

# A categorical framework for the quantum harmonic oscillator

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Categories, Logic and the Foundations of Physics  
Imperial College London  
9 January 2008

# Overview

- ▶ What is categorical quantum mechanics?
- ▶ What is the quantum harmonic oscillator?
- ▶ Constructing the state space categorically
- ▶ Graphical representation
- ▶ Raising and lowering operators
- ▶ Coherent states and exponentials
- ▶ A category of Hilbert spaces?
- ▶ ‘Exotic’ Fock spaces
- ▶ Where does the ‘quantumness’ come from?

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# Categorical quantum mechanics

## Traditionally

Hilbert spaces and linear maps

Inner products

Tensor product

Linearity

States

Amplitudes

## Categorically

Objects and morphisms in a category  $\mathbf{C}$

Contravariant functor  $\dagger : \mathbf{C} \rightarrow \mathbf{C}$ , identity on objects,  $\dagger^2 = \text{id}_{\mathbf{C}}$

Symmetric monoidal  $\otimes$  on  $\mathbf{C}$

$\dagger$ -biproducts  $\oplus$  in  $\mathbf{C}$

Morphisms  $\phi : I \rightarrow A$

$\text{Hom}_{\mathbf{C}}(I, I)$ , always commutative

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Duals?

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Duals?

# The quantum harmonic oscillator

Particle in an  $n$ -dimensional quadratic potential

State space is symmetric Fock space:

$$F(A) := \mathbb{C} \oplus A \oplus (A \otimes_s A) \oplus (A \otimes_s A \otimes_s A) \oplus \dots$$

Manipulated with raising and lowering operators, for  $\phi : I \rightarrow A$ :

$$a_\phi : F(A) \rightarrow F(A) \quad a_\phi^\dagger : F(A) \rightarrow F(A)$$

Canonical commutation relations:

$$a_\phi \circ a_\psi = a_\psi \circ a_\phi, \quad a_\phi^\dagger \circ a_\psi^\dagger = a_\psi^\dagger \circ a_\phi^\dagger, \quad a_\phi \circ a_\psi^\dagger = a_\psi^\dagger \circ a_\phi + (\psi^\dagger \circ \phi) \cdot \text{id}_{F(A)}$$

Carries a natural commutative monoid structure

[Blute, Panangaden and Seely, 1994]

Natural isomorphisms:  $F(A \oplus B) \simeq F(A) \otimes F(B)$

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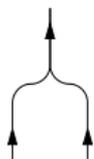
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# Internal commutative monoids

Category of internal commutative monoids  $\mathbf{C}_+$

Multiplication and  
unit morphisms

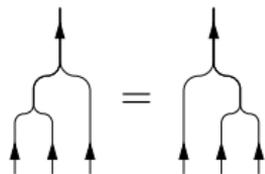


$$g : A \otimes A \longrightarrow A$$

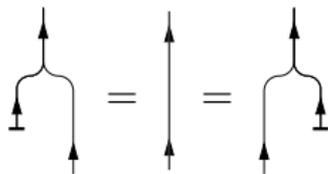


$$u : I \longrightarrow A$$

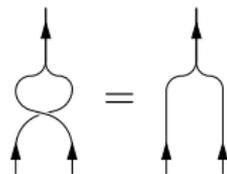
Denoted  $(A, g, u)_+$



Associativity law



Unit laws



Commutativity law

Initial object

$$I_+ := (I, \lambda_I, \text{id}_I)_+$$

Coproducts

Terminal object

$$0_+ := (0, 0_{0 \otimes 0}, \text{id}_0)_+$$

Products

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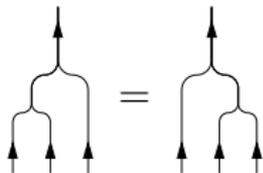
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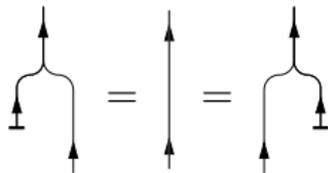
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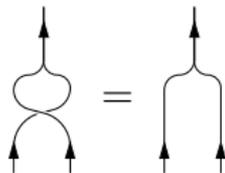
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# Categorical formulation

Problem: how to define our quantum system?

Solution: algebraically!

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathbf{C} & \xrightarrow[Q \text{ free}]{\top} & \mathbf{C}_\times \\ & \xleftarrow[R \text{ forgetful}]{} & \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{l} F := RQ \text{ is Fock space comonad} \\ \epsilon : RQ \xrightarrow{\cdot} \text{id}_{\mathbf{C}}, \eta : \text{id}_{\mathbf{C}_\times} \xrightarrow{\cdot} QR \\ (F(A), d_A, e_A)_\times := Q(A) \end{array}$$

$\epsilon_A : F(A) \rightarrow A$  projects on to *single-particle* space

$e_A : F(A) \rightarrow I$  projects onto *zero-particle* space

What to do with  $\dagger : \mathbf{C} \rightarrow \mathbf{C}$ ?

Introduce compatibility conditions:

- ▶  $F \circ \dagger = \dagger \circ F$ ;
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What to do with  $\dagger : \mathbf{C} \rightarrow \mathbf{C}$ ?

Introduce compatibility conditions:

- ▶  $F \circ \dagger = \dagger \circ F$ ;
- ▶  $\epsilon \circ \epsilon^\dagger = \text{id}_{\text{id}_{\mathbf{C}}}$  ... that is,  $\epsilon_A \circ \epsilon_A^\dagger = \text{id}_A$  for all  $A \in \text{Ob}(\mathbf{C})$ ;
- ▶ Products preserved unitarily.

# Categorical formulation

Problem: how to define our quantum system?

Solution: algebraically!

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \mathbf{C} & \xrightarrow[Q \text{ free}]{\top} & \mathbf{C}_\times \\
 & \xleftarrow[R \text{ forgetful}]{} & \\
 \end{array}
 \quad
 \begin{array}{l}
 F := RQ \text{ is Fock space comonad} \\
 \epsilon : RQ \dashrightarrow \text{id}_{\mathbf{C}}, \eta : \text{id}_{\mathbf{C}_\times} \dashrightarrow QR \\
 (F(A), d_A, e_A)_\times := Q(A)
 \end{array}$$

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# Preserving products unitarily

Unique natural isomorphisms induced in  $\mathbf{C}_\times$ :

$$k_{A,B} : Q(A \oplus B) \rightarrow Q(A) \times Q(B)$$

$$k_0 : Q(0) \rightarrow I_\times$$

Require  $Rk_{A,B}$ ,  $Rk_0$  unitary in  $\mathbf{C}$ :

$$(Rk_{A,B})^\dagger = Rk_{A,B}^{-1}$$

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# Graphical representations for $F, e, d$

$F(A)$ 
 $F(g) \circ F(f) = F(g \circ f)$

$d_A : F(A) \rightarrow F(A) \otimes F(A)$

$e_A : F(A) \rightarrow I$

# Graphical representation for $\epsilon, \eta$

$\epsilon_A : F(A) \rightarrow A$

Naturality

$\epsilon_A \circ F(f) = f \circ \epsilon_A$

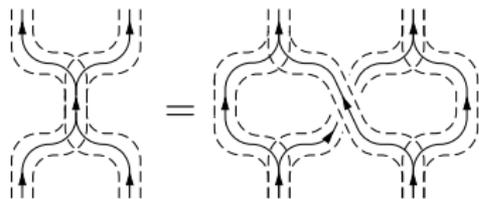
$R\eta_{(A,g,u)} \times$

$R\eta_{(A,g,u)} \times : A \rightarrow F(A)$

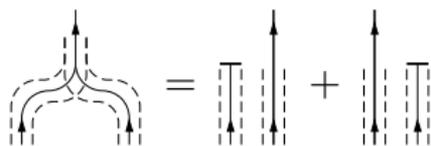
Adjunction equations

# Some emergent properties...

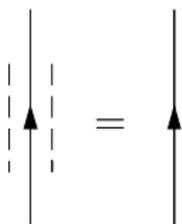
Bialgebra identity



$\epsilon \circ d^\dagger$  identity

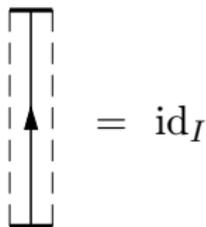


$\epsilon$  normalised

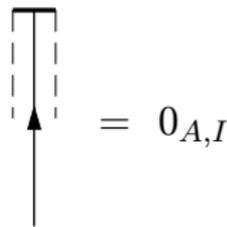


(cheated)

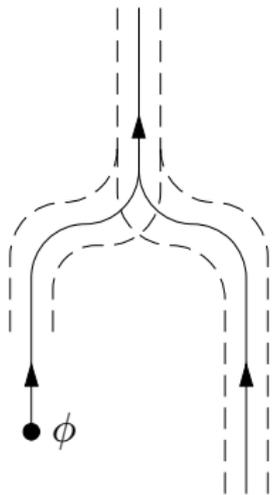
$e$  normalised



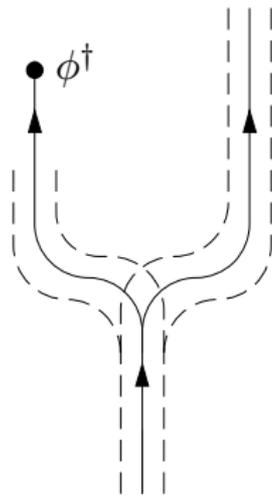
$e, \epsilon$  orthogonal



# Raising and lowering operators



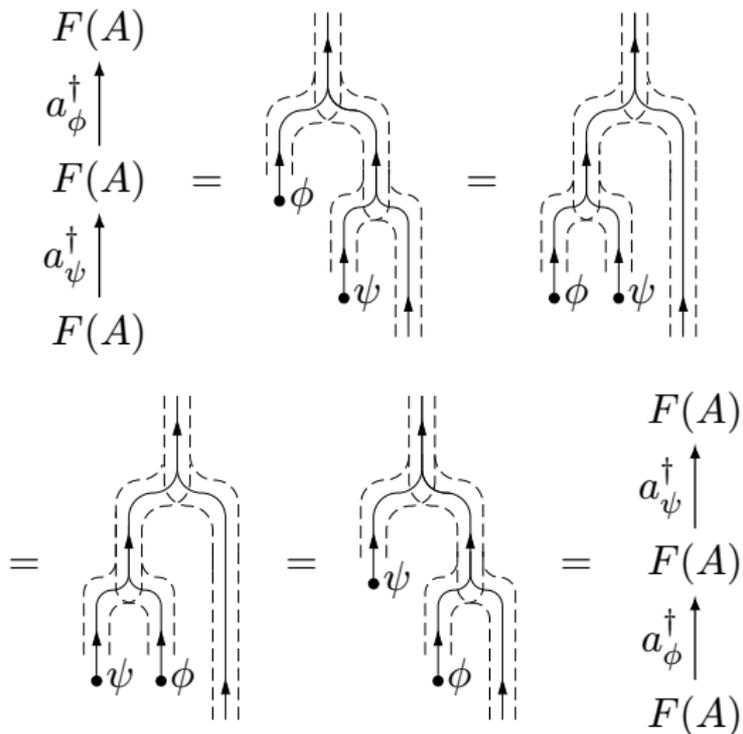
Raising morphism  
 $a_\phi^\dagger : F(A) \rightarrow F(A)$



Lowering morphism  
 $a_\phi : F(A) \rightarrow F(A)$

# Canonical commutator

$$a_{\phi}^{\dagger} \circ a_{\psi}^{\dagger} = a_{\psi}^{\dagger} \circ a_{\phi}^{\dagger}$$



# Canonical commutator

$$a_\phi \circ a_\psi^\dagger = a_\psi^\dagger \circ a_\phi + (\phi^\dagger \circ \psi) \cdot \text{id}_{F(A)}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 a_A \circ a_A^\dagger &= \text{Diagram 1} = \text{Diagram 2} && \boxed{\begin{array}{l} \epsilon \circ d^\dagger \text{ identity} \\ \text{Diagram 3} = \text{Diagram 4} + \text{Diagram 5} \end{array}} \\
 &= \text{Diagram 6} + \text{Diagram 7} + \text{Diagram 8} + \text{Diagram 9} \\
 &= \text{Diagram 10} + 0 + 0 + \text{Diagram 11} = a_A^\dagger \circ a_A + \text{id}_A \otimes \text{id}_{F(A)}
 \end{aligned}$$

The diagrams represent the composition of braiding operators  $a$  and  $a^\dagger$  in a topological quantum field theory. 
   
 - **Diagram 1:** A crossing of two strands, with solid lines on the left and dashed lines on the right.
   
 - **Diagram 2:** A crossing of two strands, with dashed lines on the left and solid lines on the right.
   
 - **Diagram 3 and 4:** A box containing the identity  $\epsilon \circ d^\dagger$ , showing a crossing of two strands equal to the sum of two parallel strands configurations.
   
 - **Diagram 6-9:** Four terms showing the expansion of the product of two crossings.
   
 - **Diagram 10:** A crossing of two strands, with dashed lines on the left and solid lines on the right, representing  $a_A^\dagger \circ a_A$ .
   
 - **Diagram 11:** Two parallel vertical strands, representing  $\text{id}_A \otimes \text{id}_{F(A)}$ .

# Coherent states



Employ  $R\eta_{I_\times} : I \rightarrow F(I)$  here

Correspond to *points*  $\text{Hom}_{\mathbb{C}_\times}(I_\times, Q(A))$

Have classical properties:

- ▶ Can be copied:

$$d_A \circ \text{Coh}(\phi) = \text{Coh}(\phi) \otimes \text{Coh}(\phi)$$

- ▶ Can be deleted:

$$e_A \circ \text{Coh}(\phi) = \text{id}_I$$

- ▶ Unchanged by lowering operator:

$$a_\psi \circ \text{Coh}(\phi) = (\psi^\dagger \circ \phi) \cdot \text{Coh}(\phi)$$

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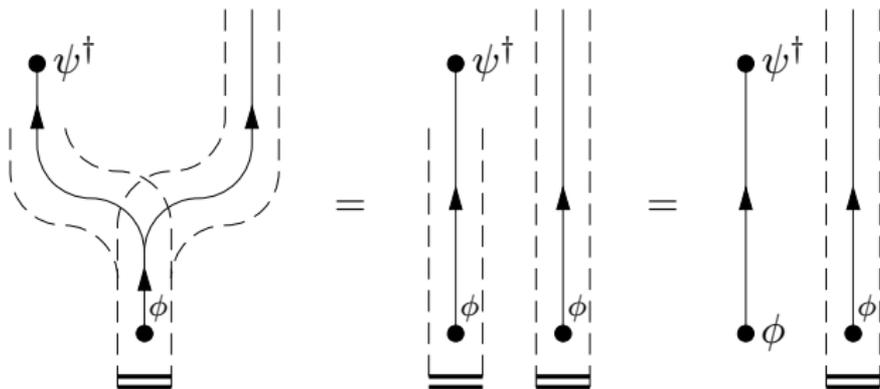
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# Coherent state is eigenstate of $a_\psi$

$$a_\psi \circ \text{Coh}(\phi) = (\psi^\dagger \circ \phi) \cdot \text{Coh}(\phi)$$



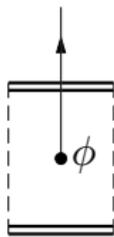
# Morphism exponentials

Construct an exponential

$$\exp_{(A,g,u)_+}(\phi)$$

from a state  $\phi : I \rightarrow A$  and a commutative monoid  $(A, g, u)_+$

Intuition:  $\exp_{(A,g,u)_+}(\phi) = \frac{1}{0!} \cdot u + \frac{1}{1!} \cdot \phi + \frac{1}{2!} \cdot g \circ (\phi \otimes \phi) + \dots$



employing

$$\begin{aligned} (R\eta_{(A,g^\dagger,u^\dagger)_\times})^\dagger &: F(A) \rightarrow A \\ R\eta_{I_\times} &: I \rightarrow F(I) \end{aligned}$$

Has the following familiar properties:

- ▶ Additivity:  $g \circ (\exp(\phi) \otimes \exp(\psi)) = \exp(\phi + \psi)$
- ▶ Unit:  $\exp_{(A,g,u)_+}(0_{I,A}) = u$

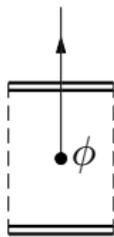
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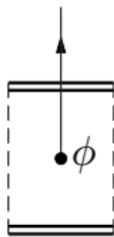
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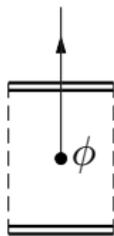
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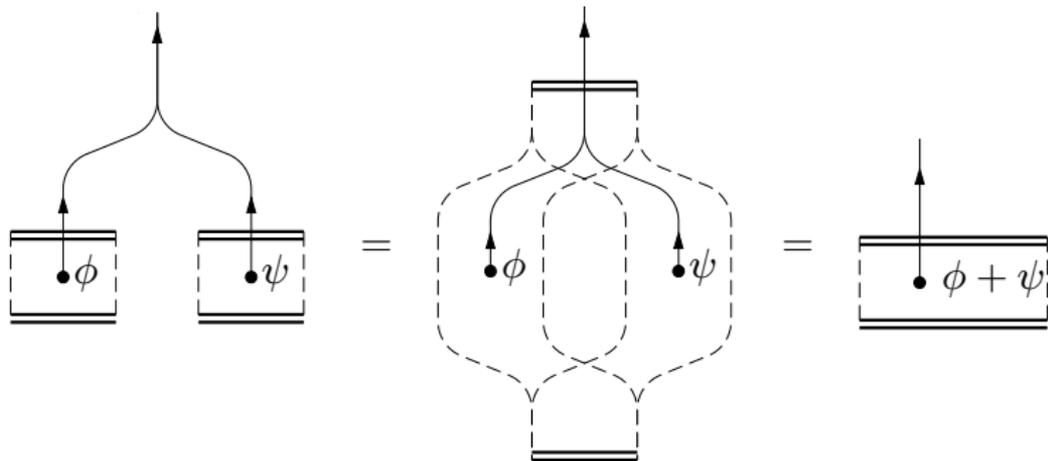
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# Proof of additivity



# C = Hilb?

Need *unbounded* operators (e.g. stages of  $\eta, d$ )

Problem:

Unbounded operators don't always compose!

Suggested solution:

Use inner-product spaces, not Hilbert spaces

Allows a well-behaved set of unbounded operators

Duals? Needed for *operator exponentials*.

**Inner**      Lacks duals

**Rel**        Lacks interesting scalars

**FdHilb**    Lacks free commutative monoid functor

'Not enough room' for duals, interesting scalars and Fock space all at once!

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# Exotic Fock spaces

Assume all objects built from ‘building blocks’  $A, B, \dots, C$   
(semisimple category, other conditions)

Typical example: supergroupoid representation category  
(almost)

Then  $K := A \oplus B \oplus \dots \oplus C$  is the *generating object*  
Canonical commutative comonoid structure  $K_{\times}$  on  $K$ !

Vectors in an object  $X$  correspond to  $\text{Hom}_{\mathbf{C}}(K, X)$

Using adjunction,

$$\text{Hom}_{\mathbf{C}}(K, X) \simeq \text{Hom}_{\mathbf{C}_{\times}}(K_{\times}, F(X))$$

i.e., states of  $X \simeq$  coherent states of  $F(X)$

# Where does the ‘quantumness’ come from?

Philosophy:

Make everything  $\dagger$ -compatible

Nontrivial fact: the

bialgebra structure of the biproduct

gives rise to the

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- ▶ What is the quantum harmonic oscillator?
- ▶ Constructing the state space categorically
- ▶ Graphical representation
- ▶ Raising and lowering operators
- ▶ Coherent states and exponentials
- ▶ A category of Hilbert spaces?
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