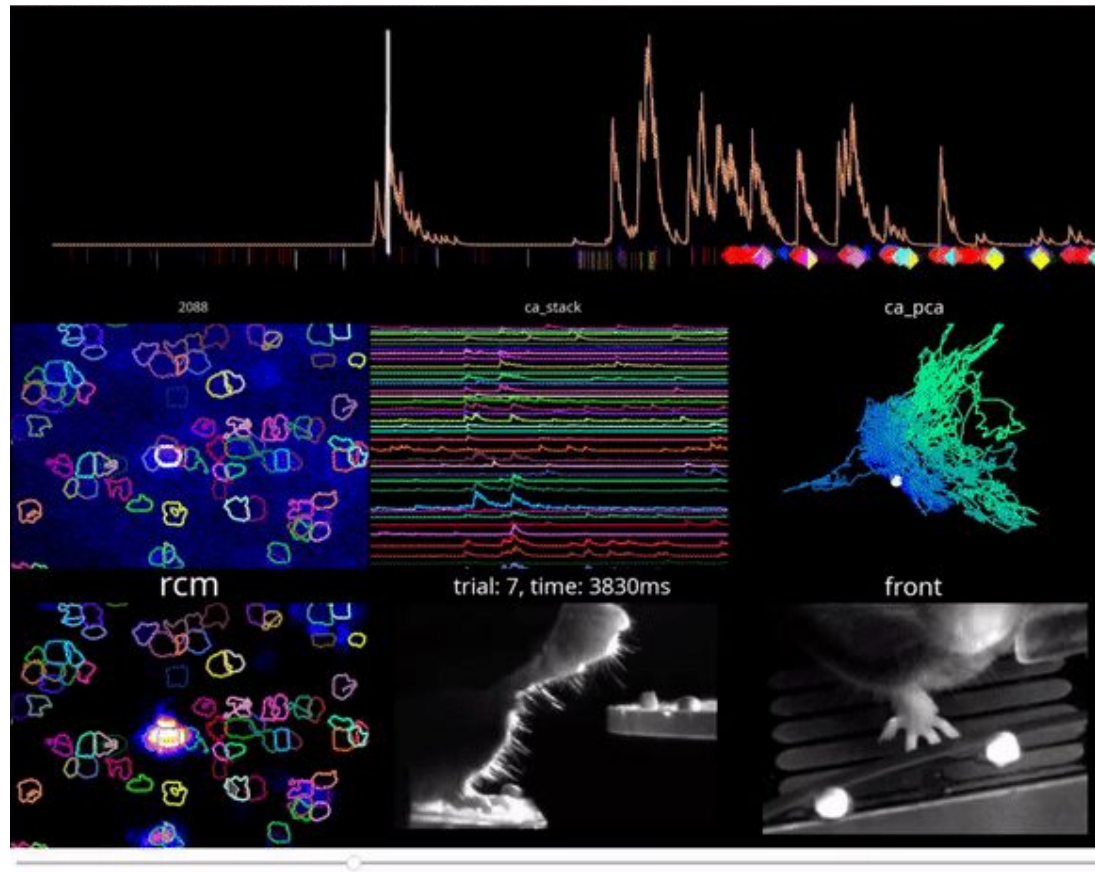
# Where can I use fastplotlib?

- Identical code across Qt, glfw, and jupyter lab. (and wx?)
  - **cloud computing, remote infrastructure**
  - Prototype in jupyter → ship Qt, glfw or web app!
- ImGui-integration (next release)

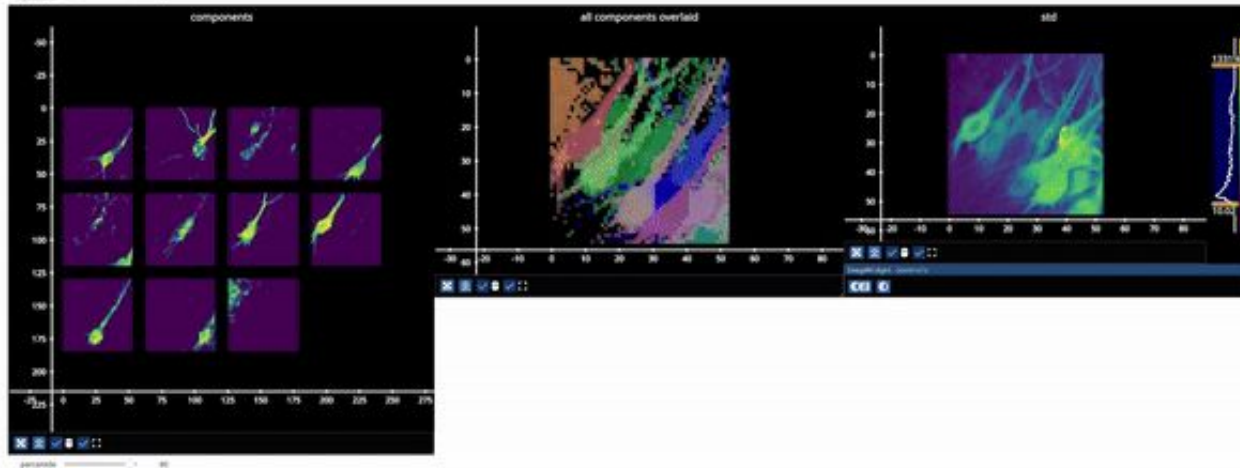
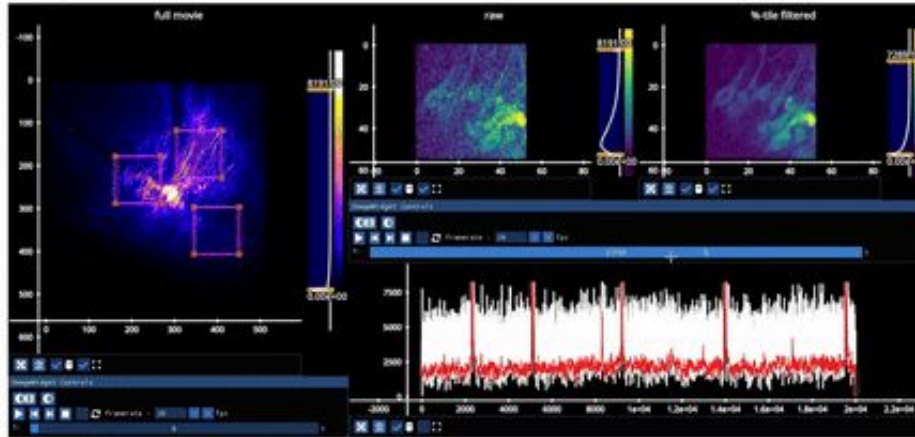
*“Write once, run everywhere”, a.k.a. ~~“Write once debug everywhere”~~*



# Exploration of large multi-modal experimental datasets



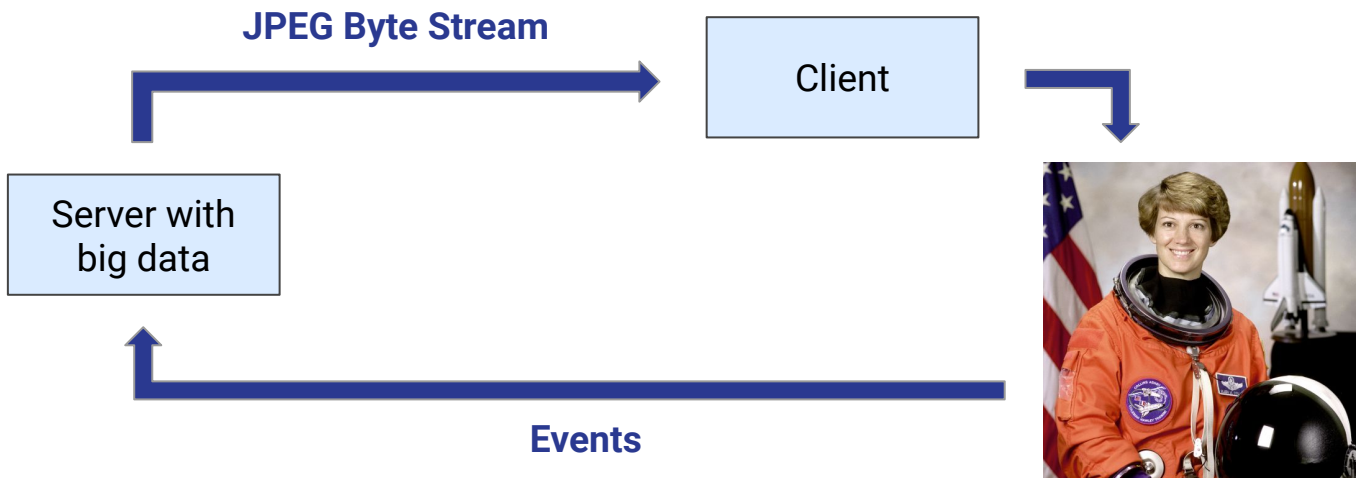
# Matrix decomposition algorithm development



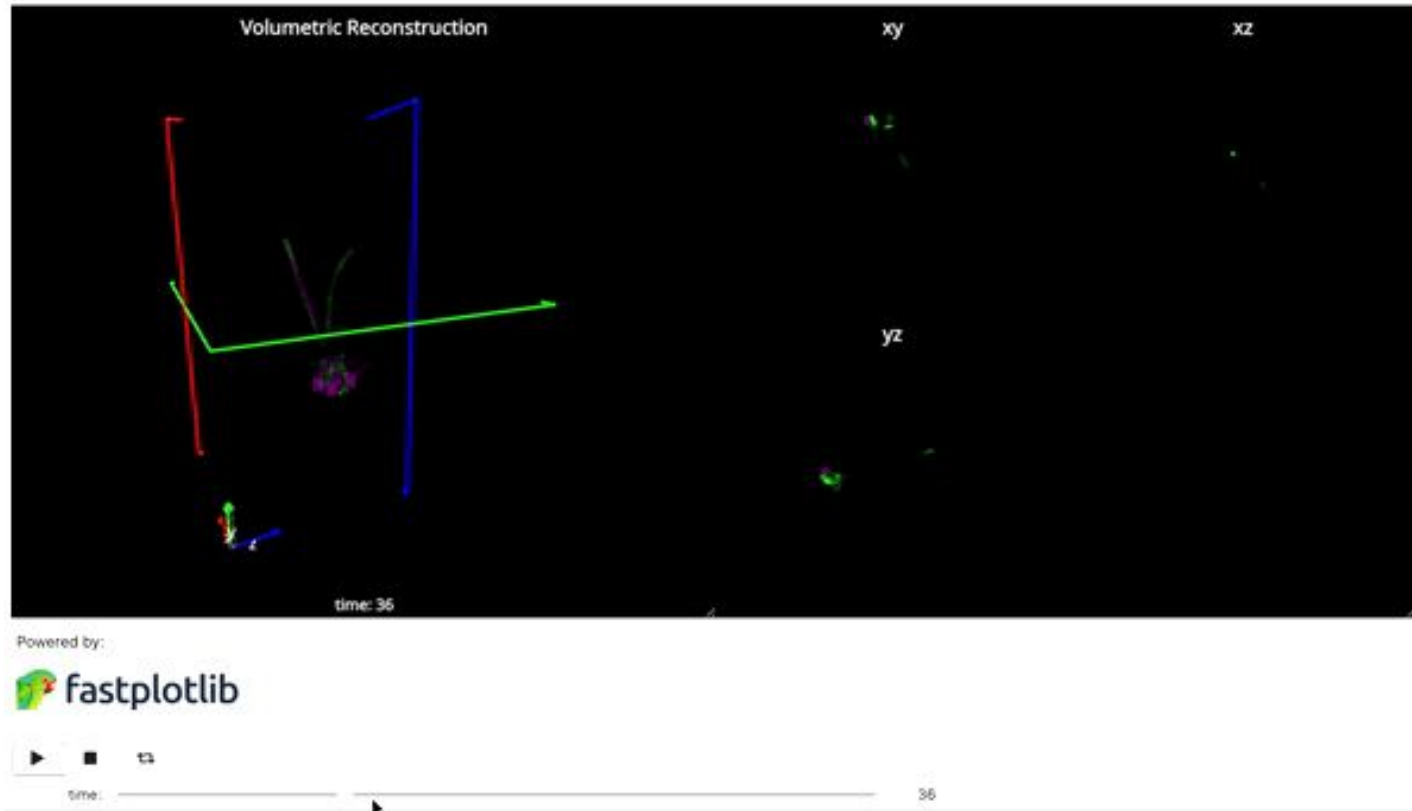


# Remote rendering

- Server-side rendering, client only receives a jpeg byte stream
- Faster than client libs - bokeh, dash, plotly, etc.
  - Render big data on server/cloud, client only gets small jpeg stream!



# Reflective Fourier Light field Computed Tomography (ReFLeCT)



<https://www.biorxiv.org/content/10.1101/2024.09.16.609432v1>

# API Walkthrough!

## Figure

### Subplot

#### Graphics:

Image

Line

Scatter

Etc...

## Figure

### Subplot

Graphics

### Subplot

Graphics

### Subplot

Graphics

### Subplot

Graphics

Demo!

# Documentation & Examples

<https://www.fastplotlib.org/ver/dev/>

Includes a user guide and how-to on getting started using fastplotlib!

We also have an extensive examples gallery that we are always adding to :D

- We would love to add more examples for your use-case

We are also always happy to help you with visualizing your data!!

- Feel free to reach out on our GitHub via an issue or discussion post
- You can also come find me downstairs in John's lab :)



[User Guide](#) [Developer Notes](#) [API Reference](#) [Examples Gallery](#)

## Welcome to fastplotlib's documentation!

Getting started

[User Guide](#)

[User Guide](#)

[GPU Info and selection](#)

[FAQ](#)

[Developer Notes](#)

[Graphics](#)

[Layouts](#)

API

[API Reference](#)

[Layouts](#)

[Graphics](#)

[Graphic Features](#)

[Selectors](#)

[UI Bases](#)

[Widgets](#)

[fastplotlib](#)

[fastplotlib.utils](#)

Gallery

[Examples Gallery](#)

Thank you!





# What fastplotlib is not

- Fastplotlib is NOT related to matplotlib in any way!
  - Different use cases, different APIs!
  - Fastplotlib is not aimed towards the creation of static publication figures
- Fastplotlib does not handle data loading
  - Numpy-like data arrays which support **memoryview()** should work
- Fastplotlib is a plotting library, not a viewer, GUI, or application
  - You can use it to build viewers and GUI applications