# The combinatorics of random tensors: from random geometry to strongly-coupled phenomena

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#### RANDOM TENSORS

Space of tensors  $T = T_{a_1...a_p}$ ,  $a_i \in \{1, ..., N\}$ , equipped with measure of the form:

$$\mathrm{d}\nu(T) = \mathrm{d}\mu_{\boldsymbol{P}}(T)\mathrm{e}^{-S_{\boldsymbol{N}}(T)}$$

•  $d\mu_{P}$  is Gaussian with covariance P:

$$\int \mathrm{d}\mu_{\boldsymbol{P}}(T)T_{\boldsymbol{a}_1\ldots\boldsymbol{a}_p}T_{b_1\ldots b_p} = \boldsymbol{P}_{\boldsymbol{a}_1\ldots\boldsymbol{a}_p,b_1\ldots b_p}$$

both P and S<sub>N</sub> are invariant under the action of a product of unitary groups: O(N), U(N) or Sp(N).

What type of universal behaviour can we obtain in the asymptotic limit  $N
ightarrow\infty$  ?

# Large N expansion: basic idea

$$\mathcal{F}(\lambda, N) = \ln\left(\int \mathrm{d}\mu_{m{P}}(T) \mathrm{e}^{-rac{\lambda}{N^{lpha}}\mathrm{Inv}(T)}
ight)$$

Main steps:

1. Formal perturbative expansion in  $\lambda$ .

 $\Rightarrow$  combinatorial interpretation: sum over Feynman graphs

- 2. Find  $\alpha$  such that a 1/N expansion exists.
- 3. Resum  $\mathcal{F}_{\boldsymbol{\omega}}(\boldsymbol{\lambda})$ .
- Non-perturbative analysis of 1/N expansion. (won't be discussed in these lectures)

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$$= \sum_{\text{graph } G} \frac{(-\lambda)^{V(G)}}{\operatorname{sym}(G)} \mathcal{A}(G)$$

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$$= \sum_{\omega \in \mathbb{N}} N^{-\omega} \mathcal{F}_{\omega}(\lambda)$$

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# Large N expansion: main applications

#### ► Matrix models

- Random surfaces / 2D quantum gravity from matrix integrals.
- ► Large *N* limit as an approximation tool in quantum (field) theory.

#### Tensor models

- Random geometry / quantum gravity in  $D \ge 3$ .
- New generic class of large N theories: more solvable than matrix theories, but still physically interesting.

Real symmetric tensor:

$$T_{a_1 a_2 \cdots a_p} = \bigwedge_{a_1 a_2 \cdots a_p}$$

$$\sum_{c=1}^{N} T_{abc} T_{cde} = \underbrace{a \ b}_{d} \underbrace{c}_{d} e$$

Connected invariants:

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Connected invariants:

$$p=1$$
  $\longleftarrow$   $(\phi_a\phi^a)$ 

Real symmetric tensor:

$$T_{a_1a_2\cdots a_p} = \overbrace{a_1 \ a_2}^{\cdots} a_p$$

$$\sum_{c=1}^{N} T_{abc} T_{cde} = \underbrace{a \ b}_{b} \underbrace{c}_{d} e$$

Connected invariants:

$$p=2$$
 (tr( $M^n$ ))

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Connected invariants:



#{invariants of order 2n}  $\sim \left(\frac{3}{2}\right)^n n!$ 

- $\Rightarrow$  Rapid growth of theory space for  $p \ge 3$ :
  - large N behaviour explicitly depends on the combinatorial structure of the invariants which contribute to the action;
  - ▶ this dependence is hard to characterize in full generality.



#### Lecture 1

Large N expansion of matrix models

First generalization: complex colored tensor models

Random geometry applications

#### Lecture 2

Other ensembles of random tensors and QFT applications

## OUTLINE

#### Large N expansion of matrix models

First generalization: complex colored tensor models

Random geometry applications

#### HERMITIAN MATRIX ENSEMBLE

$$\mathcal{Z}_{N}(\lambda) = \int_{\mathcal{H}_{N}} \mathrm{d}M \exp\left(-N\left(\frac{1}{2}\mathrm{Tr}M^{2} + \frac{\lambda}{4}\mathrm{Tr}M^{4} + \dots\right)\right)$$
$$(\mathrm{d}M := \prod_{k} \mathrm{d}M_{kk} \prod_{i < j} \mathrm{d}\mathrm{Re}M_{ij} \,\mathrm{d}\mathrm{Im}M_{ij})$$

 Basic question: determine expectation values of U(N)-invariant observables

$$\langle \mathsf{Tr}(M^{n_1})\mathsf{Tr}(M^{n_2})\ldots\mathsf{Tr}(M^{n_k})\rangle$$

• Gaussian theory ( $\lambda = 0$ ): entirely determined by the propagator

$$oldsymbol{P}_{ij,kl} := \langle M_{ij}M_{kl} 
angle_0 = rac{1}{\mathcal{Z}_{N}(0)} \int \mathrm{d}M \, \mathrm{e}^{-rac{N}{2} \operatorname{Tr} M^2} \, M_{ij}M_{kl} = rac{1}{N} \delta_{il} \delta_{jk}$$

Higher order moments computed by Wick's theorem.

## GAUSSIAN CORRELATORS

Graphical representation of

► propagator: 
$$P_{ij,kl} = \frac{1}{N} \delta_{il} \delta_{jk} = \frac{i}{j} \xrightarrow{k} l$$
  
► interaction:  $N \text{Tr} M^4 = N \sum_{i,j,k,l} M_{ij} M_{jk} M_{kl} M_{li} = \frac{i}{j} \xrightarrow{k} l$ 

Invariant correlators  $\rightarrow$  ribbon diagrams

#### **RIBBON DIAGRAMS**

ribbon graph  $\simeq$  combinatorial map  $\simeq$  embedded graph



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ribbon graph  $\simeq$  combinatorial map  $\simeq$  embedded graph



The weight / amplitude of an arbitrary ribbon graph only depends on the topology of the surface it represents:

$$N^{V-E+F} = N^{\chi} = N^{2c-2g}$$

 $V = #\{vertices\}, E = #\{edges\}, F = #\{faces\}.$  $g = genus, c = #\{connected components\}.$  TOPOLOGICAL EXPANSION OF MATRIX MODELS ['T HOOFT '74]

$$\mathcal{Z}_{N}(\lambda) = \int dM \exp\left(-N\left(\frac{1}{2}\operatorname{tr}(M^{2}) + \frac{\lambda}{4}\operatorname{tr}(M^{4})\right)\right)$$
$$= \sum_{\text{ribbon graph } G} \frac{(-\lambda)^{V(G)}}{s(G)} N^{\chi(G)} = \sum_{\text{quandrangulation } \Delta} \frac{(-\lambda)^{n(\Delta)}}{s(\Delta)} N^{\chi(\Delta)}$$

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$$\underbrace{\text{Universal large-} N \text{ expansion}}_{\text{Universal large-} N \text{ expansion}}$$

$$\ln \mathcal{Z}_{N}(\lambda) = \sum_{g \in \mathbb{N}} N^{2-2g} \mathcal{F}_{g}(\lambda) \quad \text{with} \quad \mathcal{F}_{g}(\lambda) = \sum_{\substack{G \text{ connected} \\ g(G) = g}} \frac{(-\lambda)^{V(G)}}{s(G)}$$

$$N^{2} \longrightarrow + N^{0} \longrightarrow + N^{-2} \longrightarrow + N^{-4} \longrightarrow + \cdots$$

• General potential:  $Tr(M^4) \rightarrow Tr(V(M))$ 



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•  $\beta$ -ensembles:

$$\boldsymbol{P}_{ij,kl} \propto \frac{1}{N} \left( j \underbrace{ \overset{i}{=} \overset{l}{=} l}_{k} - (1 - \frac{2}{\beta}) j \underbrace{ \overset{i}{=} \overset{l}{=} \overset{l}{=} k }_{k} \right)$$

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• Hermitian models with U(N) symmetry ( $\beta = 2$ )

• General potential:  $Tr(M^4) \rightarrow Tr(V(M))$ 



▶ β-ensembles:

$$\boldsymbol{P}_{ij,kl} \propto \frac{1}{N} \left( \substack{i \\ j \end{pmatrix} \left( 1 - \frac{2}{\beta} \right)_{j}^{i} \right) \left( 1 - \frac{2}{\beta} \right)_{j}^{i}$$



• Real symmetric matrix with O(N) symmetry ( $\beta = 1$ ).

• General potential:  $Tr(M^4) \rightarrow Tr(V(M))$ 



•  $\beta$ -ensembles:

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- Quaternionic Hermitian matrix with Sp(N) := U(2N) ∩ Sp(2N, C) symmetry (β = 4).

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- Real symmetric matrix with O(N) symmetry ( $\beta = 1$ ).
- Quaternionic Hermitian matrix with Sp(N) := U(2N) ∩ Sp(2N, C) symmetry (β = 4).
- $\Rightarrow$  generate non-orientable surfaces.



[Review: Eynard, Kimura, Ribault '15]

#### Applications of the large N limit

• Random surfaces and QG in D = 2

Matrix integral at large  $N \rightarrow$  statistical sum of

Feynman graphs  $\simeq$  Euclidean space-time geometries



Strongly-coupled QFT

Large number of fields/symmetries e.g.  $SU(3) \rightarrow SU(N)$ 

- perturbation theory in 1/N
- non-perturbative effects in coupling constants  $\lambda$

Key probe of holographic dualities:

- $\blacktriangleright gauge theory \leftrightarrow Einstein gravity$
- $\blacktriangleright \text{ vector models} \leftrightarrow \text{higher-spin gravity}$

What are tensor models good for in these two lines of thoughts?

## QG IN D=2 as a matrix integral

$$\ln \int \mathrm{d}M \, e^{-N(\frac{1}{2}\mathrm{tr}M^2 - \frac{\lambda}{q}\mathrm{tr}M^q)} \xrightarrow[N \to \infty]{} \mathcal{F}_0(\lambda) = \sum_{\Delta} \lambda^{n_{\Delta}}$$

- Large-N limit ⇒ generating function of planar q-angulations Δ, weighted by n<sub>Δ</sub> ~ area.
- Critical regime:  $\lambda \rightarrow \lambda_c \Rightarrow$  continuum limit.
- Double-scaling  $\Rightarrow$  non-trivial sum over topologies.

<u>Universality</u>: the distribution over 2d metrics converges to the Brownian sphere in the continuum limit, independently of the details of the potential (e.g. value of q).

 $\rightarrow$  basic random geometry behind Liouville QG.

#### BROWNIAN SPHERE



Credit: T. Budd (https://hef.ru.nl/~tbudd/gallery/)

$$\#\{ \text{ rooted planar } \Delta \} \sim K \lambda_c^{-n_{\Delta}} n_{\Delta}^{-5/2}$$

 $d_{
m spectral}=2$  ; distance scale  $\sim n_{ riangle}^{1/4}$  and  $d_{
m Hausdorff}=4$ 

# QG IN $D \ge 3$ as a D-index tensor integral?

[Ambjørn, Durhuss, Jónsson '91; Gross '91; Sasakura '91;...]

#### ► Challenges:

- interplay between combinatorics and topology: nice global properties from local Feynman rules?
- ► large *N* expansion?
- matrix techniques not available (spectral representation?)

# QG IN D > 3 as a D-INDEX TENSOR INTEGRAL?

[Ambjørn, Durhuss, Jónsson '91; Gross '91; Sasakura '91;...]

#### Challenges:

- interplay between combinatorics and topology: nice global properties from local Feynman rules?
- ► large-N expansion?
- matrix techniques not available (spectral representation?)

Path to progress: [Gurau '09; Gurau, Rivasseau, Bonzom,... '10s]

- more symmetry:  $U(N)^{D} \rightarrow colored$  tensor models
- tractable combinatorics, mapping to sufficiently regular topological spaces.

 $\Rightarrow$  universal large-*N* expansion, in any *D* > 3

indexed by Gurau degree  $\omega > 0$ 



#### Large N expansion of matrix models

#### First generalization: complex colored tensor models

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[GURAU '09]

Multipartite pure quantum state

$$|\Psi\rangle = \sum_{a_1,a_2,...,a_D} T_{a_1a_2...a_D} |a_1\rangle \otimes |a_2\rangle \otimes \cdots \otimes |a_D\rangle$$

with  $a_k \in \{1, \ldots, N_k\}$ .

Entanglement structure characterized by local unitary (LU) invariants:

$$U(N_1) \times U(N_2) \times \cdots \times U(N_D)$$

LU invariant (and normalized) random T<sub>a1a2...aD</sub>
 ~ distribution over multipartite pure state entanglement structures.

In the rest of the talk, take  $N_k = N \gg 1$ .

 $T_{a_1 a_2 \cdots a_D} = \underbrace{a_1 a_2}_{a_1 a_2 \cdots a_D} \qquad \underbrace{a_D}_{a_2 a_1} = \overline{T}_{a_1 a_2 \cdots a_D}$ 

 $U(N)^{D}$  invariants indexed by bubble diagrams  $\mathcal{B}$ :

$$(D=2)$$
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$$T_{a_1 a_2 \cdots a_D} = \underbrace{a_1 \ a_2}_{a_1 a_2 \cdots a_D} \qquad \underbrace{a_D \ \cdots \ a_2 \ a_1}_{a_1 a_2 \cdots a_D} = \overline{T}_{a_1 a_2 \cdots a_D}$$

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  $\longleftrightarrow$   $\square$   $\bigcirc$   $\bigcirc$   $\bigcirc$   $\cdots$ 

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 $U(N)^D$  invariants indexed by bubble diagrams  $\mathcal{B}$ :

Partition function:

$$\mathcal{F}(\{\lambda_{\mathcal{B}}\}) = \ln \int dT \, \exp\left(-\overline{T} \cdot T + \sum_{\mathcal{B}} \frac{\lambda_{\mathcal{B}}}{N^{\alpha(\mathcal{B})}} \mathsf{Tr}_{\mathcal{B}}(\overline{T}, T)\right)$$

FEYNMAN GRAPHS



G
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 $V = \#\{\text{vertices}\}$ 

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 $V = #{\text{vertices}}$ ;  $p = #{\text{propagators}}$ 

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 $V = #{vertices}$ ;  $p = #{propagators}$  $F_{0j} = #{faces of color (0j)}$ 

$$\mathcal{A}(G) \propto N^{\sum_j F_{0j}}$$

**FEYNMAN GRAPHS**  $\frac{1}{2} \underbrace{j_1}_{i_3} - \underbrace{0}_{j_3} - \underbrace{j_1}_{j_2} \sim \underbrace{j_1}_{i_2} \underbrace{j_1}_{j_3} = \delta_{i_1j_1} \delta_{i_2j_2} \delta_{i_3j_3}$ G

 $V = \#\{\text{vertices}\} ; p = \#\{\text{propagators}\}$  $F_{0j} = \#\{\text{faces of color (0j)}\} ; F_{ij} = \#\{\text{faces of color (ij)}\}$ 

$$\mathcal{A}(G) \propto N^{\sum_j F_{0j}}$$

# JACKETS

Colored graph + cyclic permutation  $\sigma$  on the colors  $\Rightarrow$  combinatorial map  $J_{\sigma}$ , called *jacket*.



 $J_{\sigma} \sim J_{\sigma^{-1}} \Rightarrow \exists \frac{D!}{2}$  inequivalent choices of  $\sigma$ .

E.g. 3 inequivalent jackets for D = 3.

# GURAU DEGREE

 $\begin{array}{ll} \hline \hline \text{Definition} & \textit{Gurau degree of a } (D+1)\text{-colored graph } G\text{:}\\ \\ \omega(G) = D - F(G) + \frac{D(D-1)}{2}p(G) \end{array}$ 

# GURAU DEGREE

<u>Definition</u> Gurau degree of a (D + 1)-colored graph G:  $\omega(G) = D - F(G) + \frac{D(D-1)}{2}p(G)$ 

Theorem (Gurau '11; Gurau, Rivasseau '11)

 $\forall G, \quad \omega(G) \in \mathbb{N}$ 

# GURAU DEGREE

<u>Definition</u> Gurau degree of a (D + 1)-colored graph G:  $\omega(G) = D - F(G) + \frac{D(D-1)}{2}p(G)$ 



Proof.

$$\omega(G) = \frac{1}{(D-1)!} \sum_{\sigma} g(J_{\sigma})$$

# LARGE-N EXPANSION [GURAU '11; BON

Scaling of bubbles and Feynman expansion governed by Gurau degree  $\omega$ :

$$\mathcal{F}(\{\lambda_{\mathcal{B}}\}) = \ln \int dT \exp \left(-\overline{T} \cdot T + \sum_{\mathcal{B}} \lambda_{\mathcal{B}} N^{-\frac{2}{(D-2)!}\omega(\mathcal{B})} \operatorname{Tr}_{\mathcal{B}}(\overline{T}, T)\right)$$
$$= \sum_{\omega \in \mathbb{N}} N^{D - \frac{2}{(D-1)!}\omega} \mathcal{F}_{\omega}(\{\lambda_{\mathcal{B}}\})$$

where 
$$\omega(G) = D - F(G) + \frac{D(D-1)}{2}p(G)$$

Generalization of the matrix genus expansion:

• 
$$\omega \in \mathbb{N}$$
  
•  $D = 2 \Rightarrow \omega = g$ 

#### Topological/geometric interpretation?

Combinatorial structure of leading-order graphs?

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#### ► Optimal scalings:

Given a bubble  $\mathcal{B}$ , what is the smallest  $\alpha$  such that the interaction  $\lambda_{\mathcal{B}} N^{-\alpha} \operatorname{Tr}_{\mathcal{B}}(\overline{T}, T)$  preserves the existence of a large N limit?

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In contrast to random matrices, answering this question is hard.





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# COLORED TRIANGULATIONS





Colors  $\rightarrow$  unambiguous identification of sub-simplices and their gluings.

• Bubble  $\simeq$  *D*-colored graph  $\simeq$  boundary of *D*-cell.



• Feynman graph  $\simeq (D+1)$ -colored graph  $\simeq \Delta$  of dimension D.

#### Gluing of 2p-angles:



Duality:

 $\begin{array}{rcl} 3-\text{colored graph} & \longleftrightarrow & \text{colored triangulation} \\ & \text{node} & \longleftrightarrow & \text{triangle} \\ & \text{line} & \longleftrightarrow & \text{edge} \\ & \text{bicolored cycle} & \longleftrightarrow & \text{vertex} \end{array}$ 

Any orientable surface with boundaries can be represented by such a 3-colored graph.





















Topological singularities can be generated in  $D \ge 3$ :



 $g(K_{3,3}) = 1 \Rightarrow$  boundary of a neighborhood not homeomorphic to a ball.

 $\rightarrow$  (D + 1)-colored graphs are dual to *pseudo-manifolds* of dimension D.

Jackets are dual to embedded quandrangulations in  $\Delta$ .



More precisely,  $J_{\sigma}$  encodes a *Heegaard splitting* of  $\Delta$ .

[Ryan '11]

# DUALITY

Colored structure  $\Rightarrow$  unambiguous prescription for how to glue *D*-simplices along their sub-simplices.



Essential in  $D \ge 3$ .



Crystallisation theory [Cagliardi, Ferri et al. '80s; Gurau, Ryan '11]

# LARGE-N EXPANSION [Gurau '11; Bonzom, Gurau, Rivasseau '12]

Scaling of bubbles and Feynman expansion governed by Gurau degree  $\omega$ :

$$\mathcal{F}(\{\lambda_{\mathcal{B}}\}) = \ln \int dT \exp\left(-\overline{T} \cdot T + \sum_{\mathcal{B}} \lambda_{\mathcal{B}} N^{-\frac{2}{(D-2)!}\omega(\mathcal{B})} \operatorname{Tr}_{\mathcal{B}}(\overline{T}, T)\right)$$
$$= \sum_{\omega \in \mathbb{N}} N^{D - \frac{2}{(D-1)!}\omega} \mathcal{F}_{\omega}(\{\lambda_{\mathcal{B}}\})$$

$$\left( \omega(\Delta) = D - n_{D-2}(\Delta) + \frac{D(D-1)}{4}n_D(\Delta) \right)$$

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where

• generalization of the genus:  $D = 2 \Rightarrow \omega = g$ 

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$$\omega(\Delta) = D - n_{D-2}(\Delta) + \frac{D(D-1)}{4}n_D(\Delta)$$

►  $\omega \in \mathbb{N}$ 

where

- generalization of the genus:  $D = 2 \Rightarrow \omega = g$
- not a topological invariant of  $\Delta$  when  $D \geq 3$
- however:  $\omega = 0 \Rightarrow \Delta$  is a *D*-sphere





























### LEADING ORDER



[BONZOM, GURAU, RIELLO, RIVASSEAU '11;...]

$$\omega(\Delta) = 0 \qquad \Leftrightarrow \qquad \Delta \text{ is melonic}$$

 $\rightarrow$  special triangulations of the D-sphere, with a tree-like combinatorial structure.

Closed equation for their generating function:

$$igg[ G(\lambda) = 1 + \lambda G(\lambda)^{D+1} igg]$$
 (F

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$$\mathcal{G}(\lambda) = 1 + \lambda \mathcal{G}(\lambda)^{D+1}$$
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Critical behaviour:

$$G(\lambda_c) - G(\lambda) \underset{\lambda \to \lambda_c}{\sim} K (\lambda_c - \lambda)^{1/2}$$
  
$$\Leftrightarrow \quad \#\{\text{ rooted melonic } \Delta\} \sim K \lambda_c^{-n_{\Delta}} n_{\Delta}^{-3/2}$$

Universal critical exponent 3/2 associated to combinatorial trees.
# CONTINUUM LIMIT

Melons are branched polymers

i.e. they converge to the continuous random tree [Aldous '91].



Credit: I. Kortchemski (https://igor-kortchemski.perso.math.cnrs.fr/images.html)

$$\#\{\text{ rooted melonic } \Delta\} \sim K \lambda_c^{-n_{\Delta}} n_{\Delta}^{-3/2}$$
$$d_{\text{spectral}} = 4/3 \quad ; \quad \text{distance scale} \sim n_{\Delta}^{-1/2} \quad \text{and} \quad d_{\text{Hausdorff}} = 2$$

 $\Rightarrow$  strong universality: limit independent of D!

### FURTHER RESULTS

- Combinatorial classification of graphs at order ω > 0: "it's melons all the way down". [Gurau, Schaeffer '13]
- Double-scaling. [Bonzom, Gurau, Kaminski, Dartois, Oriti, Ryan, Tanasa '13 '14]
- Schwinger-Dyson eq.  $\rightarrow$  analogue of loop equations. [Gurau '11]
- ► Non-perturbative treatment. [Gurau '14]

 ▶ Applications in Group Field Theory: [Boulatov, Ooguri, '92... Freidel, Gurau, Oriti '00s '10s...]
 Melonic behaviour ⇒ rigorous renormalization theorems [Ben Geloun, Rivasseau '11; SC, Oriti, Rivasseau '13;...] [Review SC '16]

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Major open question: genuinely new random geometric phase suitable for QG in  $D \ge 3$ ? [Lionni, Marckert '19]

### SUMMARY

Tensor models for random geometry:

- well-defined generalization of the matrix models approach;
- reproduce previously known universality classes: continuous random tree, Brownian sphere, and mixtures;
- ► tend to be dominated by tree-like combinatorial species ⇒ no genuinely new universality class discovered so far...

...but a vast parameter space remains to be explored.

Entry points into the literature:

- "Random tensors", Gurau, 2016;
- "The Tensor Track" I-IV, Rivasseau, 2011-2016;
- "Colored Discrete Spaces", Lionni, 2018.