



Armani Lab  
@USC

# Novel Material Platforms for Resonator Kerr Combs

*Prof. Andrea Armani*

# Statement on picture taking

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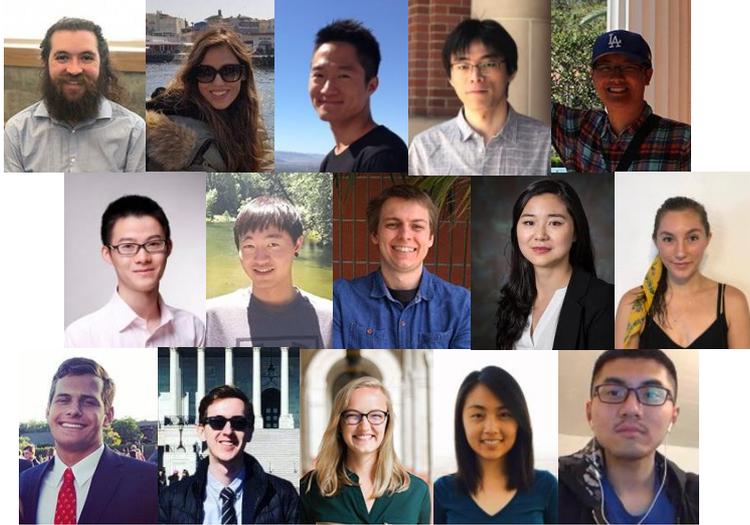
A PDF will be posted at:

**<http://armani.usc.edu>**

Therefore, while taking pictures is okay, you should also feel free to pay attention!

# Acknowledgements

## Post-docs/Graduate Students



## Friends who shared slides

Scott Diddams (NIST)  
Michal Lipson (Columbia)  
Andrey Matsko (OEWaves)  
Kartik Srinivasan (NIST)  
Myoung-Gyun Suh (Caltech)

## Undergrad Students



## More info



<http://armani.usc.edu>



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@ArmaniResearchLab



armanilab



**NORTHROP GRUMMAN**



**USC Viterbi**

School of Engineering

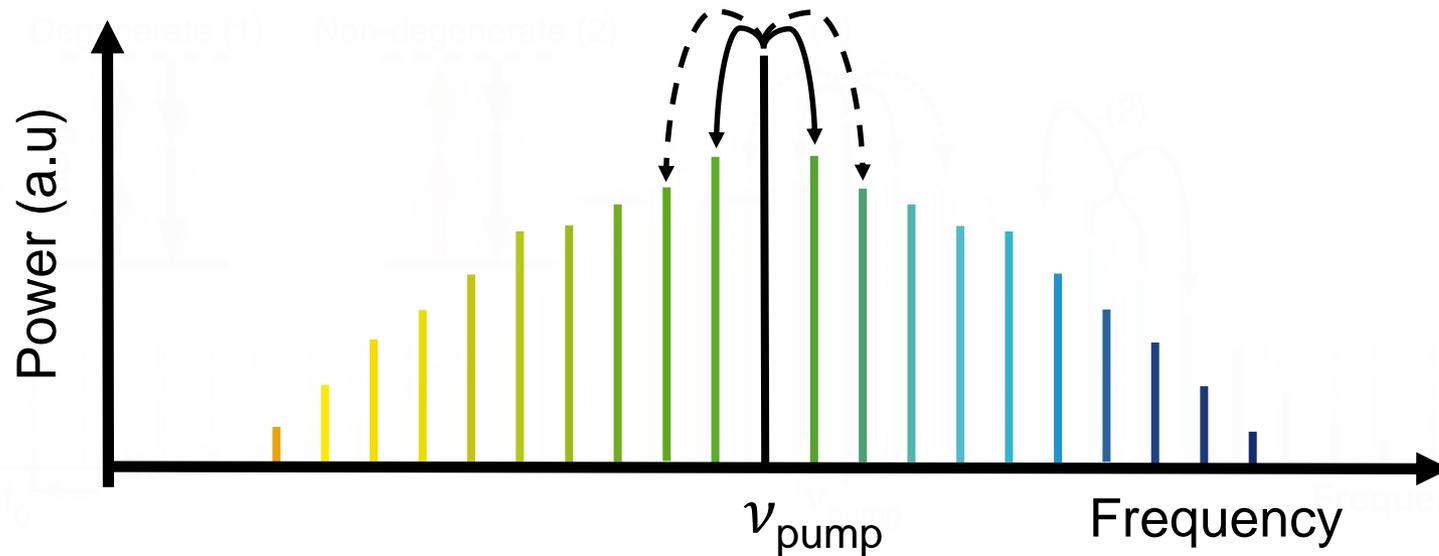
# Overview

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- **(Brief) Background on frequency combs**
- **Whispering gallery mode cavity combs**
  - *Landmark demonstrations*
  - *Emerging material systems*
  - *Multi-material/multi-device platforms*
  - *Challenges and approaches being pursued*
- **Conclusions**

# Optical Frequency Combs

A comb converts a single laser source into symmetrically and equally spaced emission lines ( $f_r$ ) at higher and lower wavelengths.

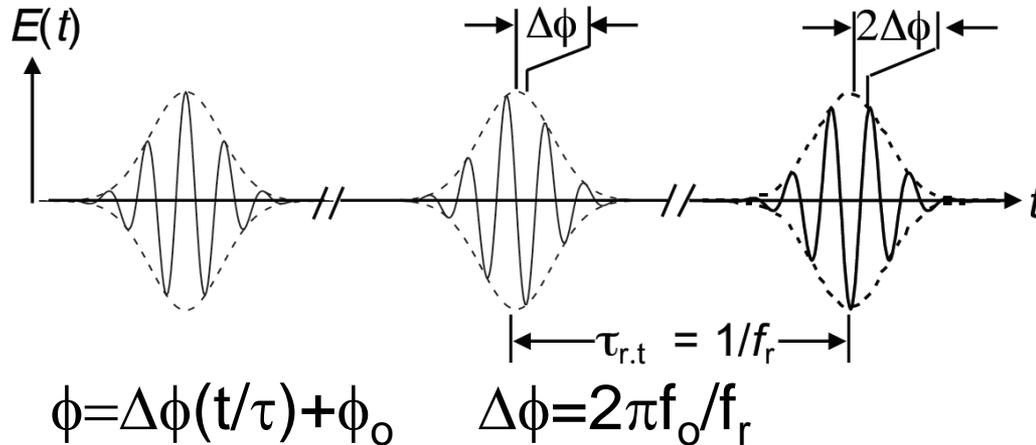


Limits:

- *Pump laser stability*
- *Comb spacing uniformity*

# Optical Frequency Comb Generation

Time domain



Challenge:

- Time domain: Phase evolves from pulse to pulse by  $\Delta\phi$ , and  $\phi_0$  is unknown
- Frequency domain: Phase evolution impacts precision

Frequency domain

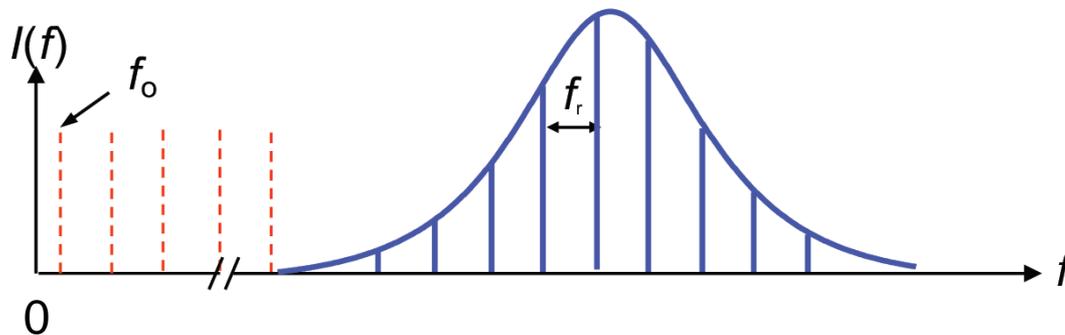
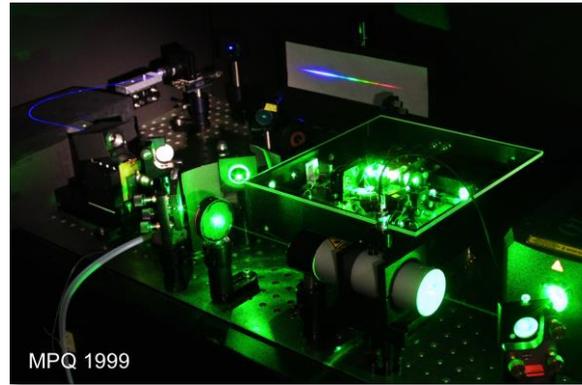


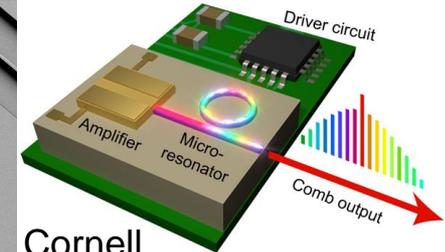
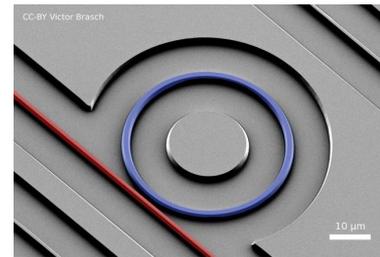
Figure from: D. Jones, S. Diddans, J. Ranka, A. Stentz, R. Windeler, J. Hall, S. Cundiff, Science 288 (2000)

# Moving from Laboratory Scale to Chip Scale



- Pulsed lasers (e.g. fs lasers)
- Fiber lasers (doped, structured fiber)

## Addressing SWaP



Cornell

# Generation principle of microcombs:

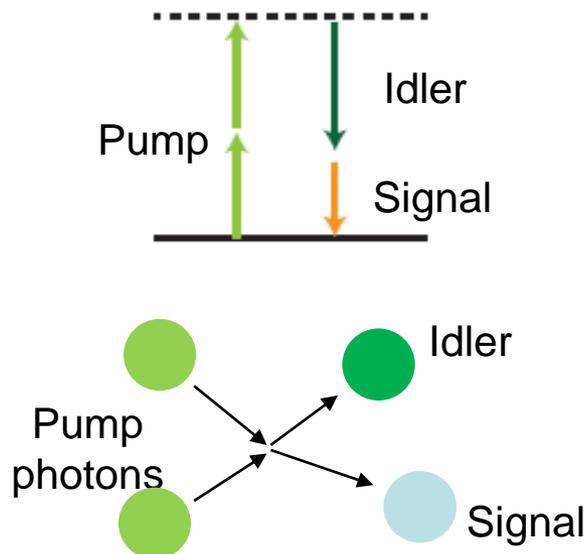
## *Kerr parametric oscillation*

In materials, the electric polarization (P) depends on the electric field (E).

$$P_i = \varepsilon_0 \sum_{j=1}^3 \chi_{ij}^{(1)} E_j + \varepsilon_0 \sum_{j=1}^3 \sum_{k=1}^3 \chi_{ijk}^{(2)} E_j E_k + \varepsilon_0 \sum_{j=1}^3 \sum_{k=1}^3 \sum_{l=1}^3 \chi_{ijkl}^{(3)} E_j E_k E_l + \dots$$

**Kerr - nonlinearity**

Kerr parametric oscillation



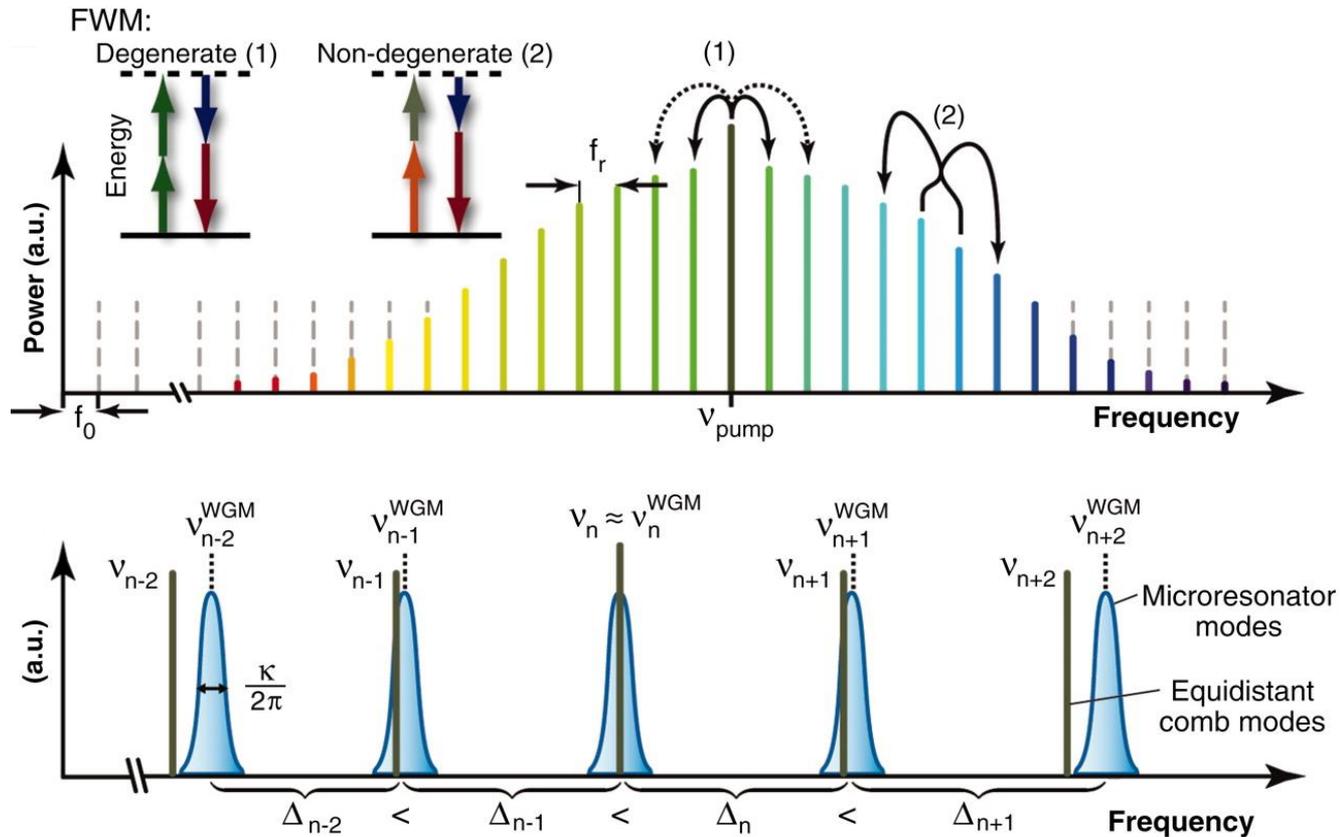
Basic requirements:

- High  $\chi^{(3)}$
- Large number of pump photons

# Cavity-based combs

## Other considerations:

- $f_r$ : device free spectral range (FSR)
- Comb span: dispersion, efficiency of four wave mixing (FWM) process

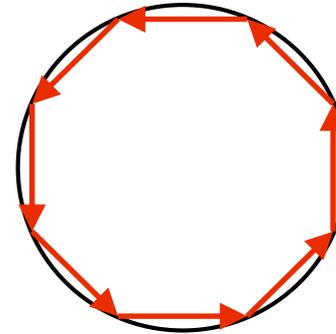


# Whispering gallery in optics

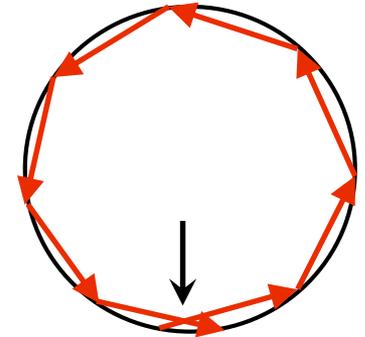


St. Paul's Cathedral Whispering Gallery

## Geometric optics



**Integral  
(on-resonance)**



**Non-Integral  
(off-resonance)**

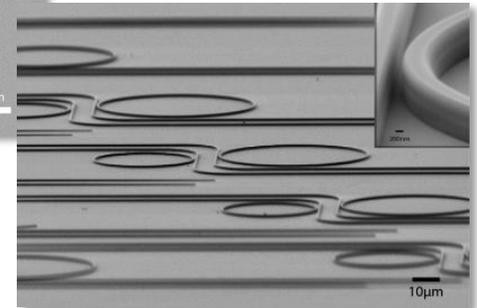
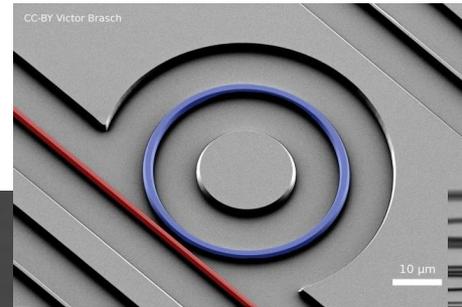
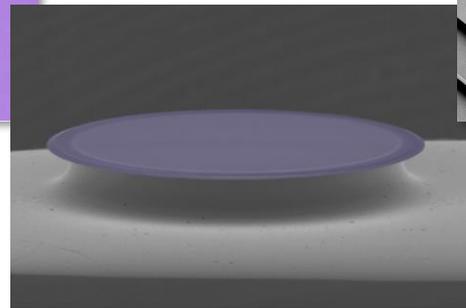
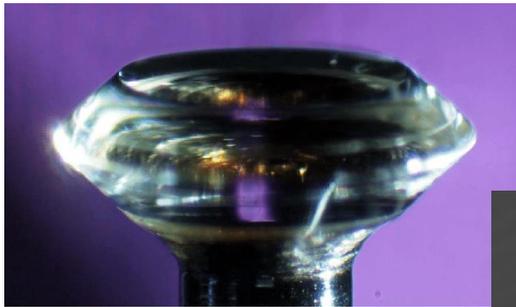


Photo by Matt Biddulph  
OEWaves, Caltech, Cornell, Harvard

# Whispering gallery mode devices

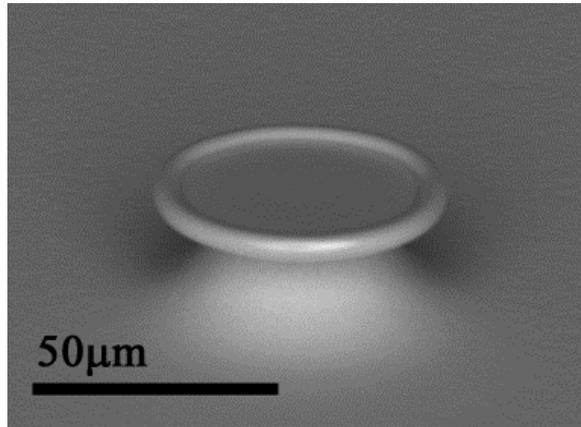


Figure of merit for resonators is quality factor (Q):

$$Q = \lambda / \Delta\lambda$$

$\lambda$  = resonant wavelength

$\Delta\lambda$  = FWHM of resonance

$$\begin{aligned} Q_{tot}^{-1} &= Q_{mat}^{-1} + Q_{ss}^{-1} + Q_{rad}^{-1} + Q_{cont}^{-1} + Q_{coup}^{-1} \\ &= Q_{in}^{-1} + Q_{ext}^{-1} \end{aligned}$$

$Q_{in}$  = intrinsic Q

- $1/Q_{mat}$  = loss due to material loss
- $1/Q_{ss}$  = loss due to surface roughness
- $1/Q_{rad}$  = bending loss, minimized by optimized size of resonant cavity
- $1/Q_{cont}$  = contamination loss, minimized by keeping cavity “clean”

$Q_{ext}$  = extrinsic Q

- $1/Q_{coup}$  = coupling loss due to inefficient optical power transfer

# Whispering gallery mode devices

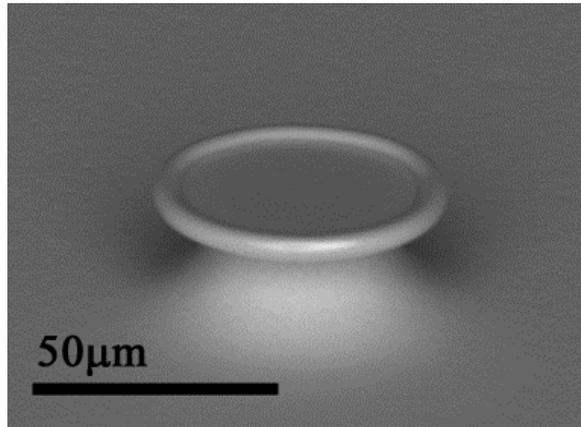


Figure of merit for resonators is quality factor (Q):

$$Q = \lambda / \Delta\lambda$$

$\lambda$  = resonant wavelength  
 $\Delta\lambda$  = FWHM of resonance

Benefit of resonators:

$$\frac{P_{circ}}{P_{input}} = \frac{1}{2\pi} \frac{\lambda Q}{\pi n D} = \frac{1}{2\pi} F$$

$$I_{circ} = \frac{P_{circ}}{A} = \frac{\lambda Q}{2\pi V} P_{input}$$

$P_{circ}$  = circulating power

$D$  = diameter

$I_{circ}$  = circulating intensity

$V$  = mode volume

$P_{input}$  = input power

$F$  = Finesse

$A$  = mode area

# Cavity-based combs

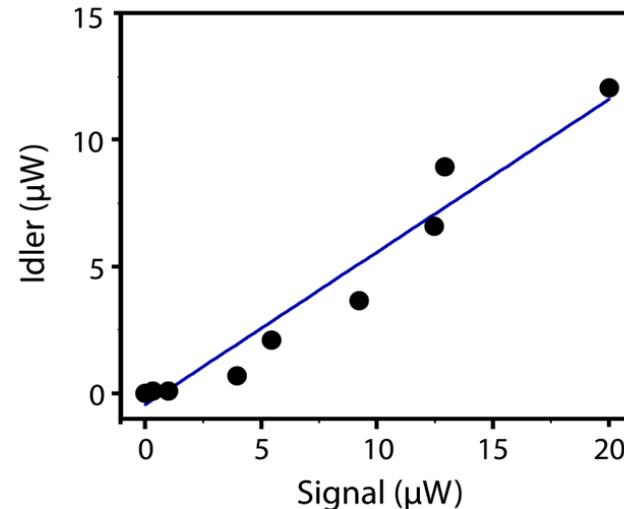
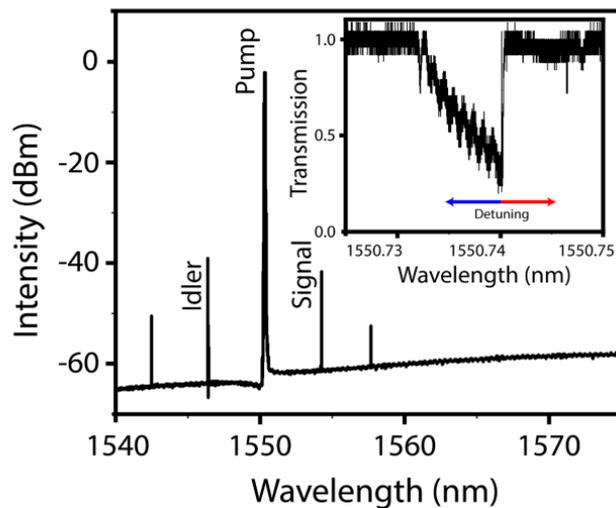
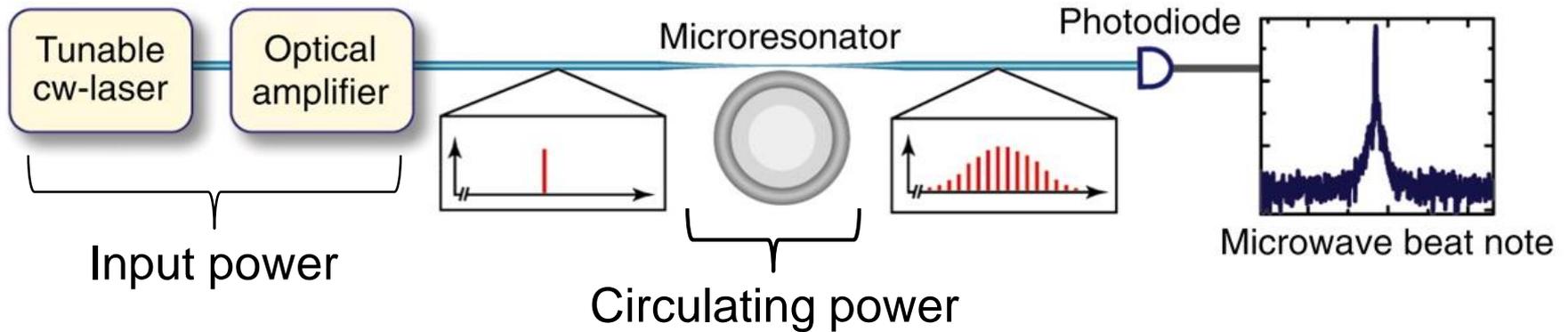
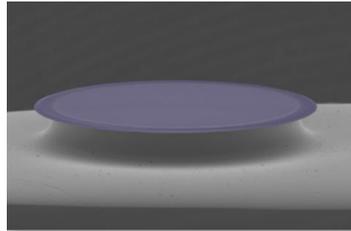


Figure from: T. Kippenberg, R. Holzwarth, S. Diddams, *Science* 332 (2011).  
Castro-Beltran, R., ... Armani, A. M., *ACS Photonics* 4 (11) 2828 (2017).

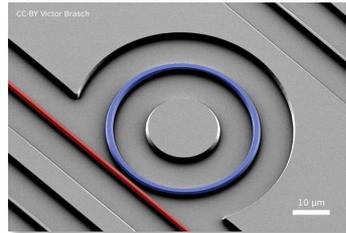
# Cavities for combs



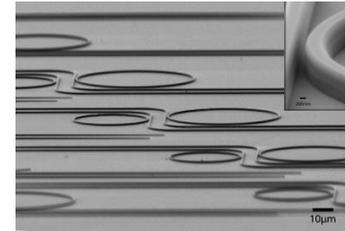
Fluorides



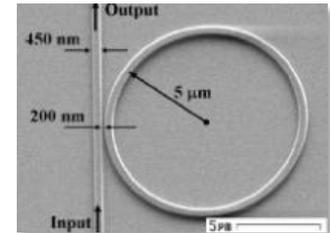
Oxides



Nitrides



Diamond



Silicon

## Goals:

- High circulating intensity
- Precise mode spacing over large wavelength range
- Integrated, packaged system

## Approaches:

- High Q, small V (high F)
- Large diameter (FSR, dispersion)
- Low, controllable material/geometric dispersion
- Designing for packaging

Loncar (Harvard), Bowen (Queensland), Yang (Wash U), Vahala (Caltech), Lipson (Columbia), Kippenberg (EPFL), Xiao (Peking), Vollmer (Exeter), Barclay (Calgary), Poon (HKU), Keller (ETH), ...  
OEWaves, JPL, NIST, Northrop Grumman

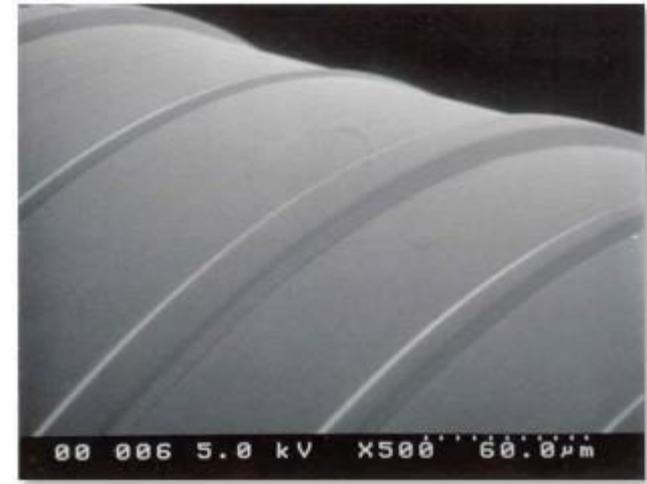
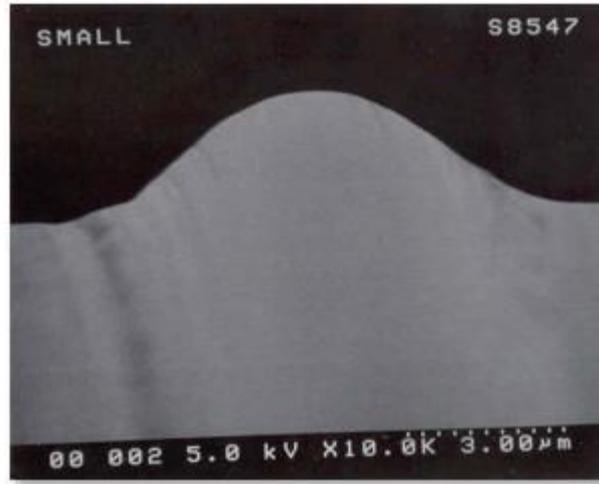
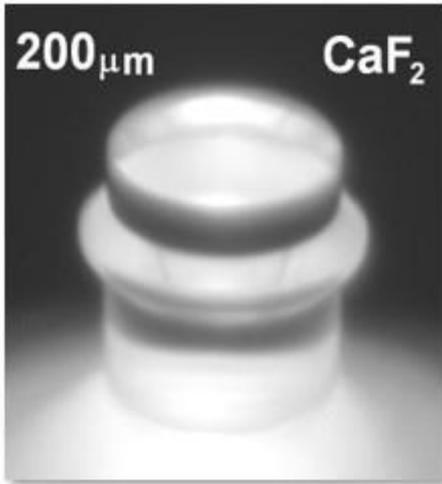
# Crystalline resonator fabrication

## Diamond turning and other techniques

Microresonators

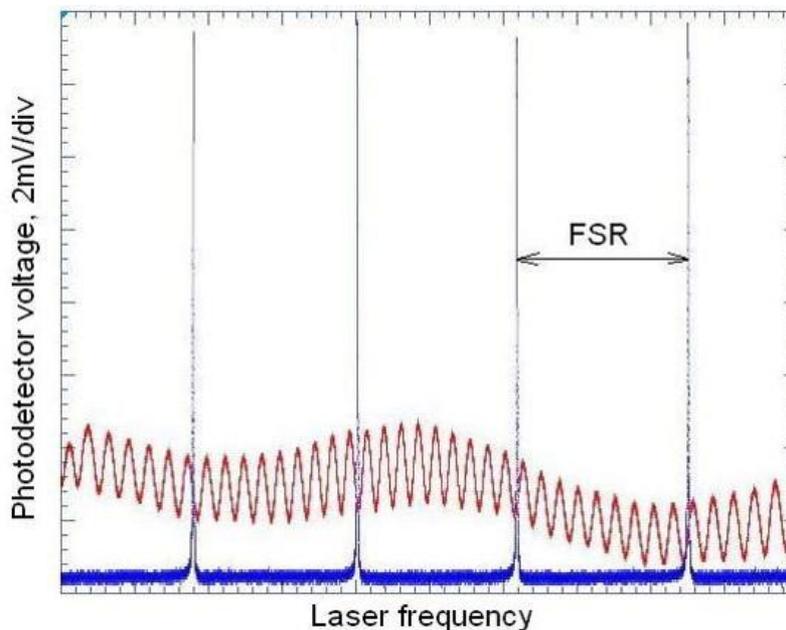
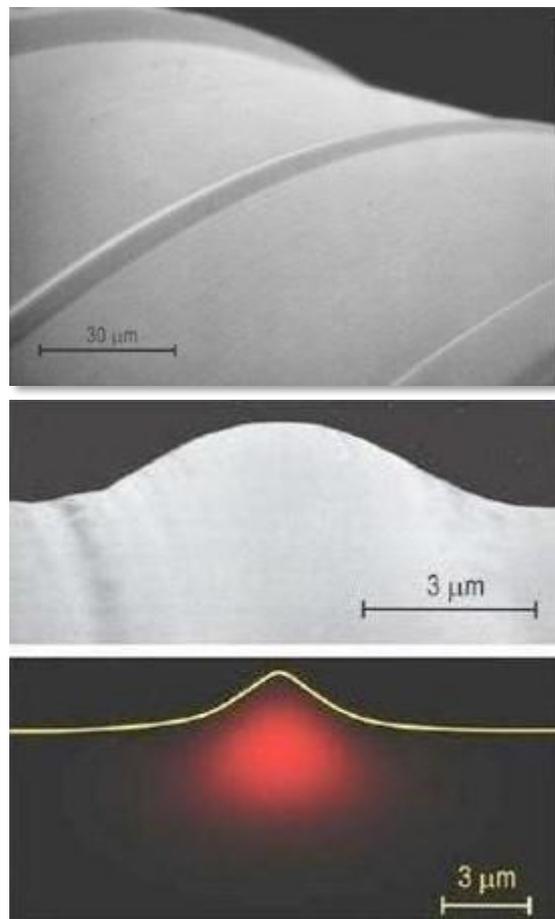
Single mode resonators

Coupled resonators



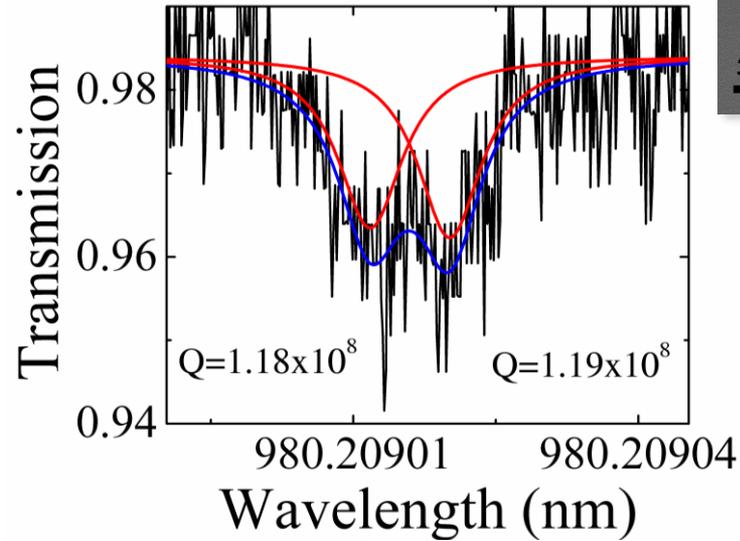
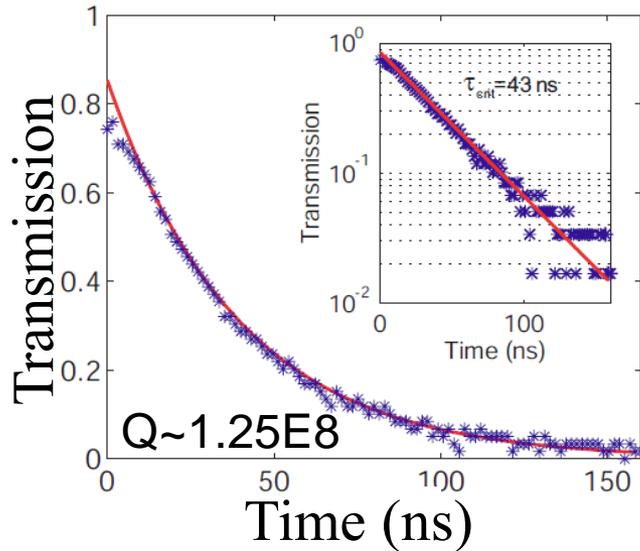
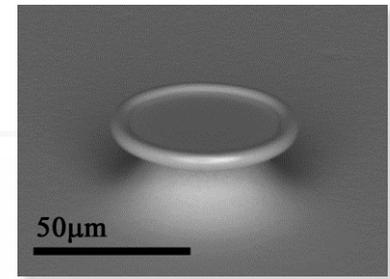
# CaF<sub>2</sub> microcavity

Extremely clean broadband spectrum with record Q's (>10<sup>10</sup> routinely)



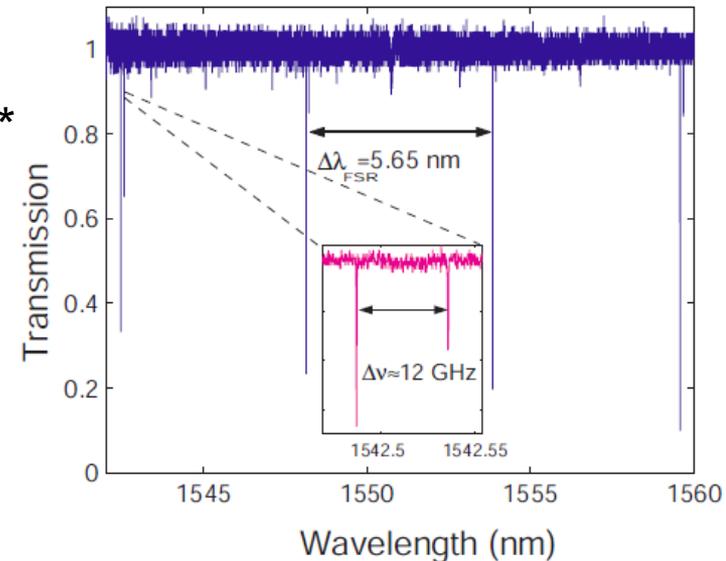
Single mode CaF<sub>2</sub> resonator

# Silica toroidal cavities



Q measured two ways: linewidth and ringdown\*

Well-defined spectrum (ideal for combs), if small diameter toroid is used.

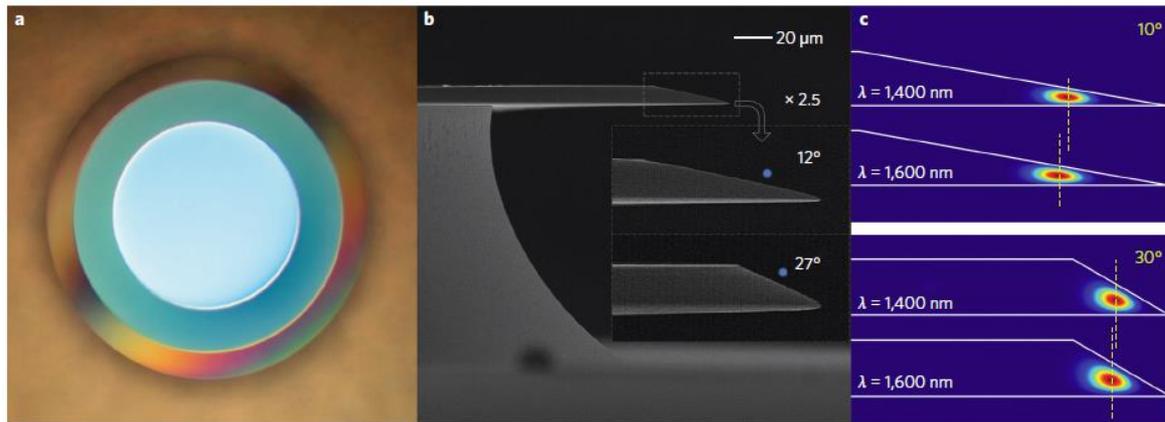


\* Not same cavity. Shown to enable discussion of CW/CCW mode splitting and ringdown.

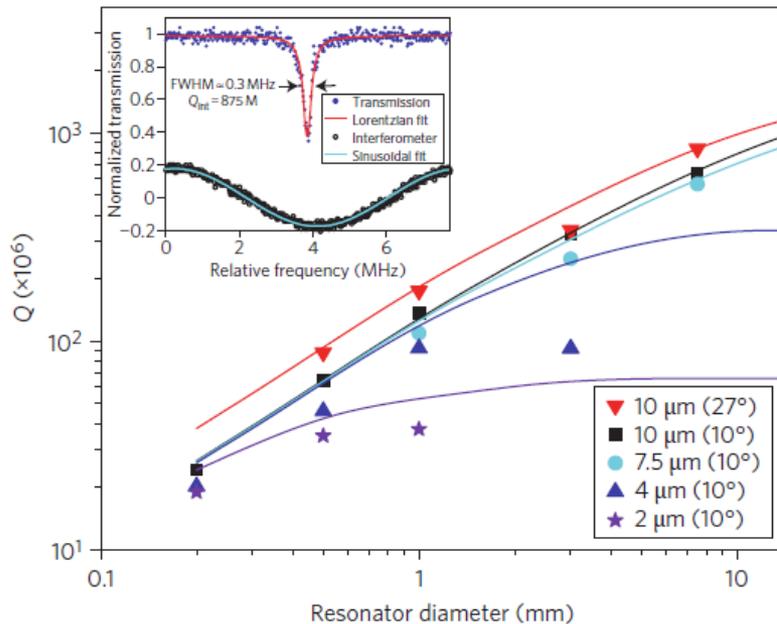
D. Armani, et al, Nature **421** (2003).

X. Zhang, et al, Applied Physics Letters **96** 15 (2010).

# Silica microdisk cavities



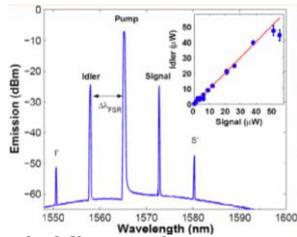
Location and shape of optical mode changes with wedge angle



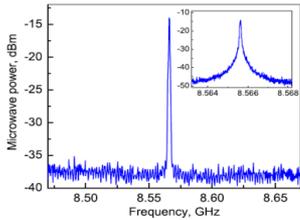
- Q is dominated by surface scattering
- Thicker oxides have higher Q factors

# Some Early Experiments

## Hyper-parametric oscillation

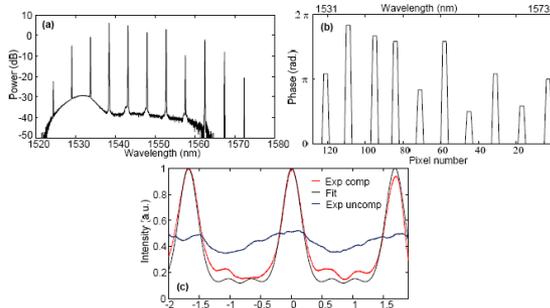


T. J. Kippenberg et al.,  
Phys. Rev. Lett. **93**,  
083904 (2004).



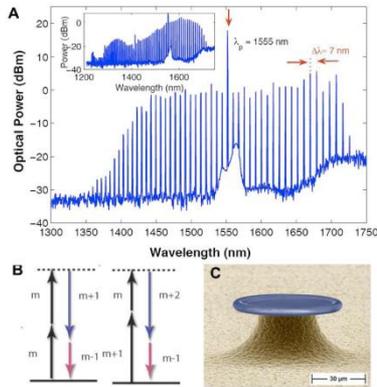
A. A. Savchenkov et al.,  
Phys. Rev. Lett. **93**,  
243905 (2004).

## Waveform manipulation



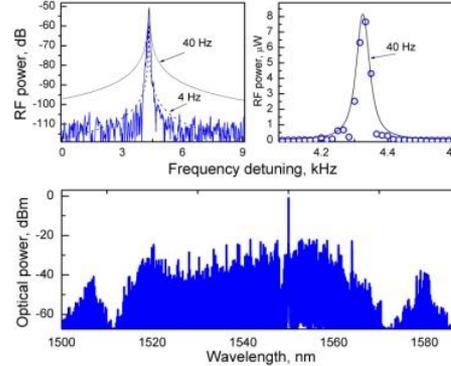
F. Ferdous et al., Nature Photonics  
**5**, 770 (2011)

## Kerr frequency comb



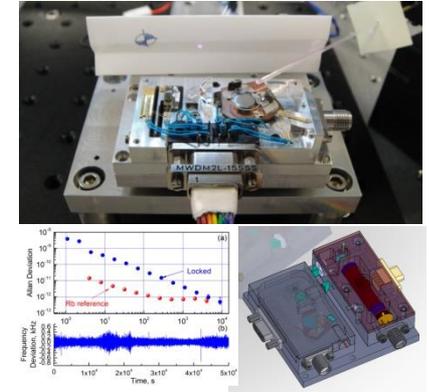
P. Del Hays, et al.,  
Nature **450**, 1214  
(2007)

## RF photonic oscillator



A. A. Savchenkov et al.,  
Phys. Rev. Lett. **101**,  
093902 (2008)

## Single point stabilization



A. A. Savchenkov et al., Opt. Lett.  
**38**, 2636 (2013)

## On-chip fs pulse generation

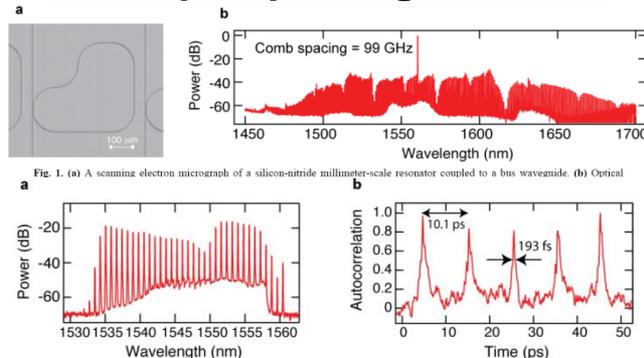
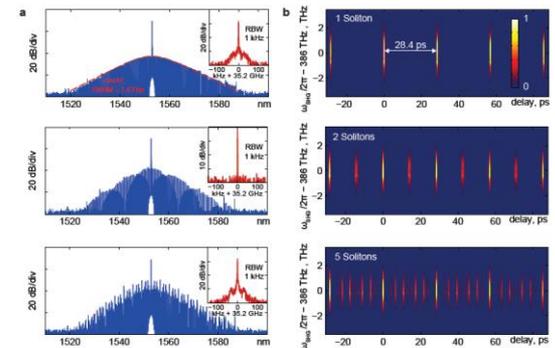


Fig. 1. (a) A scanning electron micrograph of a silicon-nitride millimeter-scale resonator coupled to a bus waveguide. (b) Optical Power (dB) vs Wavelength (nm) showing a comb spacing of 99 GHz. (c) Normalized autocorrelation trace of pulse train obtained from the comb after filtering 25 nm. The repetition rate of the pulses is 10.1 ps and the full-width at half maximum is 193 fs.

K. Saha et al, Opt. Express  
**21**, 1335 (2013)

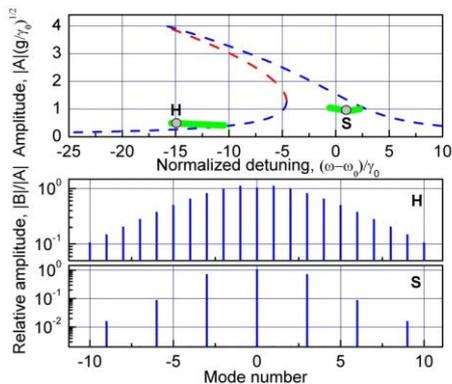
## Soliton Kerr comb



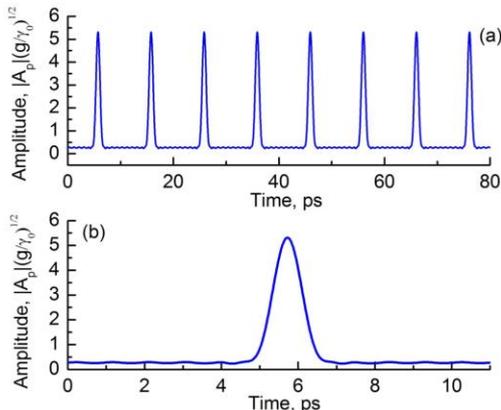
T. Herr et al., Nature Photonics  
**8**, 145–152 (2014)

# Major Regimes of Operation

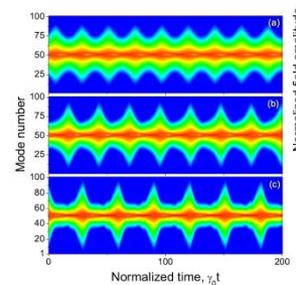
## Mode locking



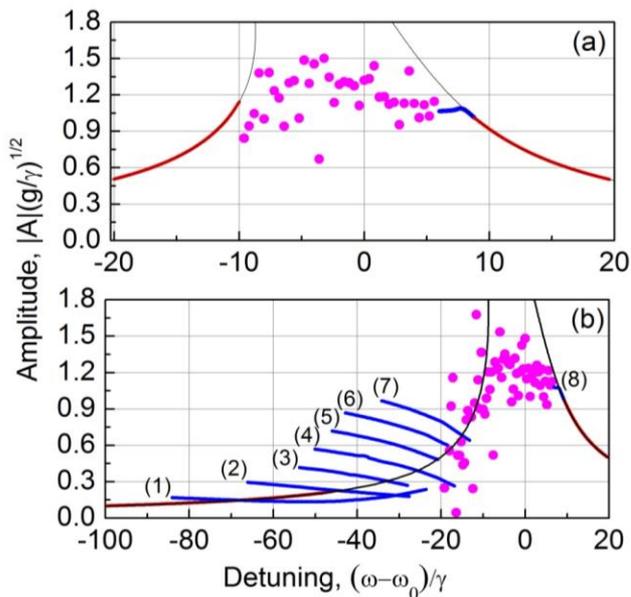
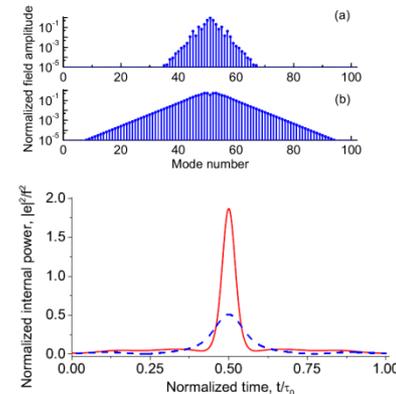
A. B. Matsko et al., Phys. Rev. A **85**, 023830 (2012)



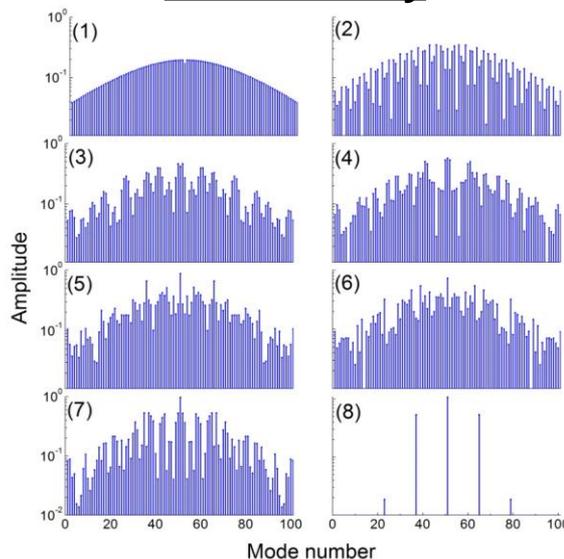
## Breathers



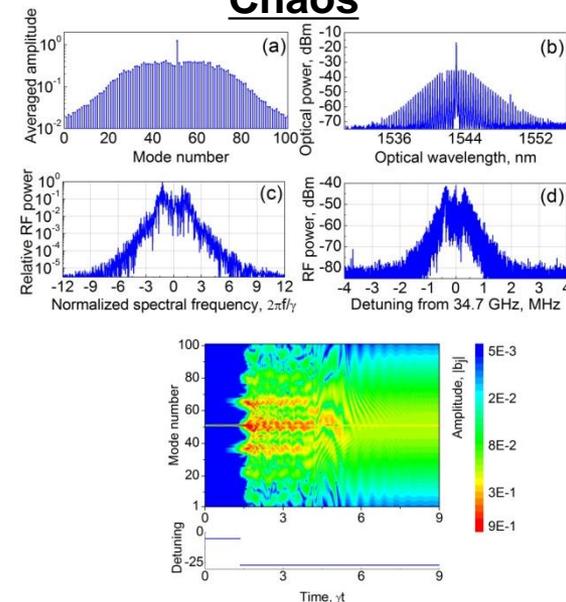
A. B. Matsko et al. Opt. Lett. **37**, 4856 (2012)



## Multistability



## Chaos



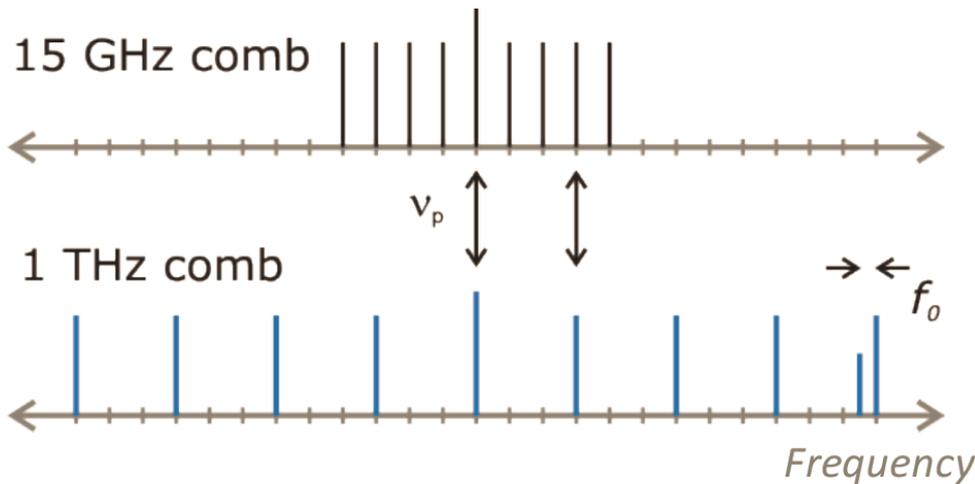
A. B. Matsko et al., Opt. Lett. **38**, 525 (2013)

# Going back to go forward

To enable portable combs, laser stability issue must to be solved:

→ Self-referencing is needed.

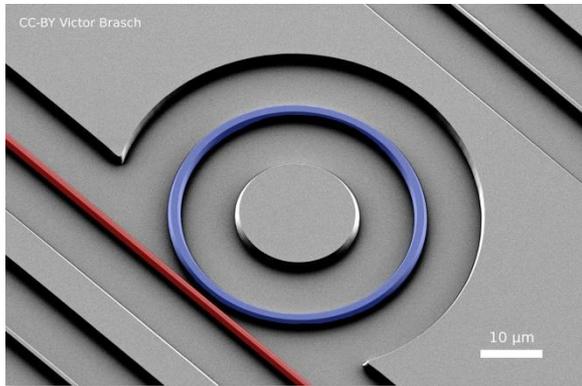
Challenges: power, frequency control, material properties, integration



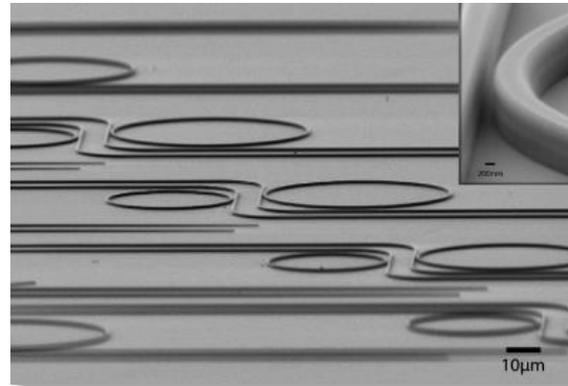
Solution: Expand comb toolbox to other material systems

# Alternative and emerging material systems

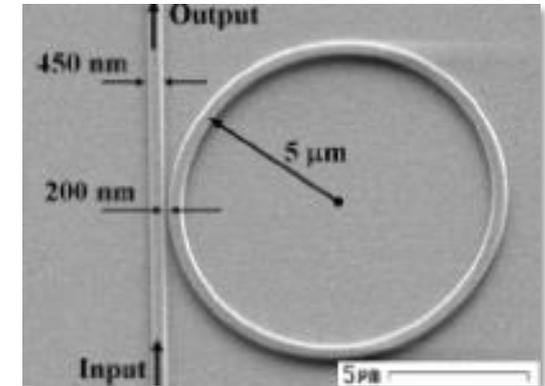
- Balance **dispersion** (geometric, material) with nonlinear behaviors and loss
- Address packaging
- Expand wavelength range (UV? Mid-IR?)



SiN



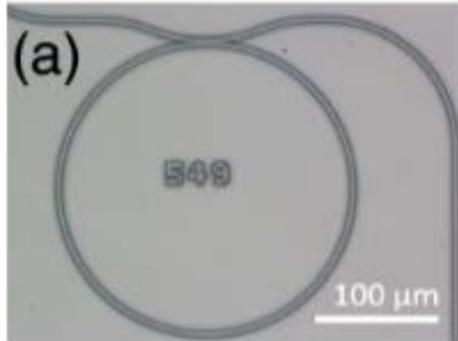
Diamond



Silicon

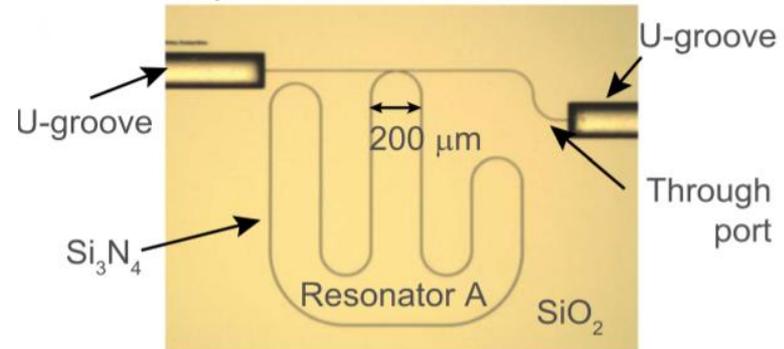
# Silicon Nitride ( $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$ ) microcavities

## Microring



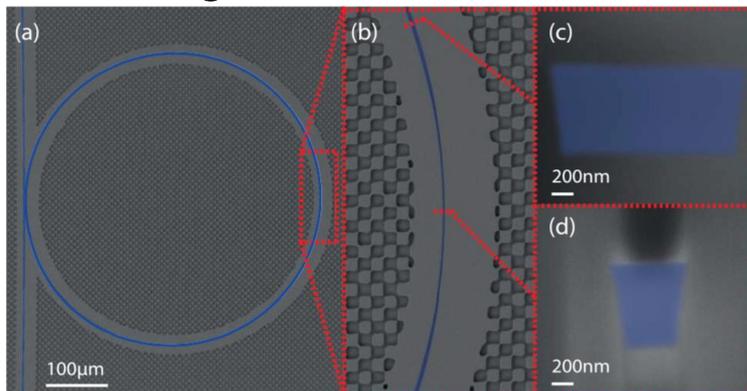
X. Ji...A. Gaeta, M. Lipson, *Optica*, 4, 6, 2017

## Finger-shaped racetracks



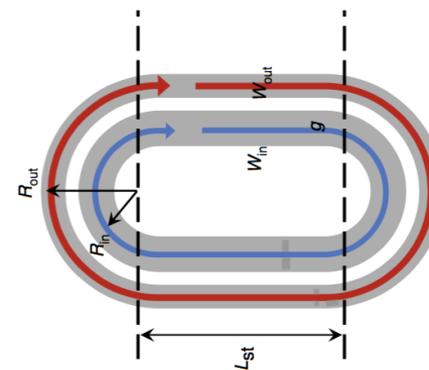
Y. Xuan...A. Weiner, M. Qi, *Optica*, 3, 11, 2016

## Tapered rings for suppressing higher order modes



A. Kordts...T. J. Kippenberg, *Optics Letters*, 41, 3, 2016; S.-W. Huang... C. Wong, *Scientific Reports*, 6, 26255, 2016

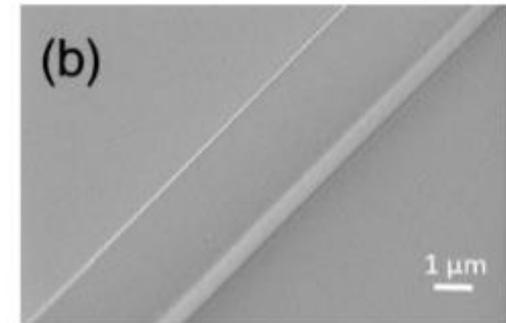
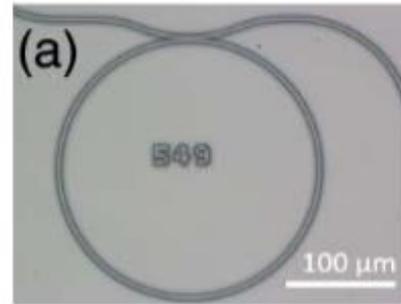
## Concentric resonators for dispersion engineering



S. Kim...A. Weiner, M. Qi, *Nature Communications*, 8, 1, 2017.

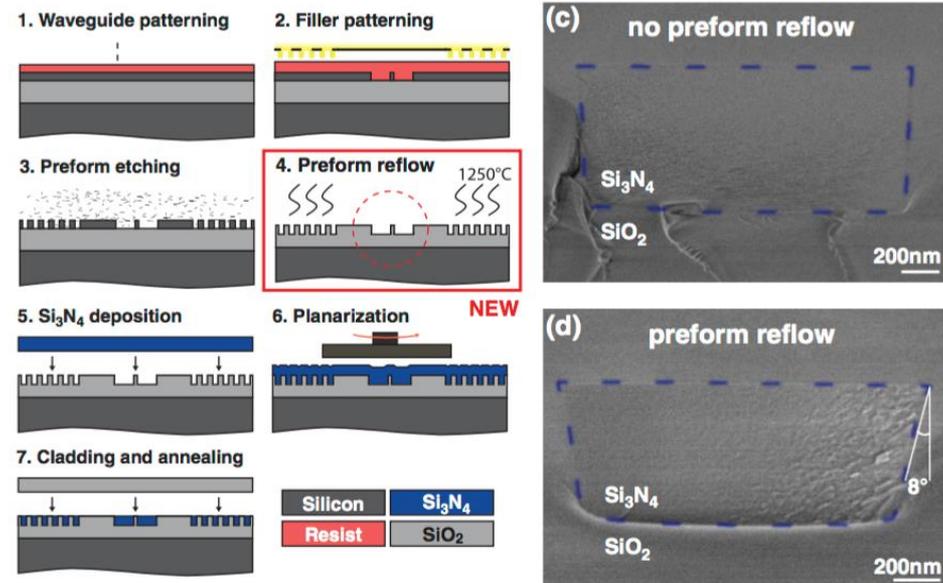
# Silicon Nitride ( $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$ ) microcavities

- Reduce surface roughness by improving etching receipts, polishing top surface and improve lithography. Up to 37 million Q was achieved for a 2.5  $\mu\text{m}$  width ring.



X. Ji...A. Gaeta, M. Lipson, *Optica*, 4, 6, 2017

- Damascene reflow process to smooth the surface and reduce scattering loss. Mean Q in excess of 5 million are obtained.

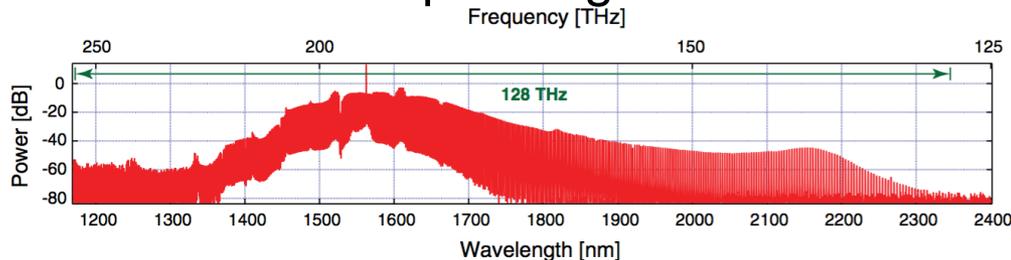


M. H. P. Pfeiffer...T. J. Kippenberg, *Optica*, 5, 7, 2018

# Silicon Nitride ( $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$ ) Combs

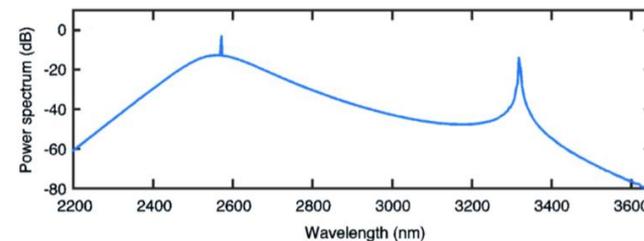
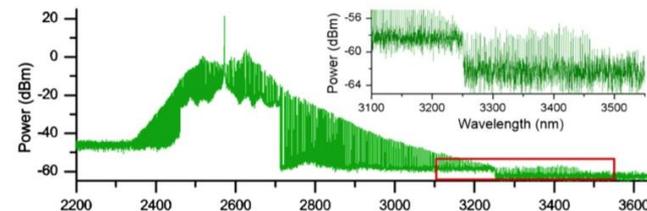
Dispersion of the  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  rings can be engineered by changing the width and height to achieve:

## Octave spanning combs

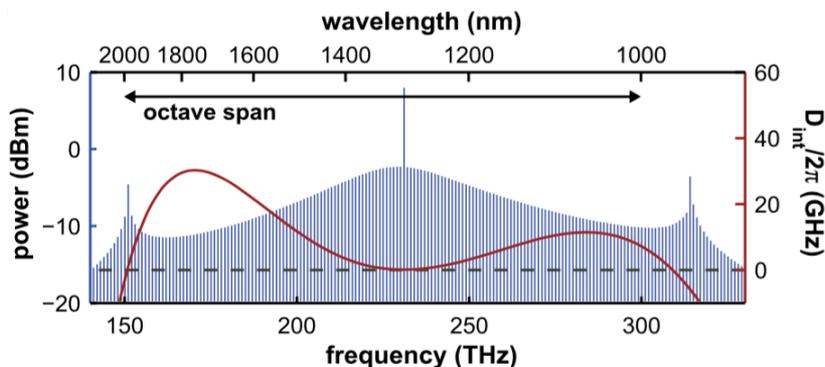


Y. Okawachi, ... M. Lipson, A. L. Gaeta, *Optics Letters*, 36, 17, 2011

## Mid-IR combs



K. Luke, ... M. Lipson, *Optics Letters*, 40, 21, 2015

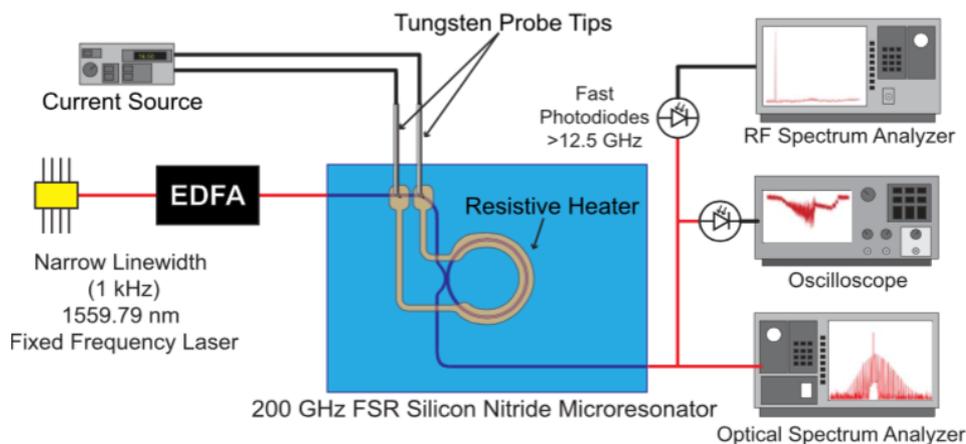


M. H. P. Pfeiffer ... T. J. Kippenberg, *Optica*, 4, 7, 2017

# Silicon Nitride ( $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$ ) Combs

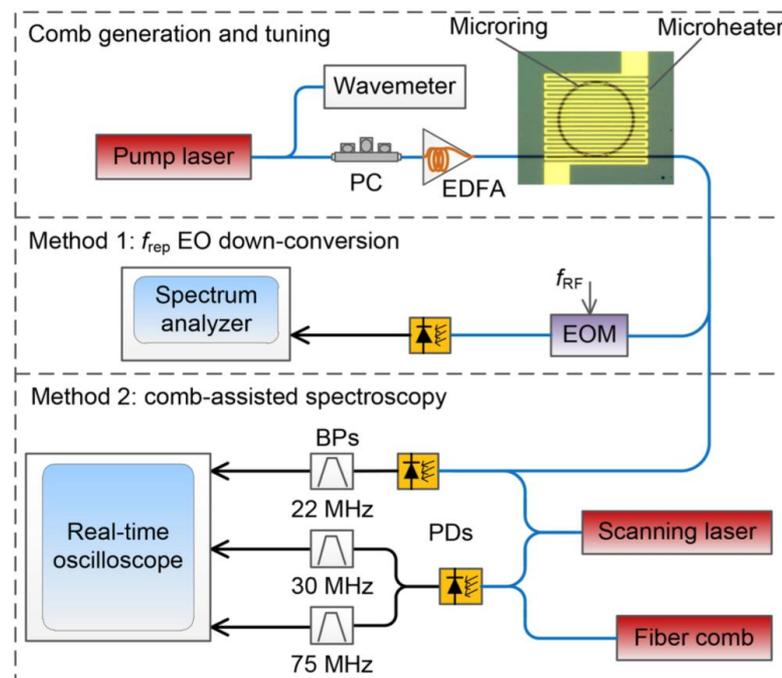
Moving past passive systems:

Mode locking with integrated heaters



C. Joshi, ... M. Lipson, A. Gaeta, *Optics Letters*, 41, 11, 2016

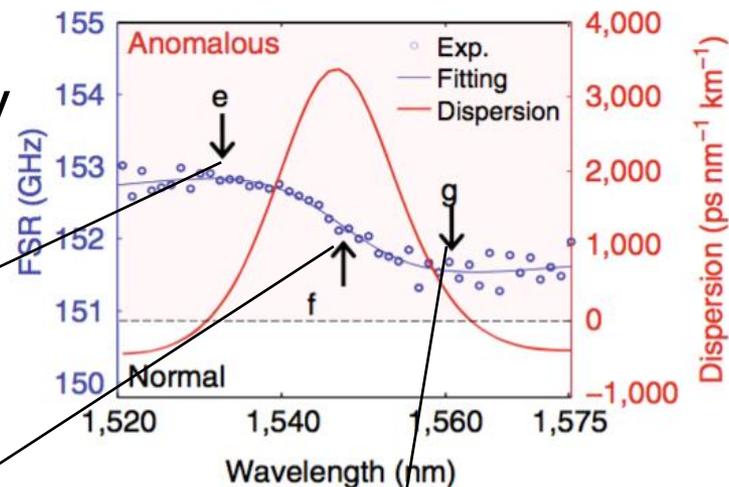
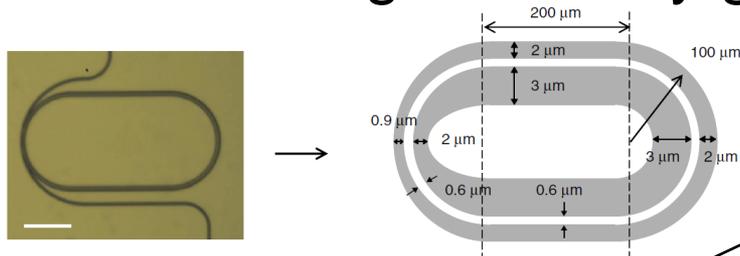
Tuning line spacing and central spacing



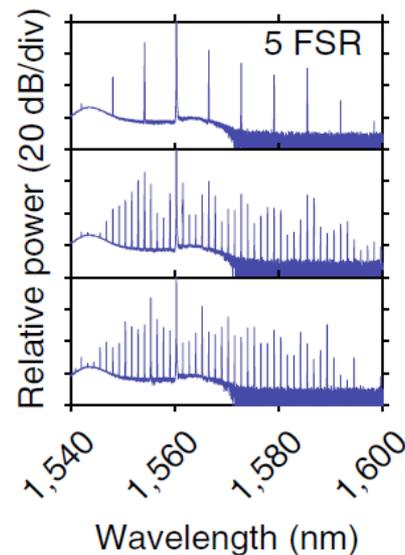
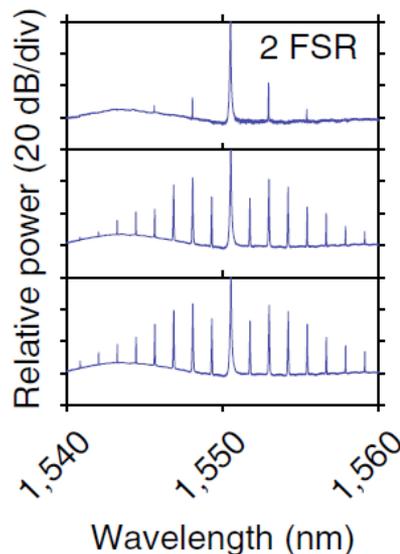
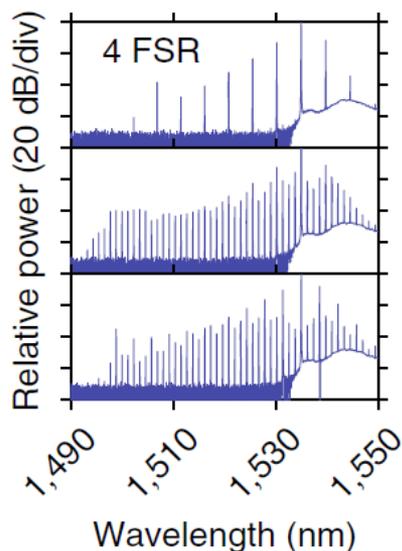
X. Xue... A. M. Weiner, *Optics Express*, 24, 1, 2016

# Dispersion engineering via geometry

Dispersion of the  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  resonators can also be engineered by geometry

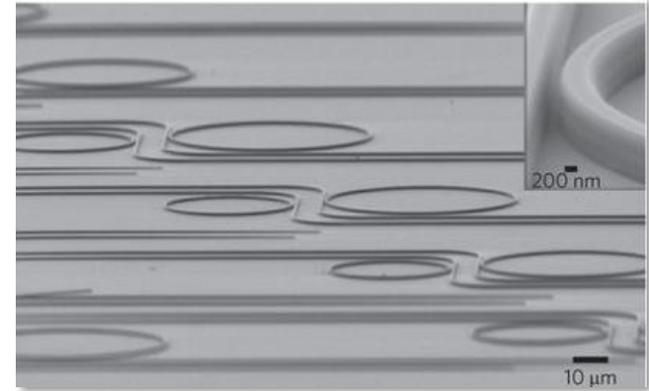


Tune the pump laser



# Diamond microring cavity

- High nonlinear refractive index ( $n_2$ ):  $1.3 \times 10^{-19} \text{ m}^2/\text{W}$
- Low absorption losses from UV to IR
- High thermal conductivity
- Lack of two-photon absorption due to its large bandgap of 5.5 eV
- Anomalous group velocity dispersion in near-IR



Micro-ring resonator

- Radius:  $\sim 30 \mu\text{m}$
- Width: 875 nm
- Height: 850 nm

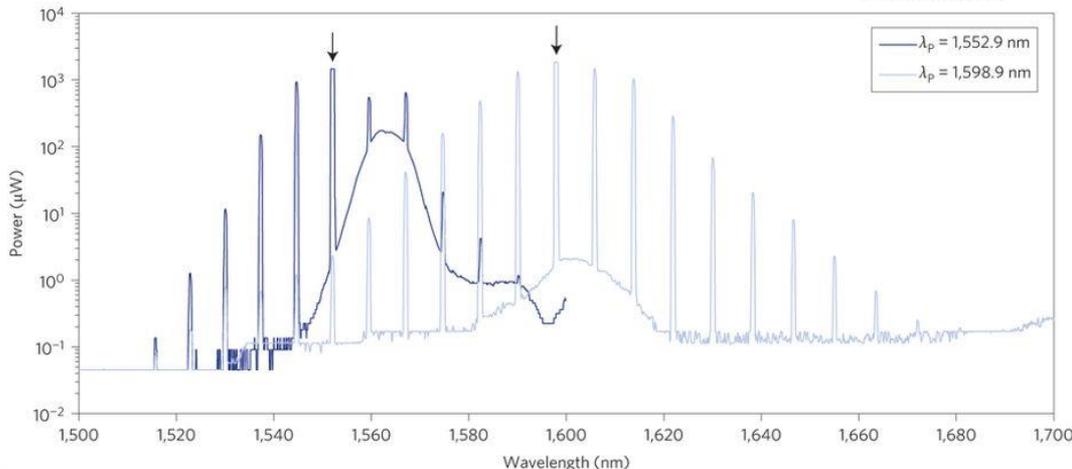
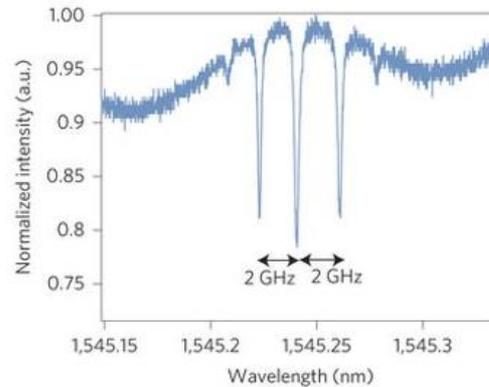
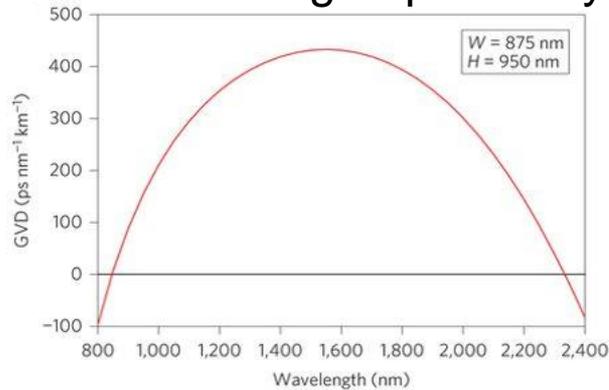
$$Q = 1.14 \times 10^6$$

Span  $\sim 165 \text{ nm}$  at 80 mW  
(1510  $\sim$  1675 nm)

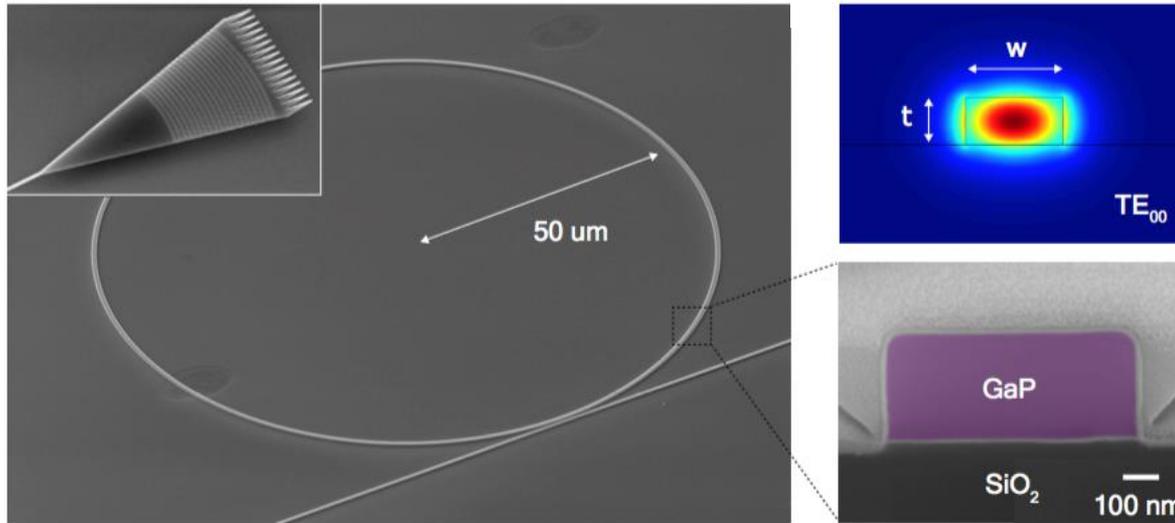
FSR: 925 GHz

$P_{\text{th}} = 20 \text{ mW}$

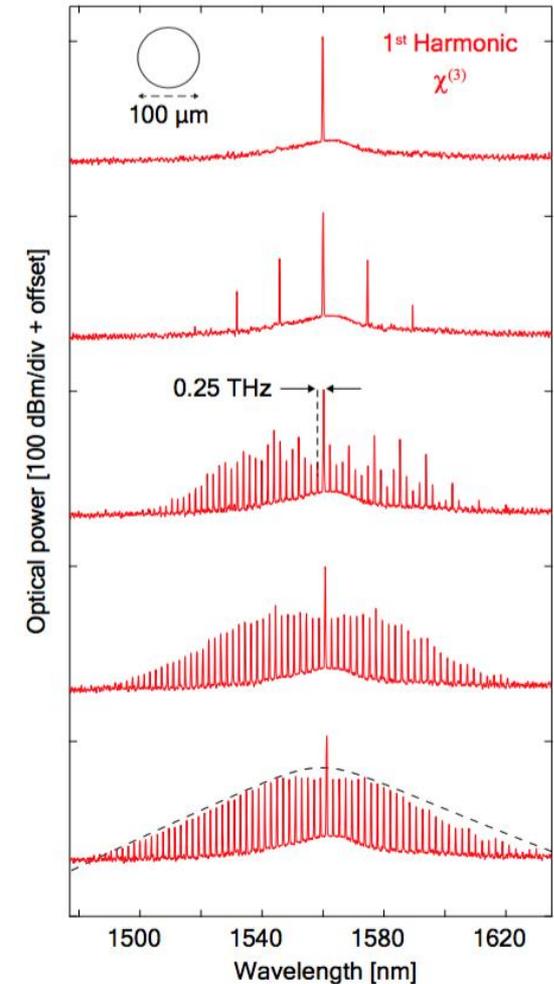
Higher coupling efficiency + better dispersion = more lines at longer pump wavelength



# Gallium Phosphide (GaP) microring



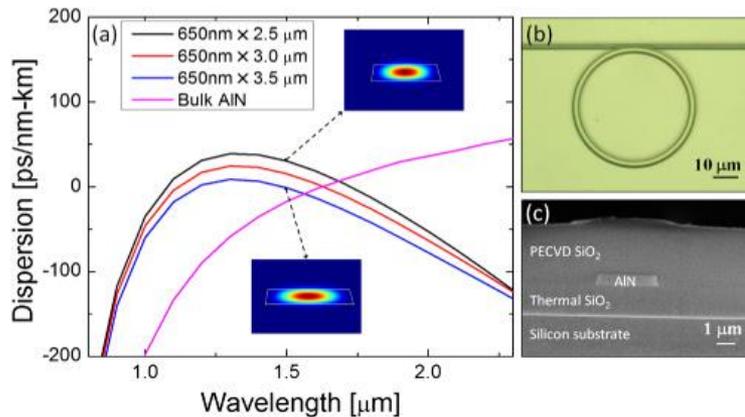
- $Q > 10^5$
- High  $n_2$  in telecom:  $1.2 \times 10^{-17} \text{ m}^2/\text{W}$
- Parametric threshold: 3 mW
- Span:  $> 100 \text{ nm}$  @ 100 mW



# Aluminum Nitride resonator

- Noncentrosymmetric crystal structure: second- ( $\chi^{(2)}$ ) and third-order ( $\chi^{(3)}$ ) optical nonlinearities
- High nonlinear refractive index ( $n_2$ ) value:  $2.3 \times 10^{-19} \text{ m}^2/\text{W}$
- Near zero group-velocity dispersion at near-IR region ( $\sim 1550 \text{ nm}$ )

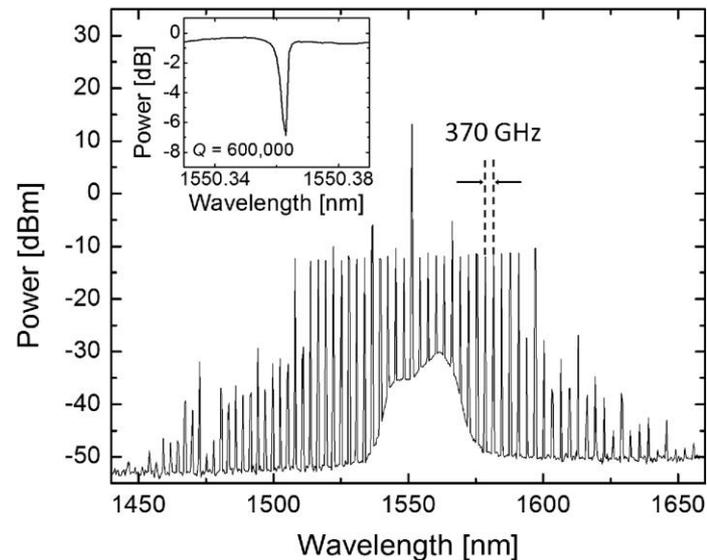
Frequency comb with  $\chi^{(3)}$



$$Q = 8 \times 10^5$$

Span :  $\sim 200 \text{ nm}$  at  $500 \text{ mW}$  ( $1450 \sim 1650 \text{ nm}$ )

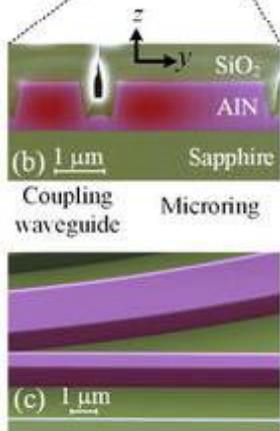
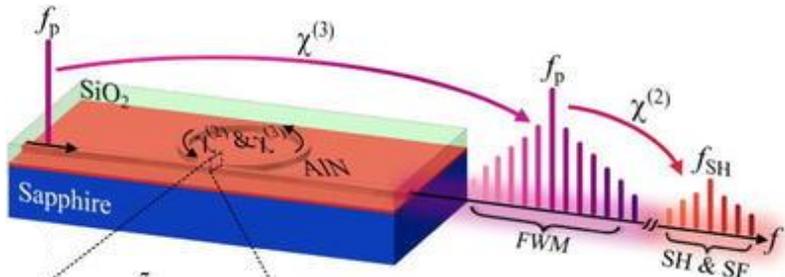
FSR:  $370 \text{ GHz}$



# Aluminum Nitride resonator

- Noncentrosymmetric crystal structure: second- ( $\chi^{(2)}$ ) and third-order ( $\chi^{(3)}$ ) optical nonlinearities
- High nonlinear refractive index ( $n_2$ ) value:  $2.3 \times 10^{-19} \text{ m}^2/\text{W}$
- Near zero group-velocity dispersion at near-IR region ( $\sim 1550 \text{ nm}$ )

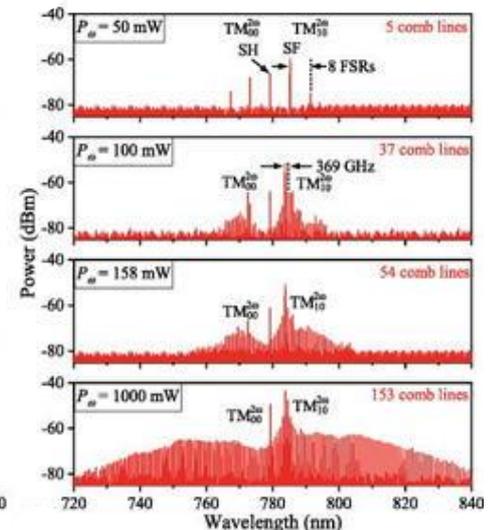
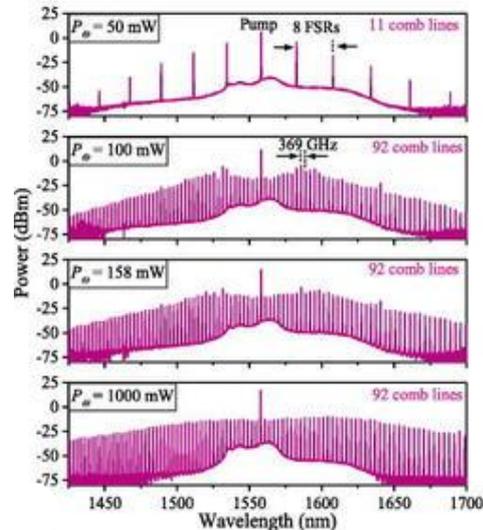
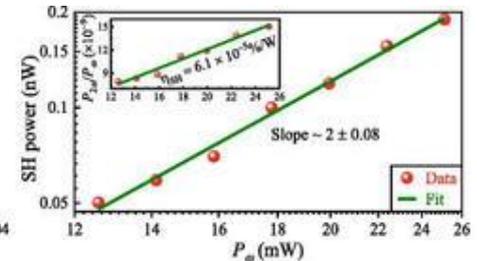
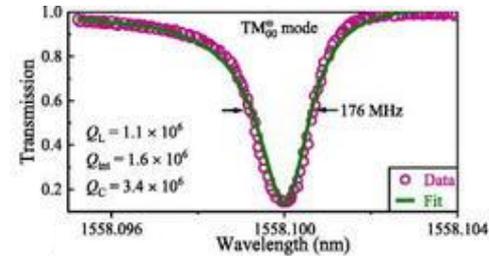
Frequency comb with both  $\chi^{(2)}$  and  $\chi^{(3)}$



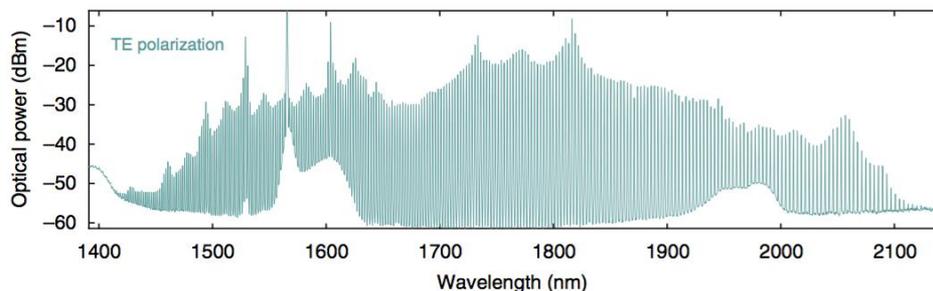
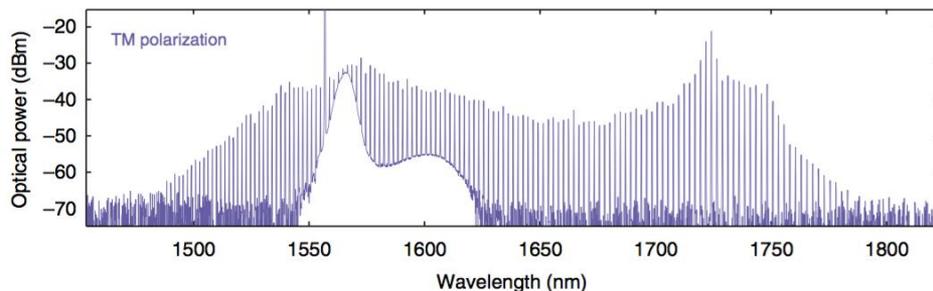
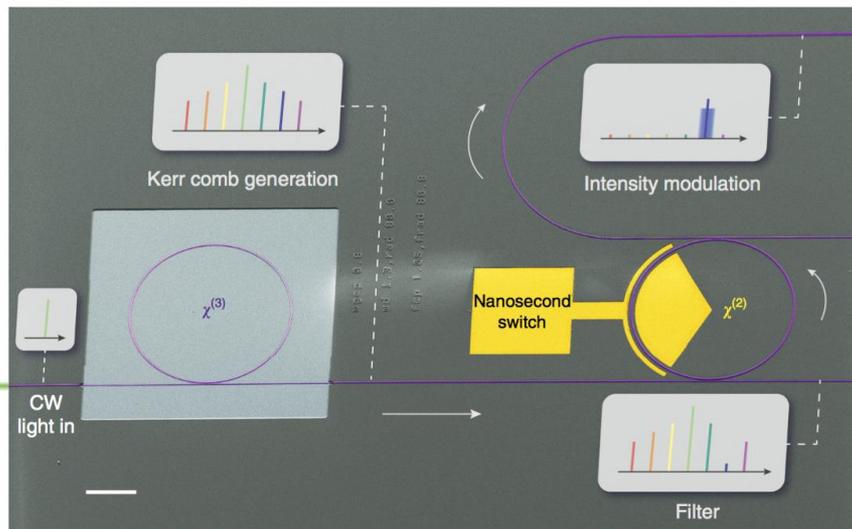
$Q \sim 1 \times 10^6$

Span at 500 mW:

- $> 300 \text{ nm}$  (1400-1700 nm)
- $\sim 120 \text{ nm}$  (720-840 nm)

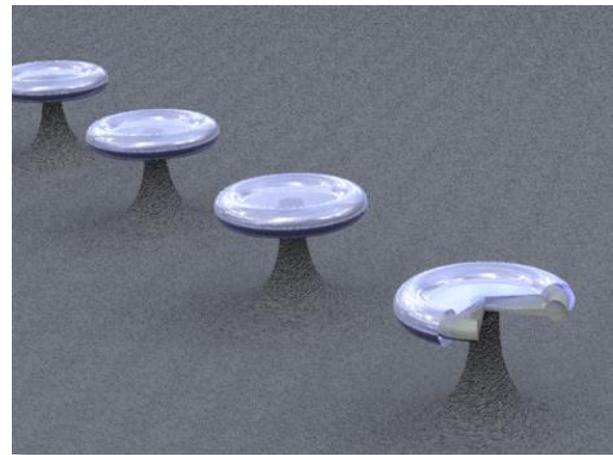
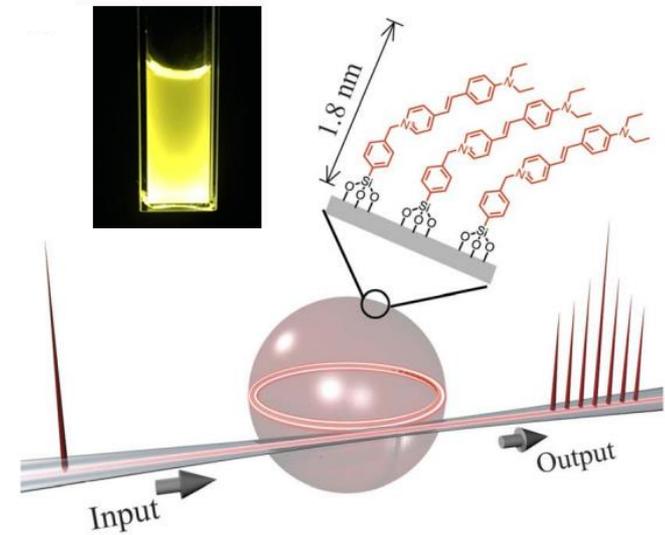
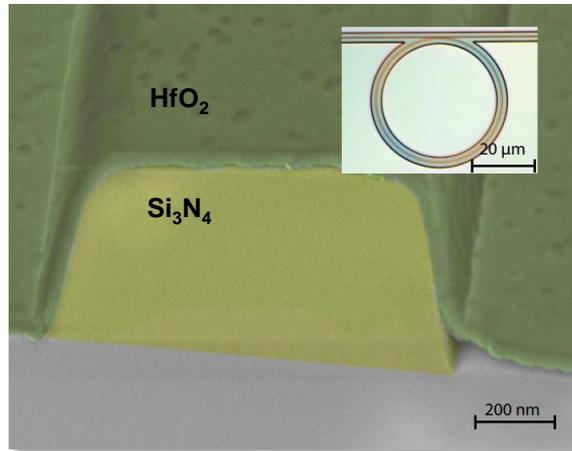


# Lithium Niobate ( $\text{LiNbO}_3$ ) cavities



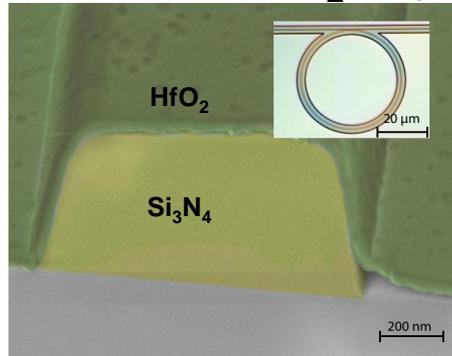
- $Q: 1.1 \times 10^6$
- $n_2: 1.8 \times 10^{-19} \text{ m}^2/\text{W}$
- Parametric threshold: 80 mW
- Span: >700 nm @ 300 mW

# Unconventional, multi-material systems?



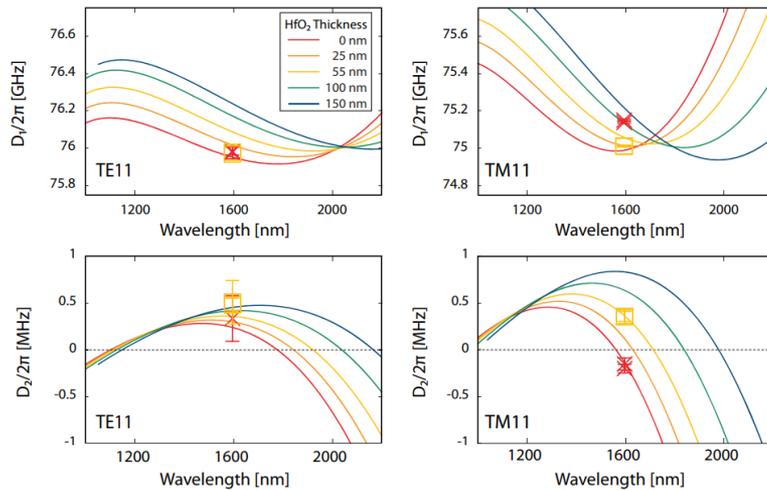
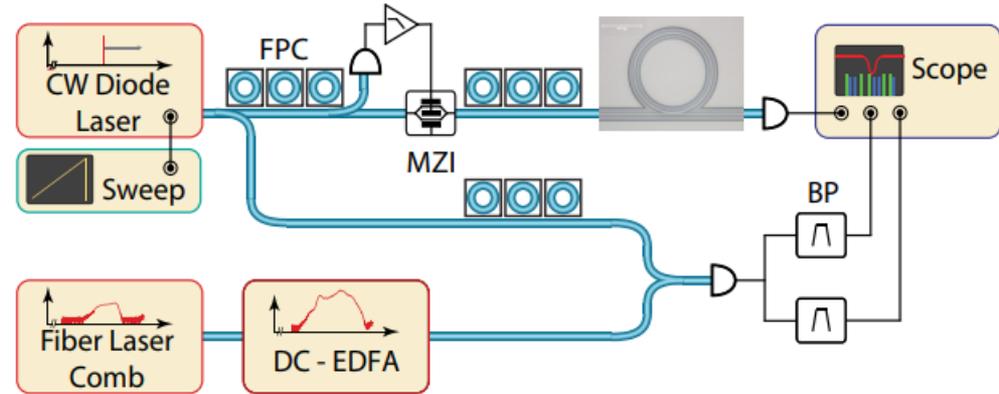
# Dispersion engineering via ALD

## Addition of HfO<sub>2</sub> Layer

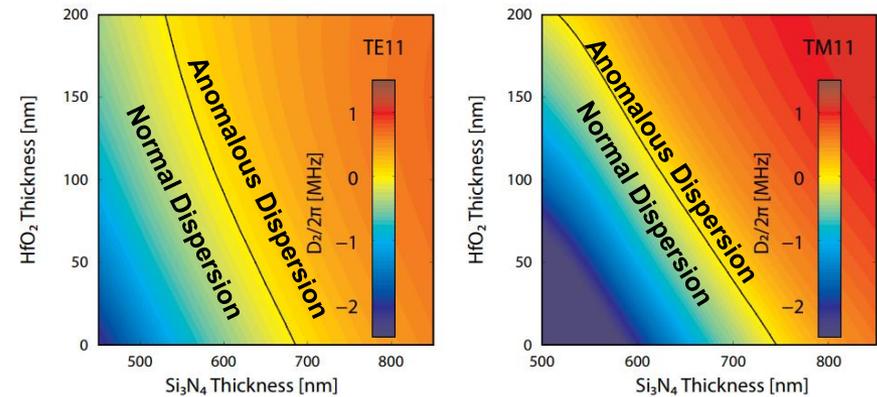


Silicon Nitride Microring  
 $Q \sim 6 \times 10^5$

## Dispersion Measurement



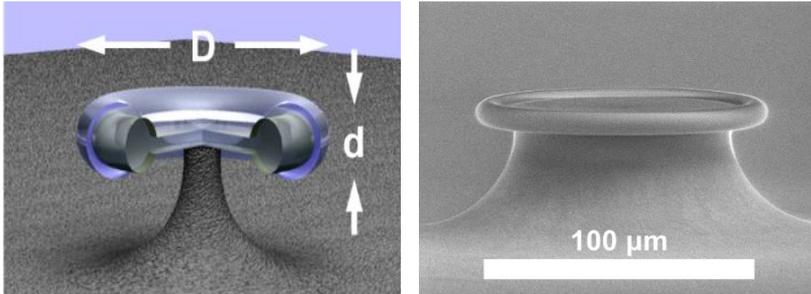
Significant cavity dispersion tunability



Traversing Regions of Dispersion

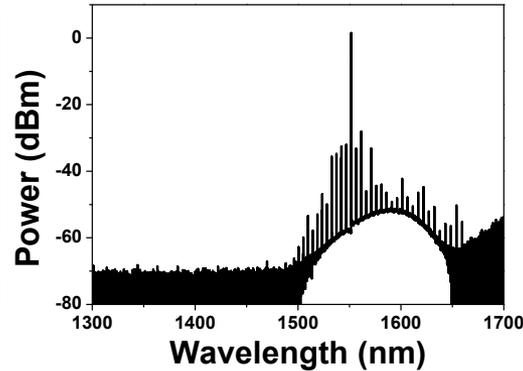
# Zr-doped SiO<sub>2</sub> cavities

SiO<sub>2</sub> cavity with 400nm film



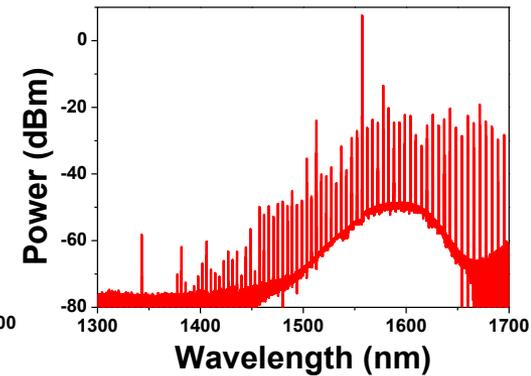
$$Q = \sim 1 \times 10^7$$

0 Mol%, 5.24 mW

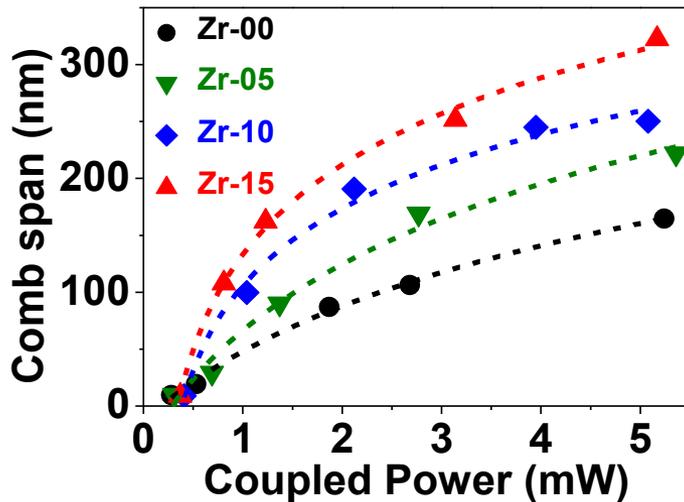


Span: 164 nm

15 Mol%, 5.17 mW



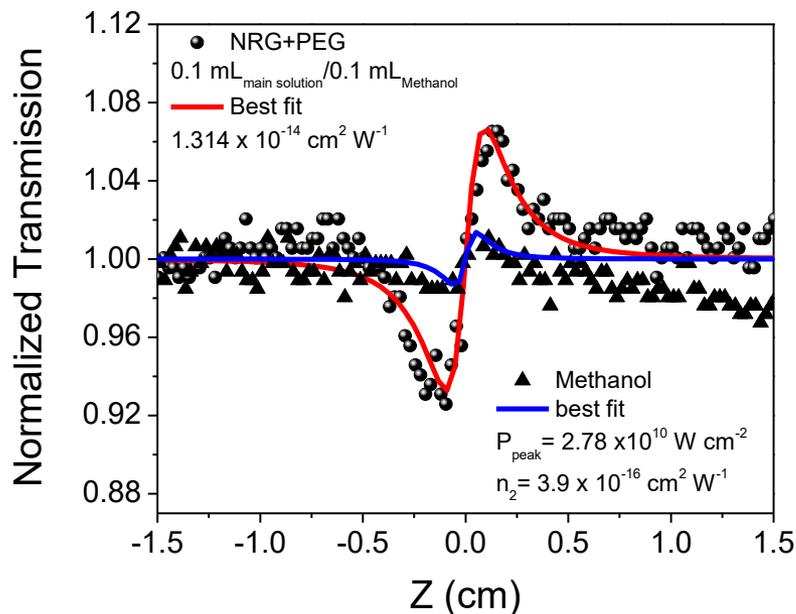
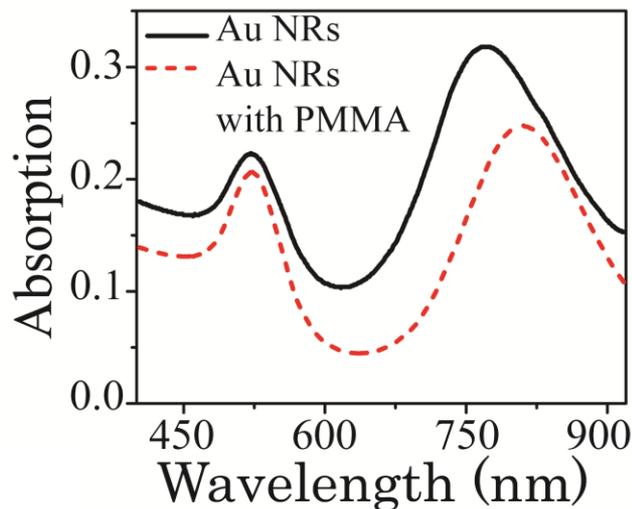
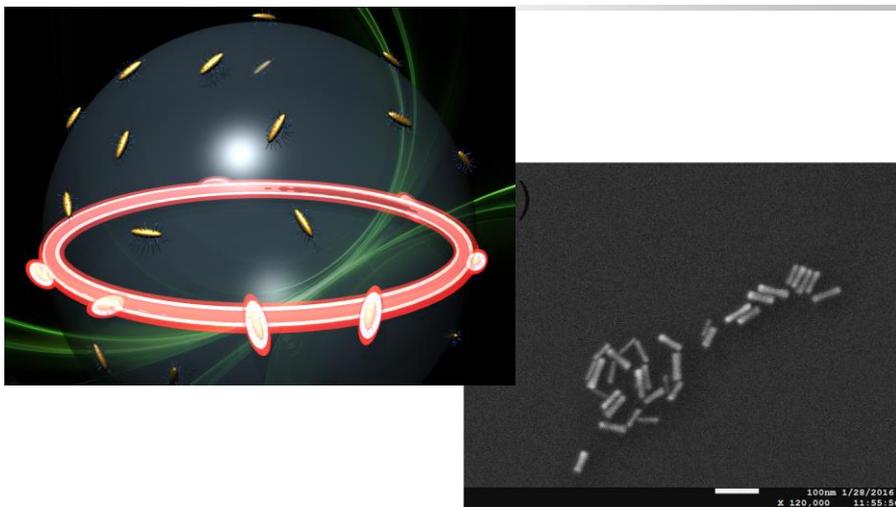
Span: 322 nm



$$P_{\text{th}} = 0.367 \text{ mW}$$

$$\text{Span (5mW)} = 1378 - \sim 1700 \text{ (322nm)}$$

# Plasmonic-photonic combs



Z-scan measurements confirm that the  $n_2$  values of GNR-PEG nanoparticle ( $1.3 \times 10^{-18} \text{m}^2/\text{W}$ ) are  $\sim 100$  times larger than silica ( $2 \times 10^{-20} \text{m}^2/\text{W}$ )

*Kerr coefficient  $n_2$*   
( $\times 10^{-20} \text{m}^2/\text{W}$ )

• Silica	2.2
• $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$	25
• $\text{CaF}_2$	1.9
• Diamond	8.2

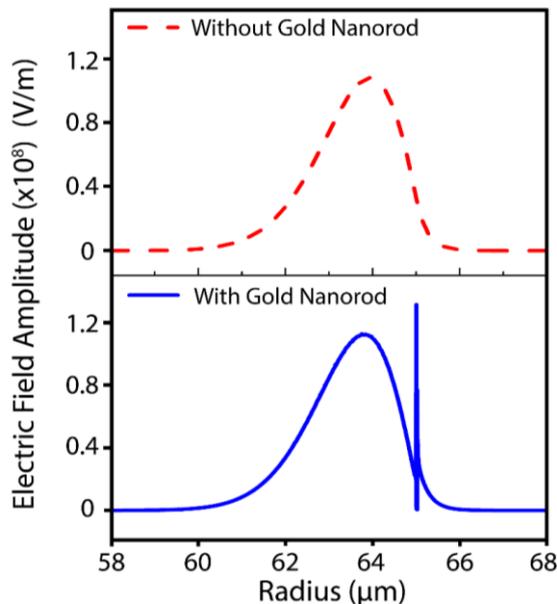
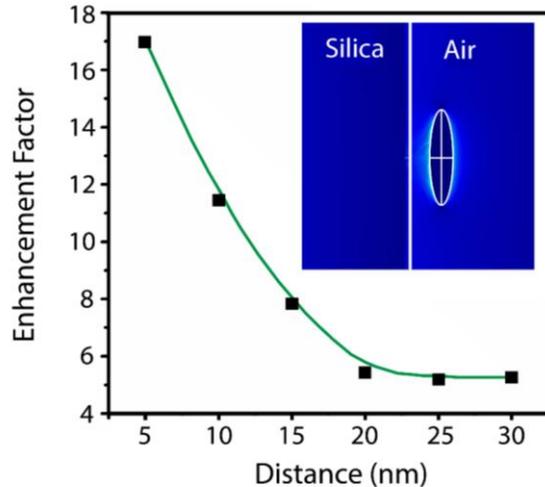
R. Castro-Beltran, ... A. M. Armani, ACS Photonics, 4 (11) 2828 (2017).

C. Shi, S. Soltani, A. M. Armani, Nano Letters, 13 (12), 5827 (2013).

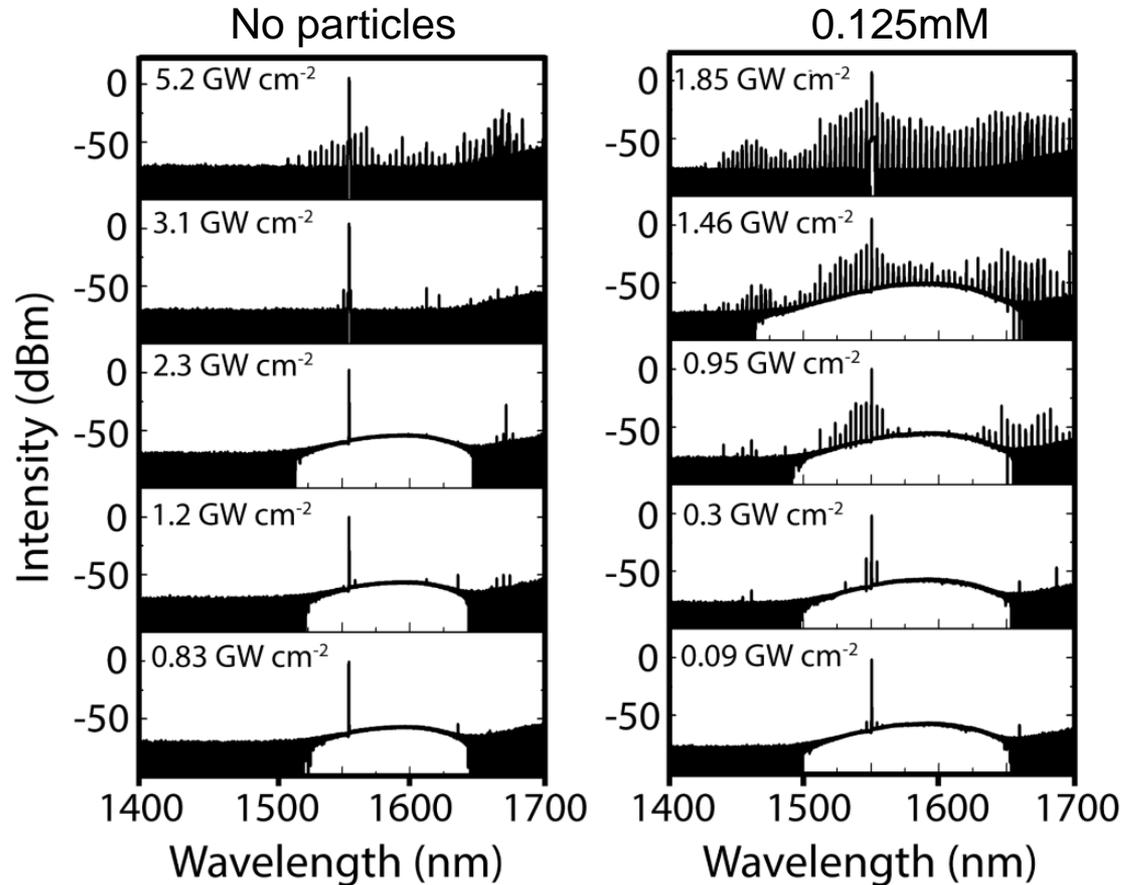
# FEM modeling of enhancement

FEM predicts enhancement at short distances

$Q > 10^7$   
 $P_{th} < 1 \text{ mW}$

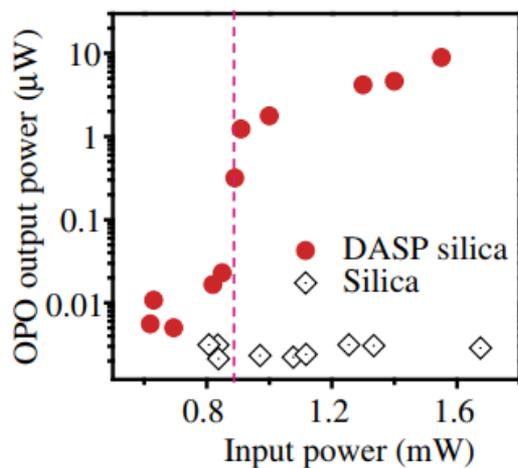
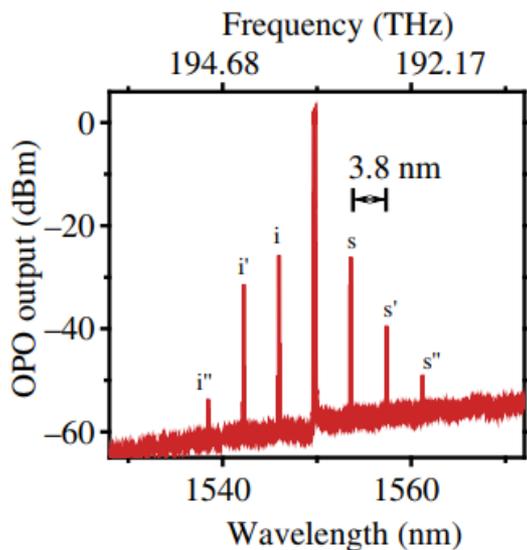
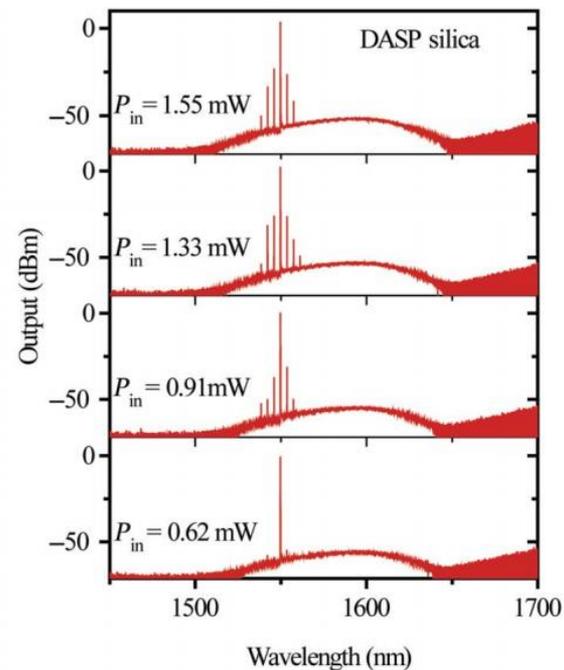
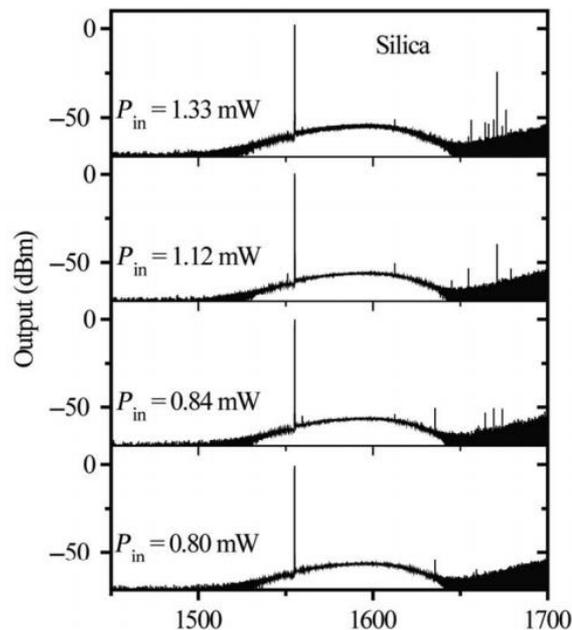
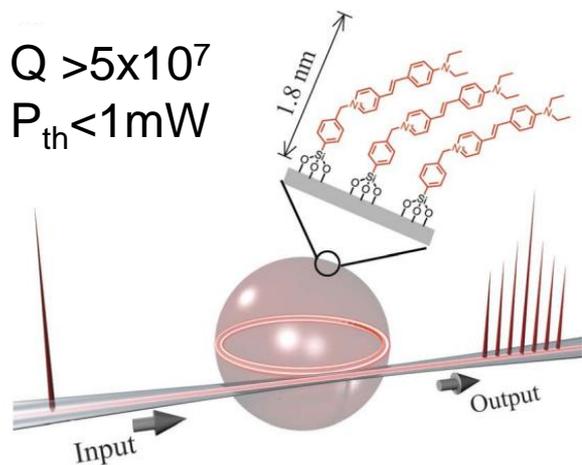


Improvement seen in fabricated devices



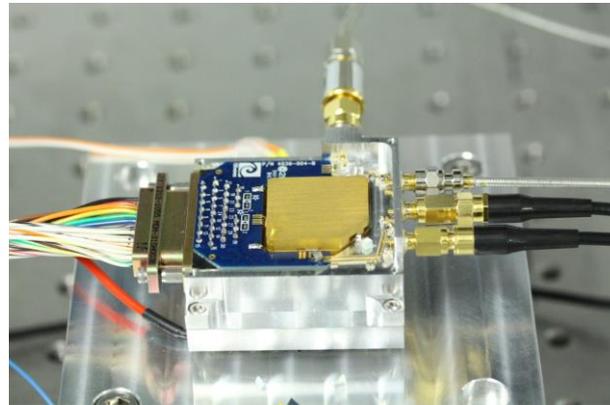
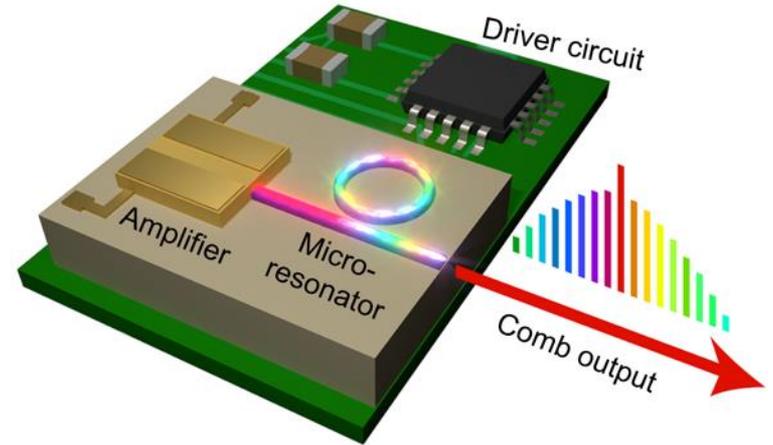
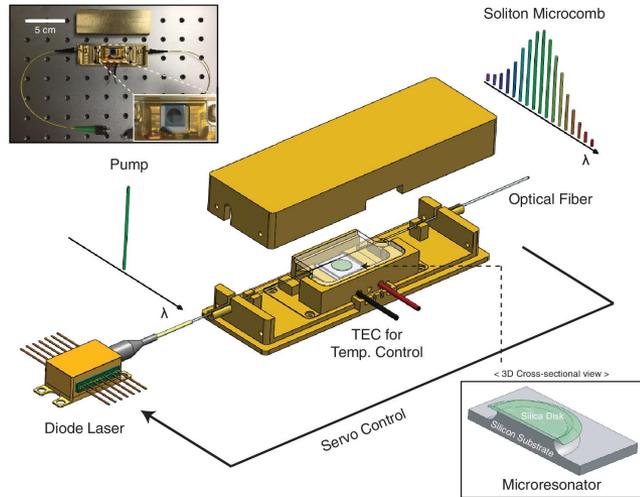


# Small organic molecule monolayers

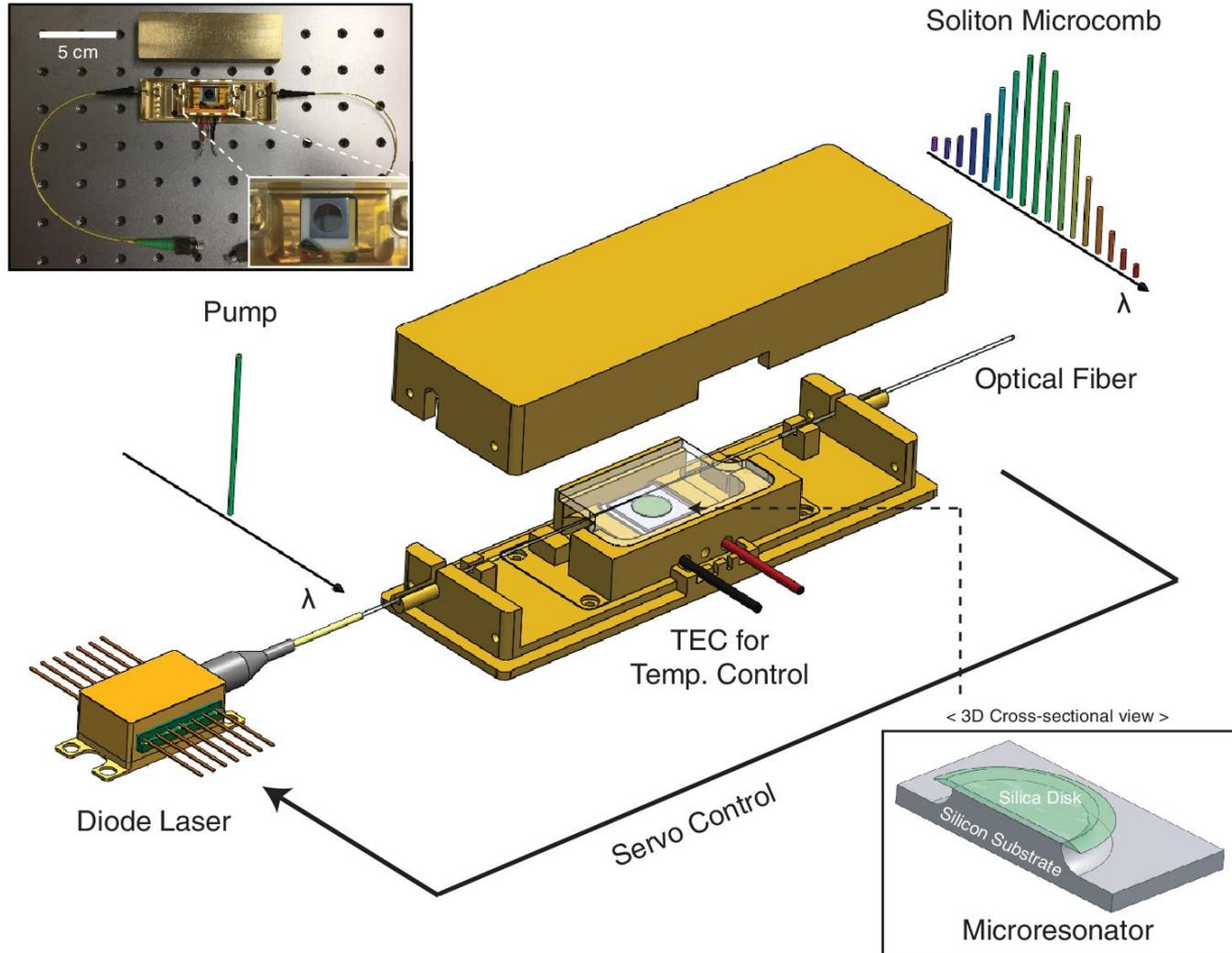


CPS: chloromethylphenyl silane  
DASP: 4-[4-diethylamino(styryl)]pyridinium

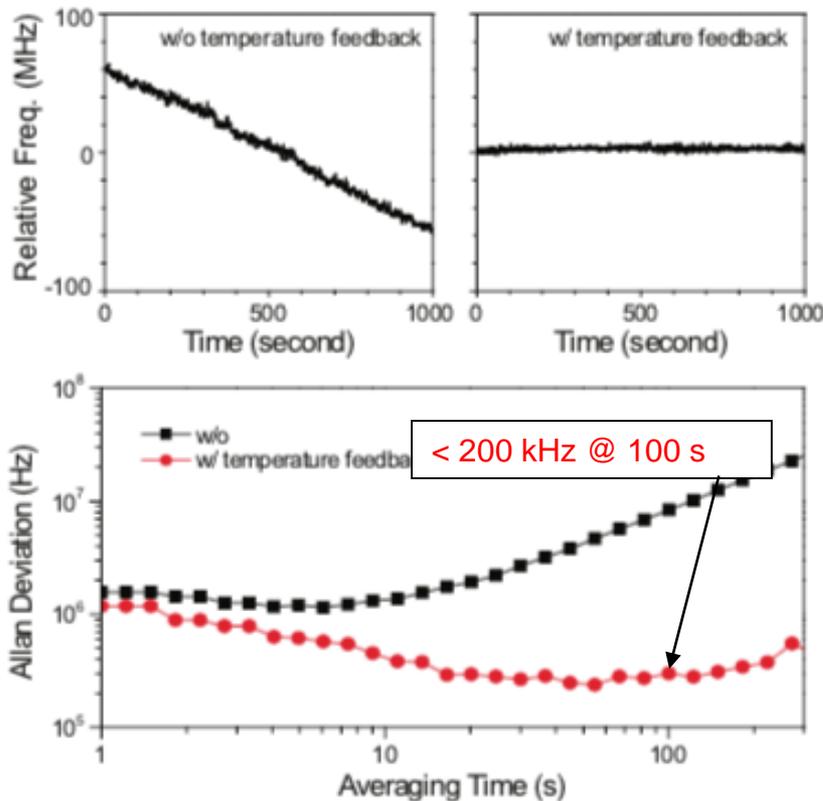
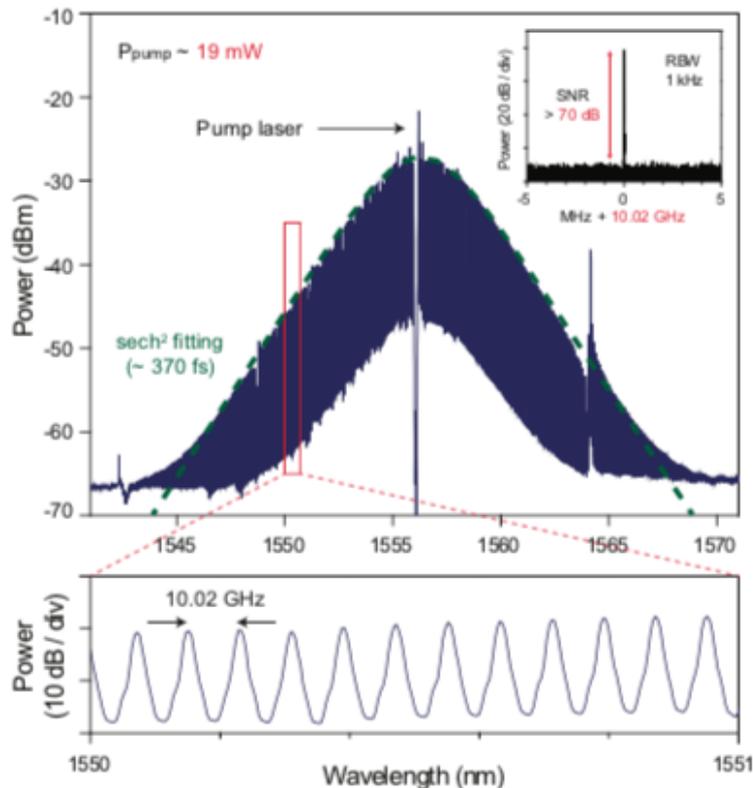
# Portable combs?



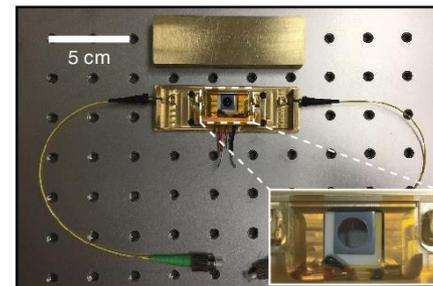
# Microcomb Module



# Direct Pumping of 10 GHz Soliton Microcomb

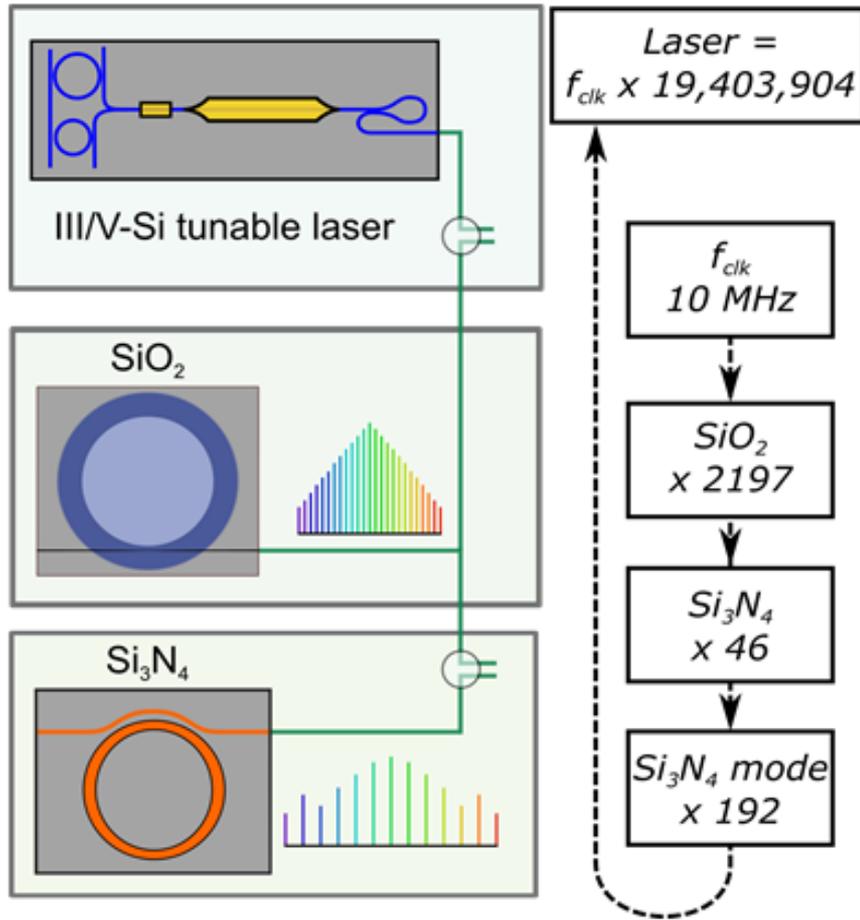


- 10 GHz soliton microcomb module
- Directly-pumped by a low power (< 20 mW) diode laser.
- Absolute frequency instability of < 200 kHz @ 100 second averaging



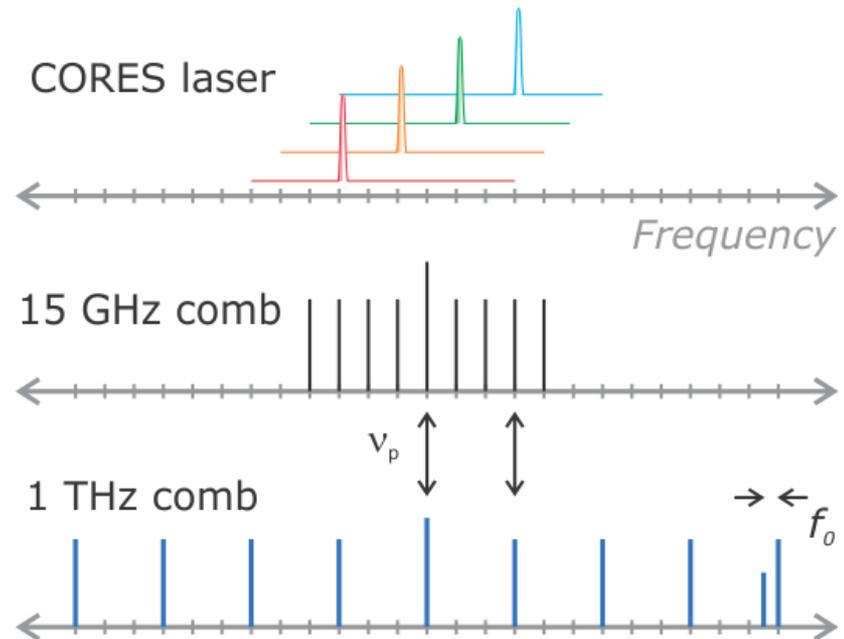
# Microcomb optical frequency synthesizer

UCSB / NIST / Caltech / EPFL / UVa / Aurrion  
 DARPA DODOS



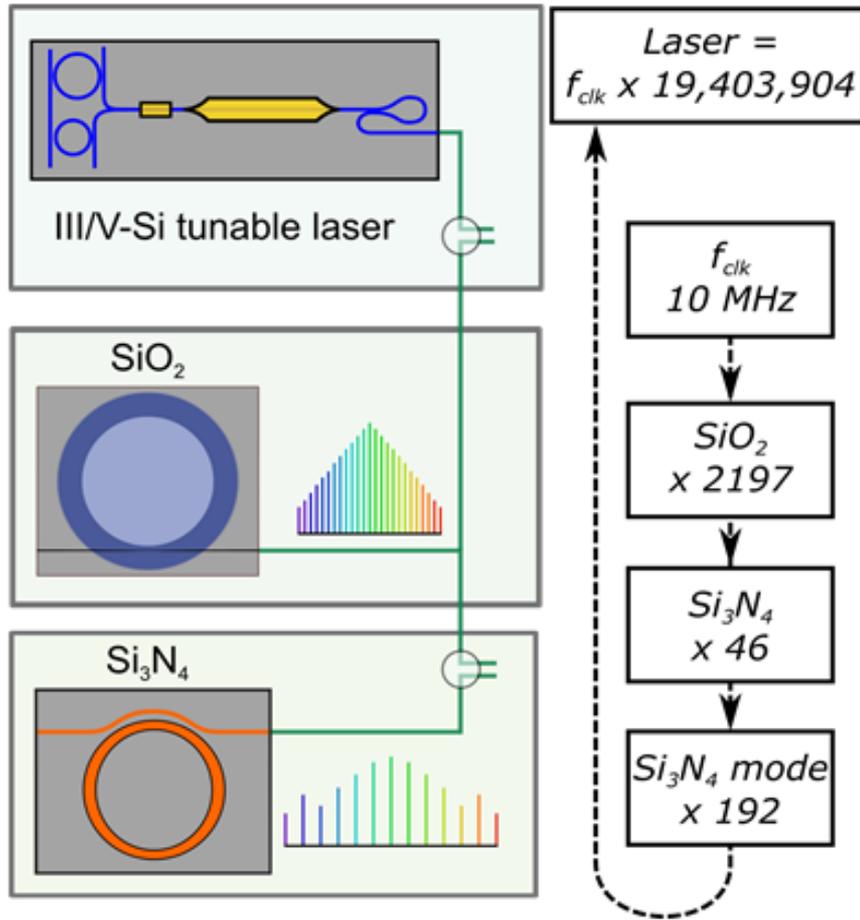
## Three ingredients

1. Self-referenced SiN THz comb
2. 15 GHz SiO<sub>2</sub> comb
3. Tunable CW laser in C-band

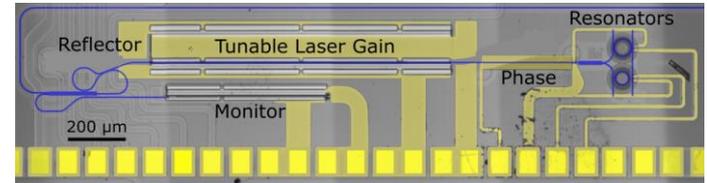


# Microcomb optical frequency synthesizer

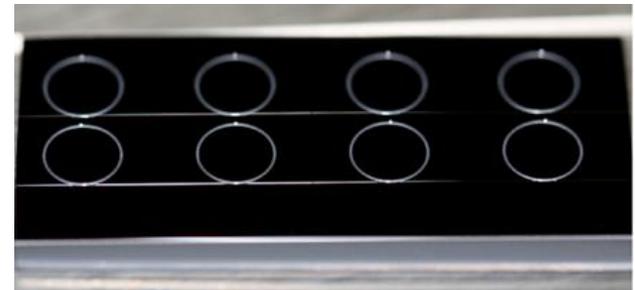
UCSB / NIST / Caltech / EPFL / UVa / Aurrion  
 DARPA DODOS



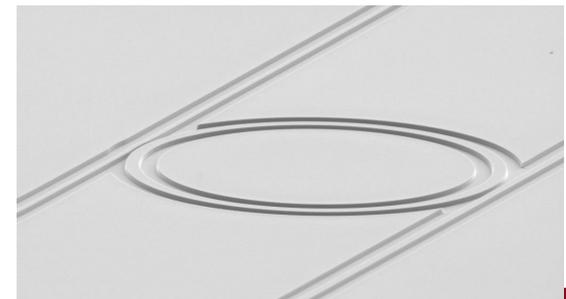
Chip tunable laser (UCSB, Aurrion)



15 GHz SiO<sub>2</sub> disks (Caltech)

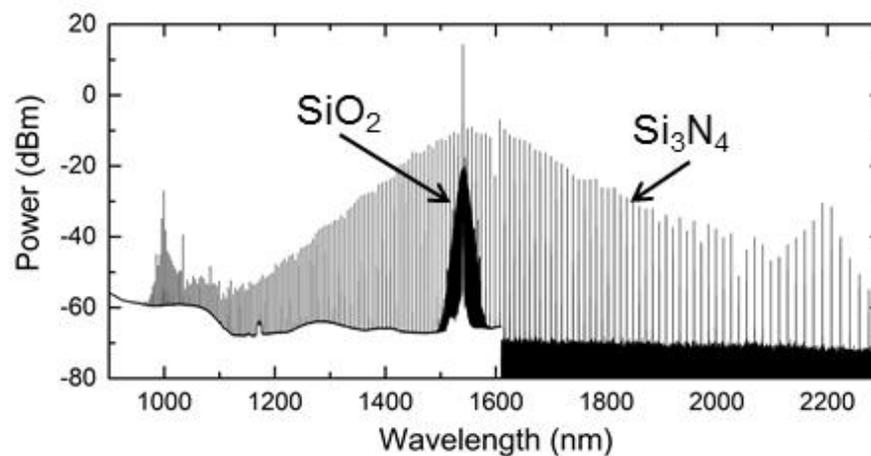
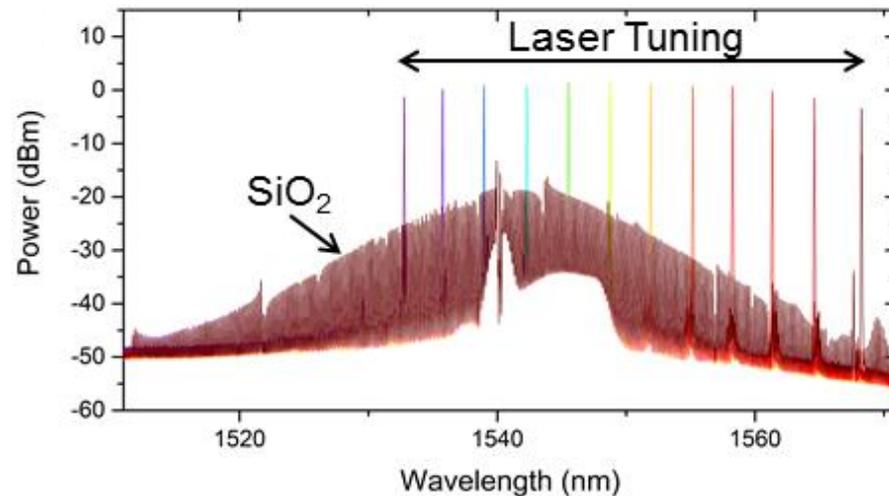
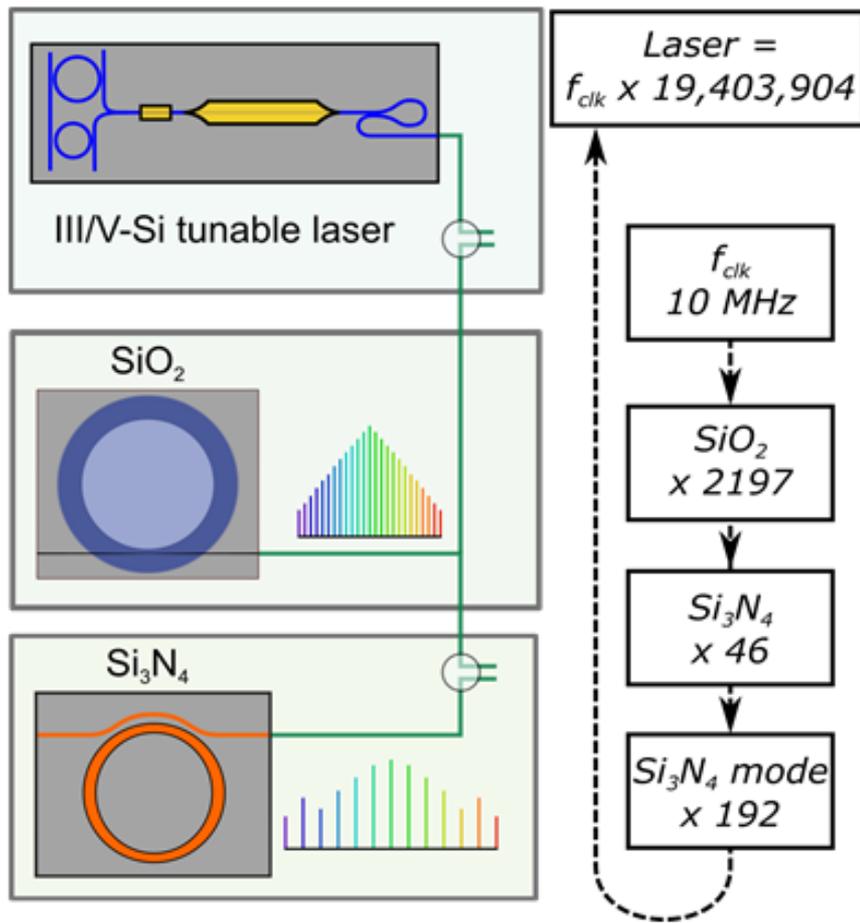


1 THz SiN (NIST-G)



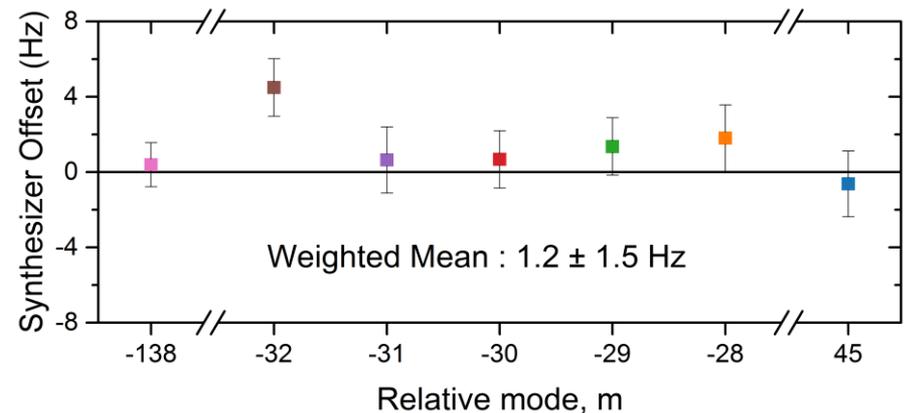
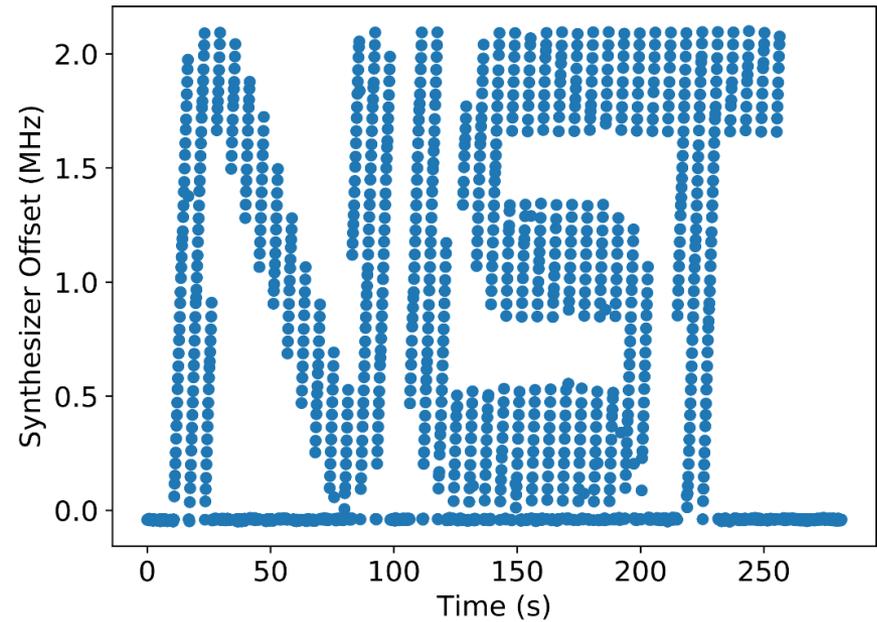
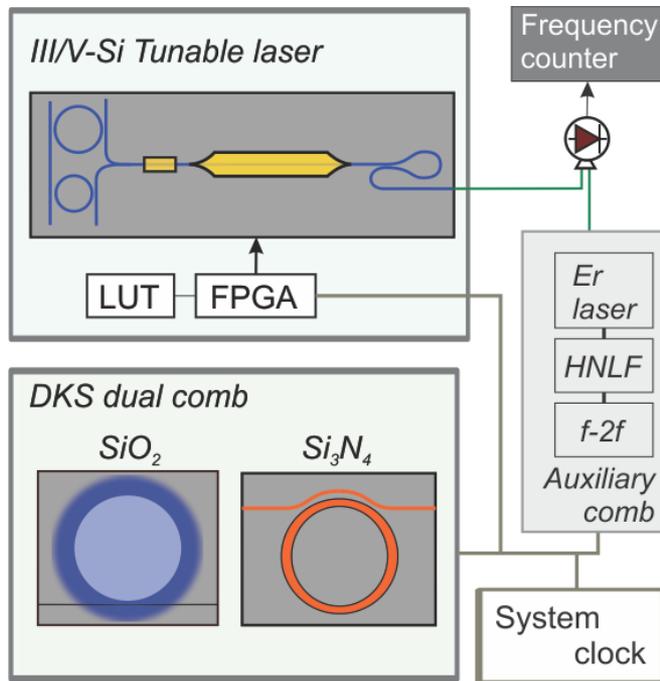
# Synthesizer frequency control

UCSB / NIST / Caltech / EPFL / UVa / Aurrion  
DARPA DODOS



# Synthesis across the C-band

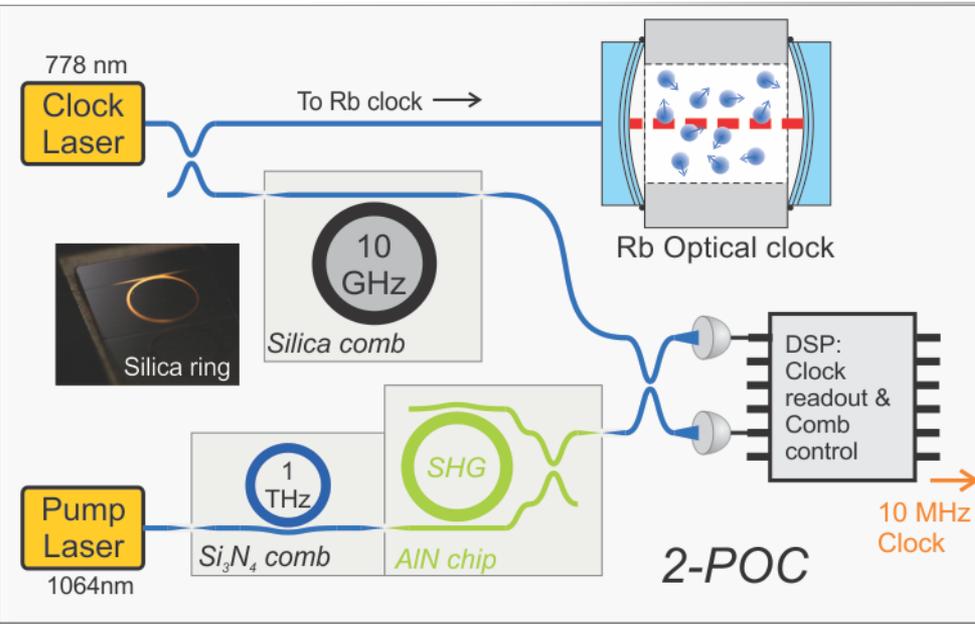
- Rapid synthesis of arbitrary frequencies in C-band
- Accurate at the 1 Hz level



UCSB / NIST / Caltech / EPFL / UVa / Aurrion  
 DARPA DODOS

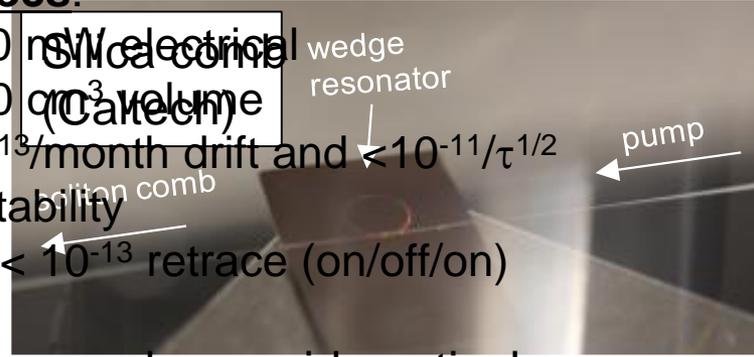
Daryl Spencer, Tara Drake, Travis Briles, Jordan Stone, et al *Nature* (2018)

# A microcomb optical atomic clock

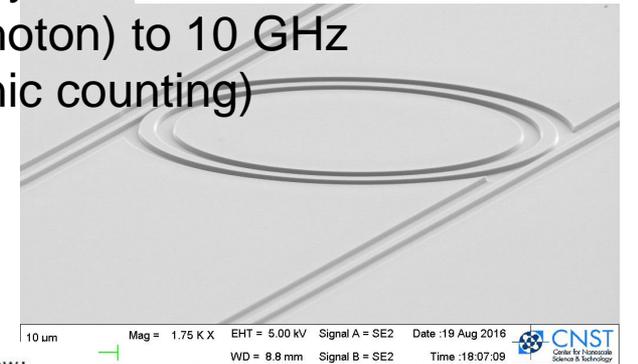


## Specs:

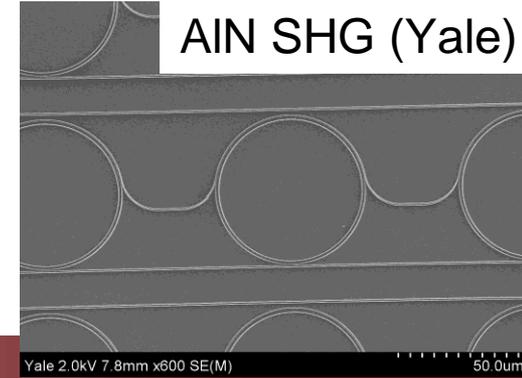
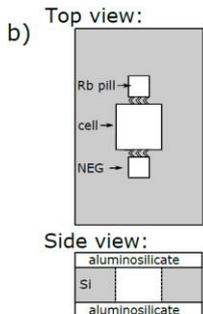
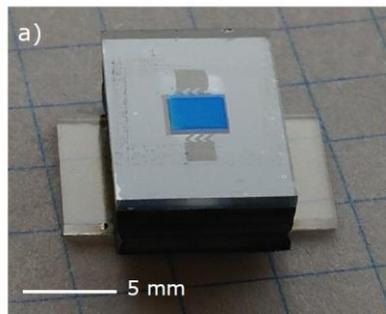
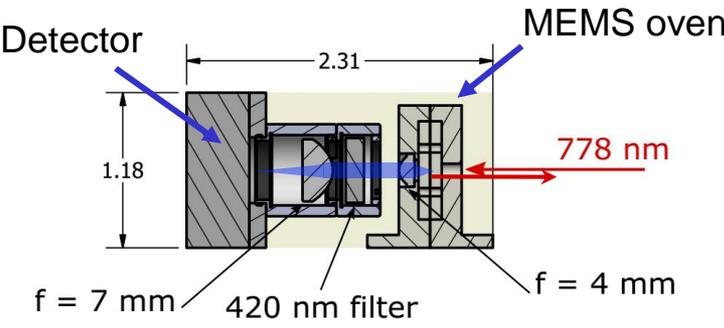
250 mW electrical  
 $< 50 \mu m^3$  volume  
 $10^{-13}$ /month drift and  $< 10^{-11}/\tau^{1/2}$  instability  
 $\Delta y < 10^{-13}$  retrace (on/off/on)



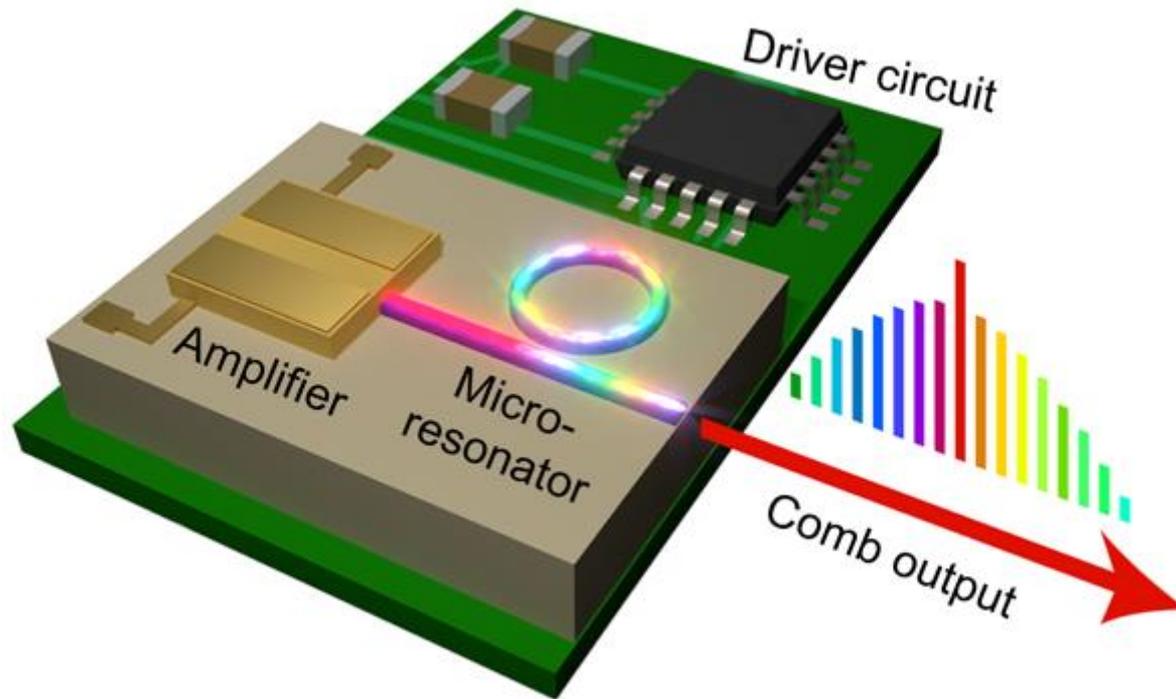
Microcombs provide optical frequency division from 385 THz (Rb 2-photon) to 10 GHz (electronic counting)



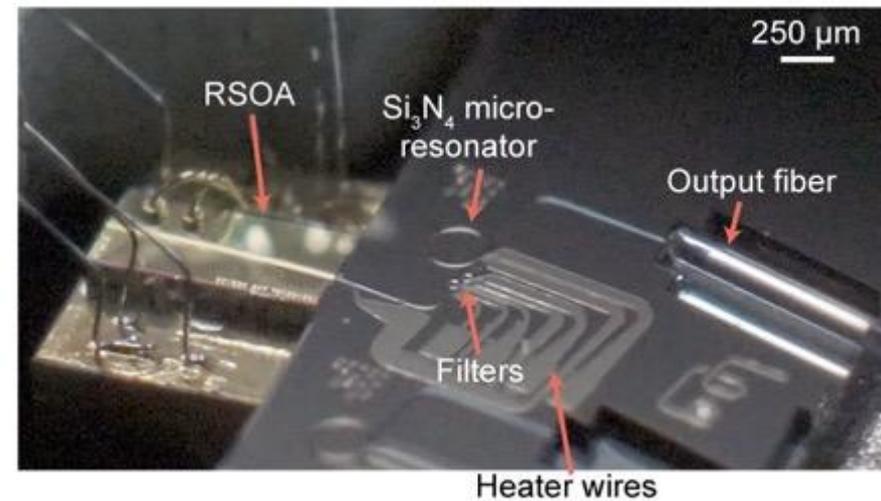
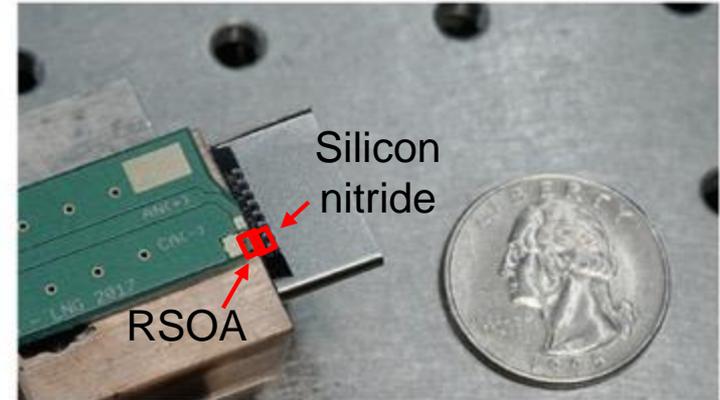
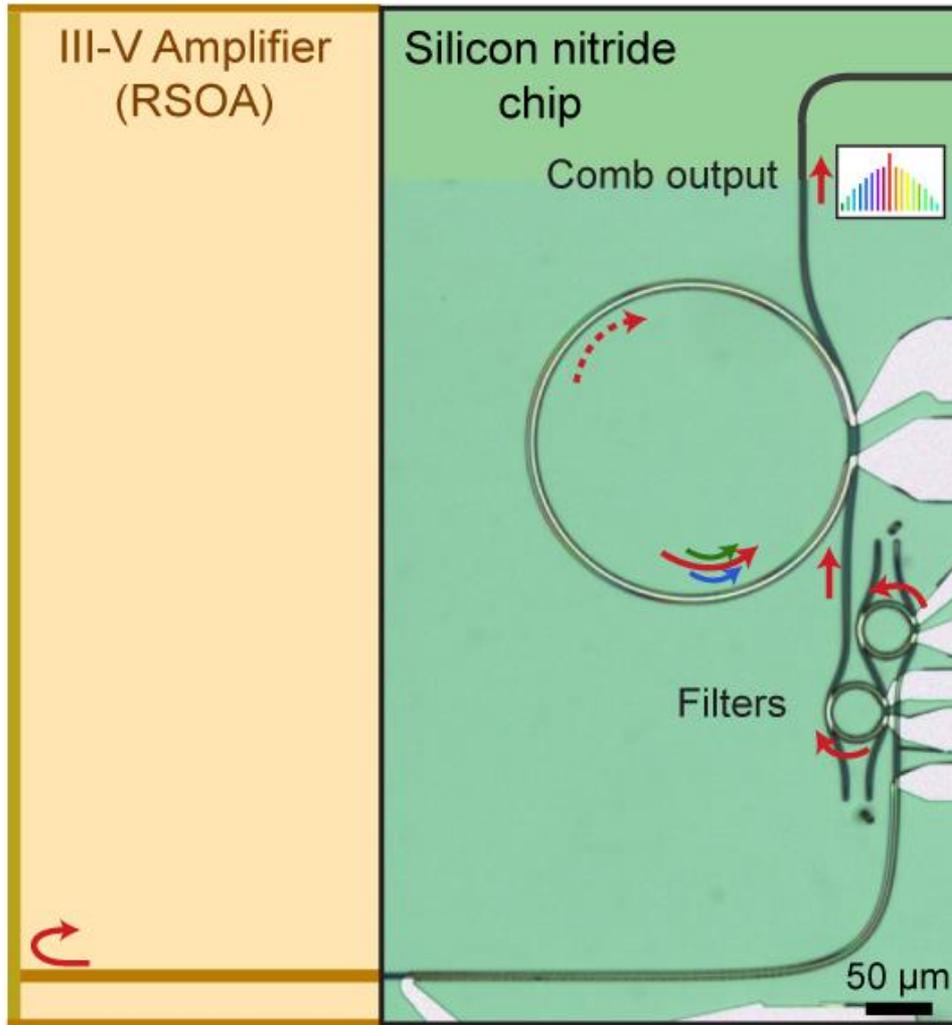
## Rb optical clock (NIST-B Atomic Devices)



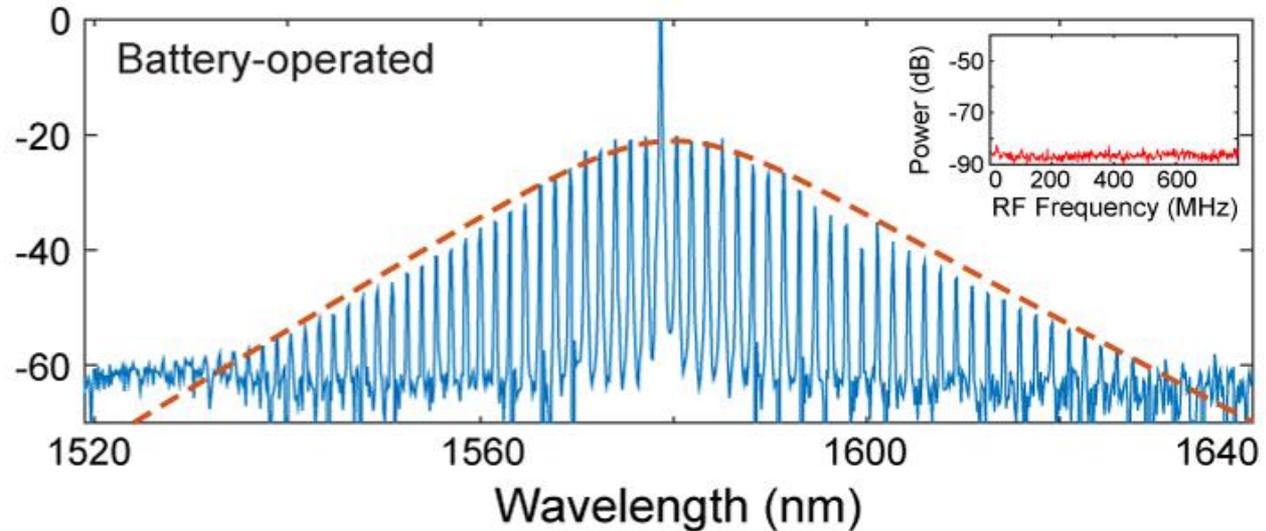
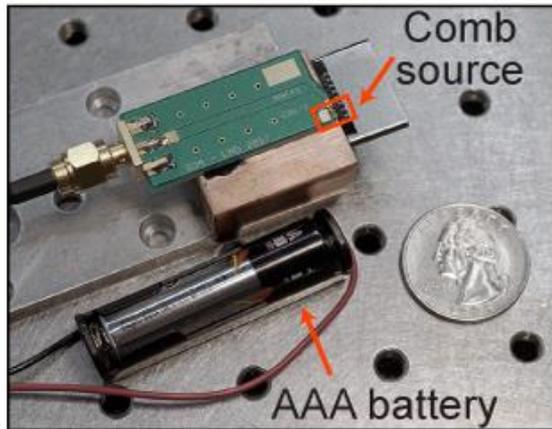
# Integrated Comb Platform



# Integrated Comb Platform



# Battery Powered Comb



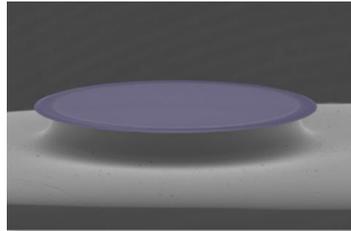
Optical pump power: 2.5 mW  
Electrical power consumption:  
130 mW

Optical pump power: 1.3 mW  
Electrical power consumption:  
98 mW

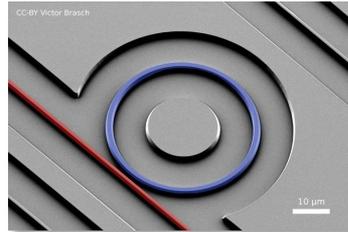
# Conclusions



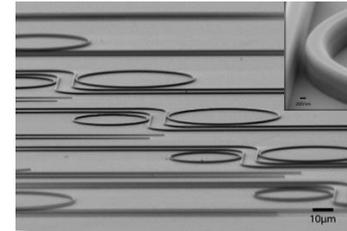
Fluorides



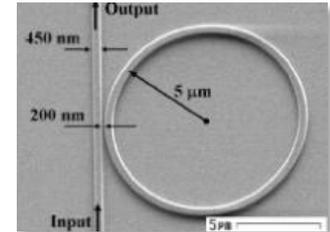
Oxides



Nitrides



Diamond



Silicon

## Goals:

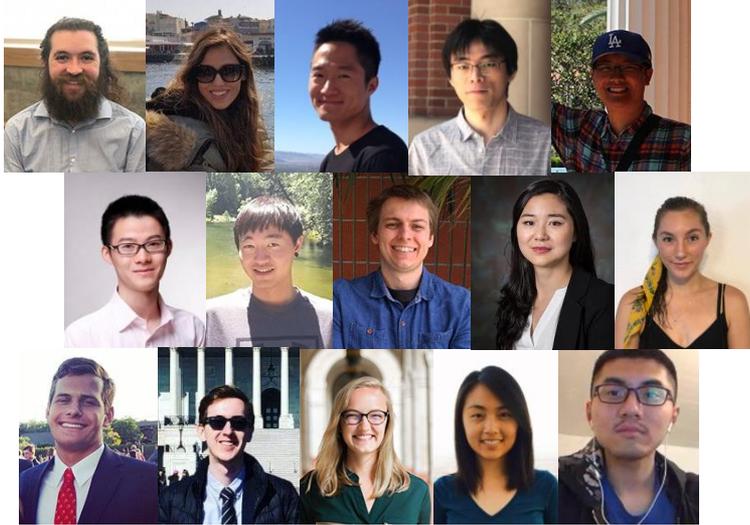
- High circulating intensity
- Precise mode spacing over large wavelength range
- Integrated, packaged system

## Approaches:

- High Q, small V (high F)
- Large diameter
- Low (controllable) dispersion
- Designing for packaging

# Acknowledgements

## Post-docs/Graduate Students



## Friends who shared slides

Scott Diddams (NIST)  
Michal Lipson (Columbia)  
Andrey Matsko (OEWaves)  
Kartik Srinivasan (NIST)  
Myoung-Gyun Suh (Caltech)

## More info



<http://armani.usc.edu>



@ArmaniLab



@ArmaniResearchLab



armanilab

## Undergrad Students



**NORTHROP GRUMMAN**



**USC Viterbi**

School of Engineering

# Related presentations

## Wednesday:

- Optically Generated 10-GHz Signal with 10 Microradian Residual Phase Instability ([SW4G.1](#))

## Thursday:

- Near-Visible Microresonator-Based Soliton Combs ([STh3J.1](#))
- Dual-comb imaging using soliton microcombs ([STh4J.3](#))
- Measurement of the Earth's Rotation Using a Chip-Based Brillouin Laser Gyroscope ([JTh5A.8](#))

## Friday:

- Broadband High-Resolution Scanning of Soliton Micro-Combs ([SF3H.6](#))
- 30 GHz Supercontinuum Generation for Astronomy with Efficient SiN Waveguides ([FF2D.6](#))