

WEI CHIEH (MASON) NG

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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EDUCATION

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Sep 2018 - May 2024 (Expected)

Ph.D. Candidate in Physics

Advisor: Professor Deepto Chakrabarty; GPA: 4.60/5.00

Thesis: Multifaceted UNDERstanding of Accreting Neutron stars and their Environments (MUNDANE)

The University of Auckland 2017

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Physics

Advisor: Professor Richard Easter; GPA: 8.63/9.00

Thesis: Inflationary Model Selection ft. Dark Matter in the CMB

The University of Auckland 2014 - 2016

Bachelor of Science

Majors: Physics and Mathematics; GPA: 8.74/9.00

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Massachusetts Institute of Technology Sep 2018 - present

Graduate Research Assistant, Advisor: Prof. Deepto Chakrabarty

X-ray pulsation searches, timing, spectroscopic, and polarimetric analyses of pulsars (NICER/NuSTAR/IXPE/XMM-Newton/Swift/RXTE/AstroSat data)

Australian National University Feb 2018 - Jul 2018

Graduate Research Assistant, Advisor: Prof. Martin Asplund

Modeling stellar atmospheres in 3D with different magnetic field configurations and strengths

Swinburne University of Technology Dec 2017 - Feb 2018

Summer Vacation Scholar, Advisors: Dr. Nikki Nielsen and Assoc. Prof. Glenn Kacprzak

Kinematics of the OVI Circumgalactic Medium: Halo Mass Dependence and Outflow Signatures

The University of Auckland Feb 2017 - Nov 2017

BSc (Honours) Student, Advisor: Prof. Richard Easter

Inflationary Model Selection ft. Dark Matter in the CMB

Australian National University Nov 2016 - Feb 2017

Summer Scholar, Advisors: Assoc. Prof. Christian Wolf and Dr. Christopher Onken

Diagnosing poor seeing of the SkyMapper telescope

The University of Auckland Dec 2015 - Feb 2016

Summer Research Scholar, Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Jan Jamie Eldridge

Modelling the emergent spectra of hot, massive stars to update the Binary Population and Spectral Synthesis (BPASS) code

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Referee

2023 - now

*Journals: The Astrophysical Journal, Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society***Graduate Student Member**

2021 - now

*IXPE Collaboration [Working Groups: Science Analysis and Simulations, Magnetars, and the Accreting White Dwarfs and Neutron Stars]***Graduate Student Member**

2019 - now

*NICER Science Team [Working Groups: Searches and Multiwavelength Coordination (from 2019), Bursts and Accretion Physics (from 2020), and Magnetars & Magnetospheres (from 2021)]***PUBLICATIONS**

Also part of **38 Astronomer's Telegrams** and GCN Circulars (led 9 of them).

First-author

- 5) **Mason Ng**, et al. 2023. *X-ray and Radio Monitoring of the Neutron Star Low Mass X-ray Binary 1A 1744-361*. In Review by ApJ. arXiv:2310.01511. DOI: 10.48550/arXiv.2310.01511
- 4) **Mason Ng**, et al. 2022. *Spectral Evolution of Ultraluminous X-ray Pulsar NGC 300 ULX-1*. ApJ, 940, 138. DOI: 10.3847/1538-4357/ac9965
- 3) Herman L. Marshall, **Mason Ng**, et al. (IXPE Collaboration + Norbert S. Schulz, Deepto Chakrabarty) 2022. *Observations of 4U 1626-67 with the Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer*. ApJ, 940, 70. DOI: 10.3847/1538-4357/ac98c2
- 2) **Mason Ng**, Paul S. Ray, Peter Bult, Deepto Chakrabarty, et al. 2021. *NICER Discovery of Millisecond Pulsations and an Ultracompact Orbit in IGR J17494-3030*. ApJ, 908, L15. DOI: 10.3847/2041-8213/abe1b4
- 1) **M. Ng**, N.M. Nielsen, G.G. Kacprzak et al. 2019. *Kinematics of the OVI Circumgalactic Medium: Halo Mass Dependence and Outflow Signatures*. ApJ, 886, 66. DOI: 10.3847/1538-4357/ab48eb

Co-author

- 30) Jeremy Heyl, et al. (10 Tier 1 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2023. *The detection of polarized x-ray emission from the magnetar 1E 2259+586*. Submitted. arXiv:2311.03637
- 29) Manoj Mandal, et al. (12 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2023. *Probing spectral and timing properties of the X-ray pulsar RX J0440.9+4431 in the giant outburst of 2022-2023*. MNRAS, 526, 771. DOI: 10.1093/mnras/stad2767
- 28) Roberto Turolla, et al. (15 Tier 1 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2023. *IXPE and XMM-Newton observations of the Soft Gamma Repeater SGR 1806-20*. ApJ, 954, 88. DOI: 10.3847/1538-4357/aced05
- 27) A. C. Albayati, et al. (12 co-authors including **M. Ng**) 2023. *Thermonuclear Type-I X-ray Bursts and Burst Oscillations from the Eclipsing AMXP Swift J1749.4-2807*. MNRAS, 524, 2477. DOI: 10.1093/mnras/stad1892
- 26) Christian Malacaria, et al. (19 Tier 1 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2023. *A polarimetric-oriented X-ray stare at the accreting pulsar EXO 2030+375*. A&A, 675, 29. DOI: 10.1051/0004-6361/202346581
- 25) G. K. Jaisawal, et al. (9 co-authors including **M. Ng**) 2023. *On the cyclotron absorption line and evidence of the spectral transition in SMC X-2 during 2022 giant outburst*. MNRAS, 521, 3951. DOI: 10.1093/mnras/stad781

- 24) Paul A. Draghis, et al. (9 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2023. *The Spin of a Newborn Black Hole: Swift J1728.9-3613*. ApJ, 947, 39. DOI: 10.3847/1538-4357/acc1c8
- 23) Mayura Balakrishnan, et al. (14 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2023. *The Black Hole Candidate Swift J1728.9-3613 and the Supernova Remnant G351.9-0.9*. ApJ, 947, 38. DOI: 10.3847/1538-4357/acc1c9
- 22) G. C. Mancuso, et al. (10 co-authors including **M. Ng**) 2023. *Detection of millihertz quasi-periodic oscillations in the low-mass X-ray binary 4U 1730–22 with NICER*. MNRAS, 521, 5616. DOI: 10.1093/mnras/stad949
- 21) Silvia Zane, et al. (26 Tier 1 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2023. *A strong X-ray polarization signal from the magnetar 1RXS J170849.0-400910*. ApJL, 944, 27. DOI: 10.3847/2041-8213/acb703
- 20) Giulia Illiano, et al. (21 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2022. *Timing analysis of the 2022 outburst of SAX J1808.4-3658: hints of an orbital shrinking*. ApJL, 942, 40. DOI: 10.3847/2041-8213/acad81
- 19) C. Malacaria, et al. (13 co-authors including **M. Ng**) 2022. *The unaltered pulsar: GRO J1750-27, a super-critical X-ray neutron star that does not blink an eye*. A&A, 669, 38. DOI: 10.1051/0004-6361/202245123
- 18) Sergey S. Tsygankov, et al. (17 Tier 1 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2022. *The X-ray polarimetry view of the accreting pulsar Cen X-3*. ApJL, 941, 14. DOI: 10.3847/2041-8213/aca486
- 17) Peter Bult, et al. (13 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2022. *The thermonuclear X-ray bursts of 4U 1730-22*. ApJ, 940, 81. DOI: 10.3847/1538-4357/ac9b26
- 16) Roberto Taverna, et al. (21 Tier 1 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2022. *Polarized x-rays from a magnetar*. Science, 378, 646. DOI: 10.1126/science.add0080
- 15) A. Sanna, et al. (14 co-authors including **M. Ng**) 2022. *MAXI J1957+032: a new accreting millisecond X-ray pulsar in an ultra-compact binary*. MNRAS, 516, L76. DOI: 10.1093/mnrasl/slac093
- 14) Peter Bult, et al. (17 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2022. *The Discovery of the 528.6 Hz Accreting Millisecond X-Ray Pulsar MAXI J1816-195*. ApJL, 935, 32. DOI: 10.3847/2041-8213/ac87f9
- 13) Tolga Guver, et al. (13 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2022. *Burst-Disk Interaction in 4U 1636-536 as observed by NICER*. ApJ, 935, 154. DOI: 10.3847/1538-4357/ac8106
- 12) A. Marino, et al. (20 co-authors including **M. Ng**) 2022. *Outflows and spectral evolution in the eclipsing AMXP SWIFT J1749.4-2807 with NICER, XMM-Newton and NuSTAR*. MNRAS, 515, 3838. DOI: 10.1093/mnras/stac2038
- 11) Kishalay De, et al. (26 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2022. *SRGA J181414.6-225604: A New Galactic Symbiotic X-Ray Binary Outburst Triggered by an Intense Mass-loss Episode of a Heavily Obscured Mira Variable*. ApJ, 935, 36. DOI: 10.3847/1538-4357/ac7c6e
- 10) A. Sanna, et al. (17 co-authors including **M. Ng**) 2022. *On the peculiar long-term orbital evolution of the eclipsing accreting millisecond X-ray pulsar SWIFT J1749.4-2807*. MNRAS, 514, 4385. DOI: 10.1093/mnras/stac1611
- 9) R. M. Ludlam, et al. (10 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2022. *Radius Constraints from Reflection Modeling of Cygnus X-2 with NuSTAR and NICER*. ApJ, 927, 112. DOI: 10.3847/1538-4357/ac5028

- 8) Pasham, D.R., et al. (18 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2021. *Evidence for a compact object in the aftermath of the extragalactic transient AT2018cow*. Nat Astron., 6, 249. DOI: 10.1038/s41550-021-01524-8
- 7) The LIGO Scientific Collaboration; the Virgo Collaboration; the KAGRA Collaboration (including **Mason Ng**) 2021. *Search for continuous gravitational waves from 20 accreting millisecond X-ray pulsars in O3 LIGO data*. Phys. Rev. D 105, 022002. DOI: 10.1103/PhysRevD.105.022002
- 6) Yuhan Yao, et al. (27 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2020. *A Comprehensive X-ray Report on AT2019wey*. ApJ, 920, 121. DOI: 10.3847/1538-4357/ac15f8
- 5) Teruaki Enoto, **Mason Ng** et al. 2021. *A Month of Monitoring the New Magnetar Swift J1555.2-5402 during an X-Ray Outburst..* ApJ, 920, L4. DOI: 10.3847/2041-8213/ac2665
- 4) D. J. K. Buisson, et al. (including **Mason Ng**) 2021. *Dips and eclipses in the X-ray binary Swift J1858.6-0814 observed with NICER*. MNRAS, 503, 5600. DOI: 10.1093/mnras/stab863
- 3) Peter Bult, et al. (including **Mason Ng**) 2021. *Long term coherent timing of the accreting millisecond pulsar IGR J17062-6143*. ApJ, 912, 120. DOI: 10.3847/1538-4357/abf13f
- 2) Peter Bult, et al. (12 co-authors including **Mason Ng**) 2020. *The X-ray bursts of XTE J1739-285: a NICER sample*. ApJ, 907, 79. DOI: 10.3847/1538-4357/abd54b
- 1) J.J. Eldridge, E.R. Stanway, et al. (7 co-authors including **M. Ng**) 2017. *Binary Population and Spectral Synthesis Version 2.1: construction, observational verification and new results*. PASA, 34, 58. DOI: 10.1017/pasa.2017.51

ACCEPTED OBSERVING PROPOSALS AS PI

Chandra DDT Observation	2023
<i>Tracking the Ne X Accretion Disk Line Emission of Ultracompact X-ray Binary 4U 1626-67 Across a Torque Reversal (60 ks).</i>	
NuSTAR DDT Observations	2023
<i>Monitoring the Pulse Profile and Spectroscopic Evolution Across the Latest Torque Reversal of 4U 1626-67 (90 ks).</i>	
NICER (AO5)	2023
<i>Detecting Millisecond X-ray Pulsations and Confirming the Ultracompact Nature of the Low Mass X-ray Binary 4U 1850-087 (20 ks)</i>	
NICER (AO4)	2022
<i>Time-Resolved Spectroscopic and Polarimetric Studies of 4U 1626-67 with NICER and IXPE (40 ks).</i>	
Swift ToO Observations	2022 - present
<i>Total of 7 ks over 2 sources</i>	
NICER ToO Observations	2021 - present
<i>Total of 377 ks over 10 sources</i>	

PRESENTATIONS

* = Virtual

Dissertation Talk - 243rd Meeting of the American Astronomical Society Jan 2024
X-ray and Radio Monitoring of the Neutron Star Low Mass X-ray Binary 1A 1744-361: Quasi Periodic Oscillations, Transient Ejections, and a Disk Atmosphere

Special Astrophysics Seminar - McGill University <i>Multifaceted Understanding of Accreting Neutron stars and their Environments: An X-ray Polarimetric Focus</i>	Dec 2023
Department Lunch Talk (Astronomy) - UC Berkeley <i>Multifaceted Understanding of Accreting Neutron stars and their Environments: An X-ray Polarimetric Focus</i>	Nov 2023
Astronomy Tea Talk - Caltech <i>Multifaceted Understanding of Accreting Neutron stars and their Environments: An X-ray Polarimetric Focus</i>	Nov 2023
KIPAC Tea Talk - Stanford University <i>Understanding Neutron Star Geometry through the Lens of X-ray Polarization</i>	Nov 2023
Seminar - NASA Goddard Space Flight Center <i>Probing the Accretion Geometry of Neutron Stars with X-ray Polarization</i>	Oct 2023
Seminar - U.S. Naval Research Laboratory <i>Probing the Accretion Geometry of Neutron Stars with X-ray Polarization</i>	Oct 2023
Seminar - University of Michigan <i>Probing the Accretion Geometry of Neutron Stars with X-ray Polarization</i>	Oct 2023
Poster - 20th Divisional Meeting of the High Energy Astrophysics Division <i>Discovery of a 7.8 Hz QPO from the High-Intensity Outburst of Dipping NS LMXB 1A 1744-361</i>	Mar 2023
Poster - 20th Divisional Meeting of the High Energy Astrophysics Division <i>IXPE Observations of the Pulsar 4U 1626-67</i>	Mar 2023
Contributed Talk - 241st Meeting of the American Astronomical Society <i>IXPE Observations of the Pulsar 4U 1626-67</i>	Jan 2023
Seminar - Nanyang Technological University <i>IXPE Observations of the Neutron Star Low-Mass X-ray Binary 4U 1626-67</i>	Dec 2022
Seminar - JAXA/ISAS <i>IXPE Observations of the Neutron Star Low-Mass X-ray Binary 4U 1626-67</i>	Nov 2022
Seminar - Kyoto University <i>IXPE Observations of the Neutron Star Low-Mass X-ray Binary 4U 1626-67</i>	Nov 2022
*Contributed Talk - Astrophysical Polarimetry in the Time-Domain Era <i>IXPE Observations of the Pulsar 4U 1626-67</i>	Sep 2022
Contributed Talk - COSPAR - Athens, Greece <i>IXPE Observations of the Pulsar 4U 1626-67</i>	Jul 2022
Poster - 19th Divisional Meeting of the High Energy Astrophysics Division <i>NICER Pulsation Search and Spectroscopy of the Original Black Widow Pulsar, PSR B1957+20</i>	Mar 2022
Poster - Celebrating 20 Years of Chandra Science Symposium <i>Spectral Evolution of NGC 300 ULX-1</i>	Dec 2019
Invited Talk - Auckland Astronomical Society <i>Modelling the spectra of hot stars</i>	Aug 2016

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming	Python, HTML/CSS, IDL, \LaTeX
High Performance Computing	OpenMP, MPI, Slurm

HONORS & AWARDS

Bruno Rossi Prize [shared], High Energy Astrophysics Division of the AAS, as a Member of the NICER Science Team	2022
School of Science Service Fellowship (<i>Massachusetts Institute of Technology</i>)	2022
Graduate Service Award, Physics Department (<i>Massachusetts Institute of Technology</i>)	2021
Department of Physics Scholarship, 2017 (<i>The University of Auckland</i>)	2016
University of Auckland Postgraduate Honours/PG Diploma Scholarships	2016
Joyce Mary Clark Scholarship (<i>The University of Auckland</i>)	2016
First in Course Award (x6) (<i>The University of Auckland</i>)	2014 - 2017
Scholarship (<i>New Zealand Qualifications Authority</i>)	2014
The Trusts Charitable Foundation Scholarship (<i>The Trusts Charitable Foundation</i>)	2013
Dux Litterarum (<i>Lynfield College</i>)	2013

RESEARCH SUPERVISION

Swati Ravi <i>MIT first-year graduate student (co-supervised with Herman Marshall)</i>	Sep 2023 - present
Claire McLellan-Cassivi <i>MIT Undergraduate Research Student (co-supervised with Herman Marshall)</i>	Jun 2023 - present

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

TA = Teaching Assistant	
TA for (Graduate) Astrophysics I <i>Department of Physics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology</i>	Spring 2021, Spring 2022
TA for “Introduction to Astronomy” and “Modern Astrophysics” <i>Department of Physics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology</i>	Spring 2020
Marker (5 applied mathematics courses across all undergraduate levels) <i>Department of Mathematics, The University of Auckland</i>	2015 - 2017
TA (Physics) for Planets, Stars and Galaxies <i>Department of Physics, The University of Auckland</i>	2015 - 2017
TA for Advancing Physics I <i>Department of Physics, The University of Auckland</i>	2015

LEADERSHIP & POSITIONS

Vice-Chair

2023

Graduate Research and Development (GRAD) Coalition. Assisting the co-Chairs and members of the GRAD Caucus in the House of Representatives to present issues and concerns by graduate students and provide a platform to discuss possible legislative solutions. Successfully organized an in-person Congressional briefing in October 2023 on the topic of graduate advising/mentorship.

Graduate Student Member

2020 - 2022

Graduate Admissions Committee, Department of Physics, MIT. Worked with the Graduate Admissions Chair to review prospective physics PhD applicants.

Co-Organizer

2020 - 2022

Physics Graduate Application Assistance Program, Department of Physics, MIT. Co-led the establishment of mentoring-based physics PhD application assistance programs as well as virtual webinars. Successfully co-developed a proposal for funding graduate student mentors.

MIT Graduate Student Council External Affairs Board

2019 - 2023

Vice-Chair (2022-2023), Development (2020-2022), Public Outreach (2019-2020). Led the groundwork for the annual MIT Research Slam (2020); led the writing and publishing of the monthly advocacy newsletter (2021-2023); led multiple in-person trips with 8 to 10-student teams to Washington D.C. to meet with Congressional offices to advocate for graduate student concerns. I have overseen the scheduling for over 100 Congressional offices and committees over two trips.

Committee Member (Graduate Student)

2019 - present

MIT Open Space Programming Advisory Committee. Advising the Open Space Programming team on activities and programming for the Kendall Square Open Space by providing graduate student input and acting as a liaison.

MITvote Graduate Liaison

2018 - present

MITvote. Developing and sending informational emails on voting in local, state, and federal elections during election seasons.

Volunteer Observer

2018 - present

MIT Sidewalk Astrogazers. Have participated in over a dozen pop-up public astrogazing events so far and trained other students in operating the telescopes.

Executive Member

2017

Science Students' Association. Introduced the annual Science Trivia, and worked with other executive members to obtain funding from the various departments for this new association.

President

2015 - 2017

The Physics Association of The University of Auckland (PAUA). Introduced the annual Physics Careers Panel Discussion, organized monthly social gatherings ("Fluid Dynamics"), introductory Python workshops, and research seminars for undergraduate students.

OUTREACH AND PANELS

Physics Graduate Application/Admissions Information Session

Jul 2023

Speaker for a virtual presentation and Q&A session (> 45 attendees) for undergraduates of IISER Bhopal

Physics Graduate Application/Admissions Information Session

Dec 2022

Speaker for an in-person presentation and Q&A session (> 15 attendees) for undergraduates of the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore

Physics Graduate Applications Panel for Cenca Bridge	Apr 2022
<i>Panelist for a live virtual webinar (> 5 attendees) to talk about the graduate admissions process. This panel was particularly for the Central American-Caribbean Bridge in Astrophysics students</i>	
PhysGAAP Webinar for Prospective Applicants	Dec 2021
<i>Panelist for a live virtual webinar (>90 attendees) to talk about the graduate admissions process</i>	
International Graduate School Panel	Nov 2021
<i>Panelist for a live virtual webinar (>10 attendees) to talk about international opportunities for graduate school to current undergraduate students in New Zealand</i>	
PGSC Career Panel	Nov 2021
<i>In-person panelist on a career panel (> 20 attendees); spoke about physics graduate admissions</i>	
Site 4 Art Kits & Stargazing Program	Nov 2021
<i>In-person presentation to two dozen graduate students and their family from all backgrounds about neutron stars</i>	
Discord Panel for Physics/Astro Graduate School Applicants	Oct 2021
<i>Panelist for a live virtual panel (> 20 attendees); spoke about physics graduate admissions</i>	
PhysGAAP Webinar for Prospective Applicants	Sep 2021
<i>Panelist for a live virtual webinar (>140 attendees) to talk about the graduate admissions process</i>	
Physics Information Session for MSRP Students	Jul 2021
<i>Panelist for a live virtual panel (>20 attendees) to talk about the graduate school</i>	
Graduate Admissions Panel for MIT SPS	May 2021
<i>Panelist for a live virtual panel (>20 attendees) to talk about the graduate admissions</i>	
Graduate School Panel for UPRM	Sep 2020
<i>Panelist for a live virtual panel (>20 attendees) to talk about the graduate admissions</i>	