

Quantum Nanotube Array as Photonic Repeater and Sensor: A Novel Architecture for Quantum Communication and Sensing

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March 25, 2025

Abstract

This document outlines a conceptual architecture for a quantum repeater and quantum sensor based on arrays of carbon nanotubes with embedded gas cavities and externally coated reflective surfaces. Each nanotube acts as a microscopic cavity capable of maintaining a photon in resonance. The system's collective output, when properly aligned, can be externally monitored via interference patterns or field perturbations, making it a candidate for distributed quantum communication and sensing.

1 Introduction

Quantum communication systems demand devices capable of preserving entanglement and signal integrity over long distances. Nanotube-based architectures may offer new opportunities by enabling extremely compact resonant cavities with scalable array layouts. This document refines our understanding of how such a device could act as both a quantum repeater and a sensor.

2 Nanotube Structure

Each nanotube:

- Is cylindrical with a hollow interior.
- Contains a sealed quantum gas (e.g., noble gas or tailored molecular compound).
- Is externally coated with a reflective material (e.g., silver or platinum nanoparticle-based film) to act as a mirror.
- May be positioned in an electromagnetic field for alignment or modulation.
- Is embedded in a polymer matrix to ensure spatial stability and thermal dissipation.

2.1 Geometric Parameters

- Diameter: 1 nm to 10 nm
- Length: 100 nm to 500 nm
- Density: up to 10^9 per cm^2

3 Repeating Mechanism

The repeating function arises from the emission, trapping, and re-emission of photons in the nanotube array:

1. A photon enters a tube and interacts with the quantum gas.
2. Partial absorption and re-emission occur due to quantum transitions.
3. Coherent emission is encouraged by synchronized excitation (e.g., EM field or acoustic signal).
4. Reflective coatings maintain internal resonance.
5. Emission from the ensemble is redirected via carefully shaped geometry.

This allows information-bearing photons to be replicated coherently, acting as a form of quantum repeater.

4 Quantum Sensor Properties

As quantum resonators:

- The tubes are sensitive to external perturbations such as electric fields, pressure, or magnetic variations.
- Frequency shifts in emission spectra can be correlated to physical quantities.
- Coherent ensembles can amplify weak signals through interference.

This renders the array an ultra-sensitive quantum sensor capable of distributed measurement.

5 External Readout and Monitoring

Due to the vast number of nanotubes:

- Direct measurement of each tube is impractical.
- Aggregate optical interference (far-field pattern) can be measured via CCD or photodiode array.
- Electrical changes (e.g., capacitance, inductance) across the substrate may be monitored.

The collective emission or field effect of the array offers an ensemble output that encodes global system state.

6 Optical Transparency and Diffraction Control

6.1 Matrix Transparency

The surrounding matrix must be optically transparent at the operational wavelengths (e.g., 1310 nm or 1550 nm) to allow for the injection and readout of photons. Suitable matrix materials include optically clear resins or polymers such as polymethyl methacrylate (PMMA), polycarbonate (PC), or silica-infused composites, which do not significantly scatter or absorb light at telecom wavelengths.

6.2 Diffraction-Based Sensing

The collective geometry of the nanotube array introduces natural diffraction effects, which can be harnessed to:

- Encode information via far-field interference patterns.
- Amplify weak signals through constructive interference.
- Detect perturbations in phase or wavelength due to external physical fields.

The array can be designed with regular spacing (akin to a diffraction grating), enabling precise angular dispersion of the output beam. This output can then be analyzed to infer internal state changes or external interactions.

6.3 Photonic Bandgap Control

By varying the spacing, coating thickness, and refractive index contrast between tubes and the matrix, a photonic bandgap structure can be engineered to control light propagation within the composite. This could enable filtering, delay lines, or wavelength-selective resonance within the repeater or sensor system.

7 Potential Applications

- Quantum repeater for long-distance entanglement distribution.
- Ultra-compact QKD nodes embedded in passive surfaces.
- Ambient quantum sensors for magnetic, thermal, or vibrational fields.
- Substrate-level quantum state memory for NFTs or identity binding.

8 Conclusion

The proposed carbon nanotube architecture acts as both a quantum repeater and a quantum sensor by leveraging its collective optical and electromagnetic response. Although still theoretical, this design outlines a plausible low-power, scalable path to integrating quantum functionality into common substrates or circuits.

9 References

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