

# Revealing the Heliosphere: 3D Reconstruction with Neural Radiance Fields

*Robert Jarolim*

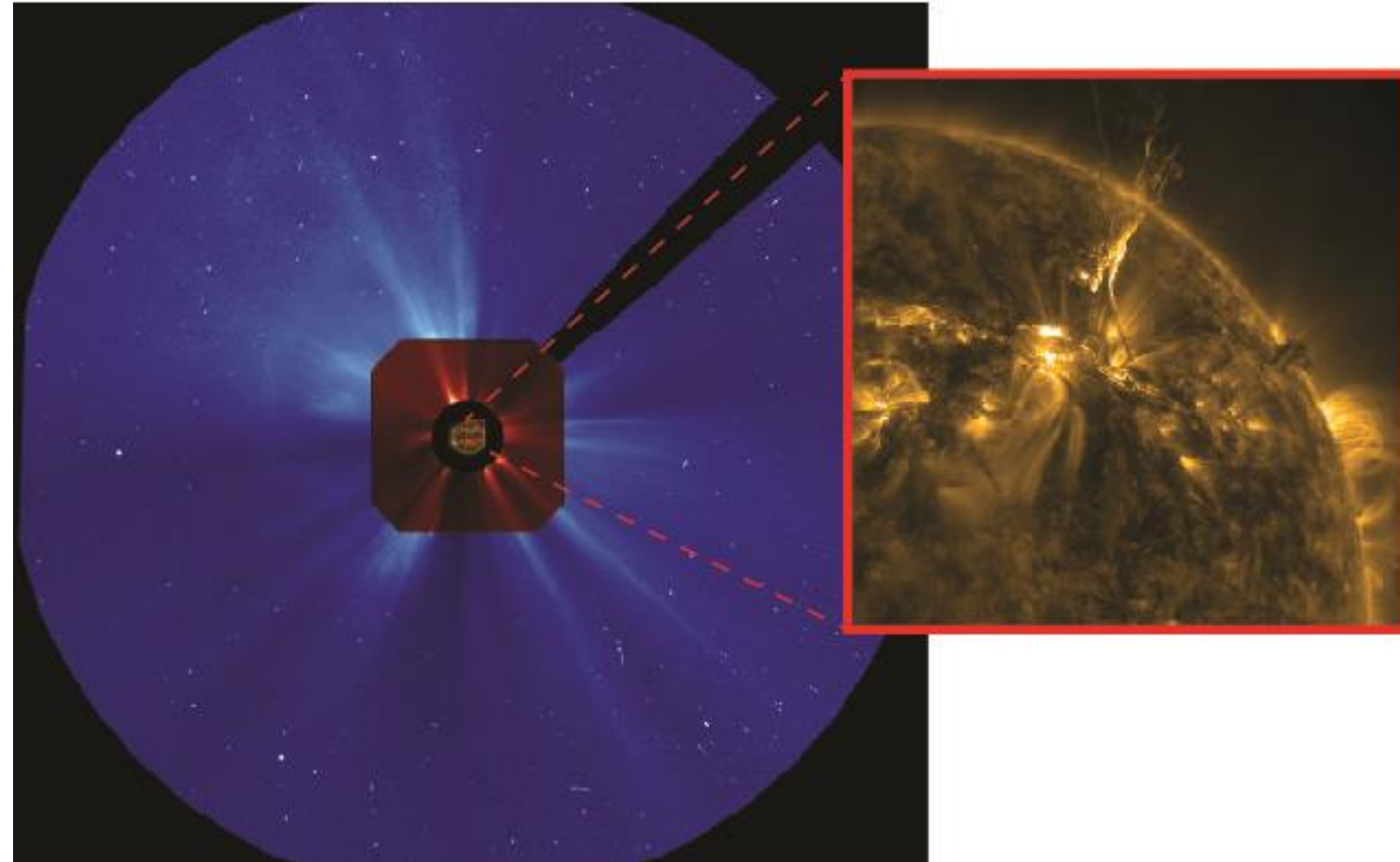
NASA Jack Eddy Fellow, CPAESS  
*High Altitude Observatory, NSF NCAR*

NASA 5th Eddy Cross-Disciplinary Symposium, 5 May 2026



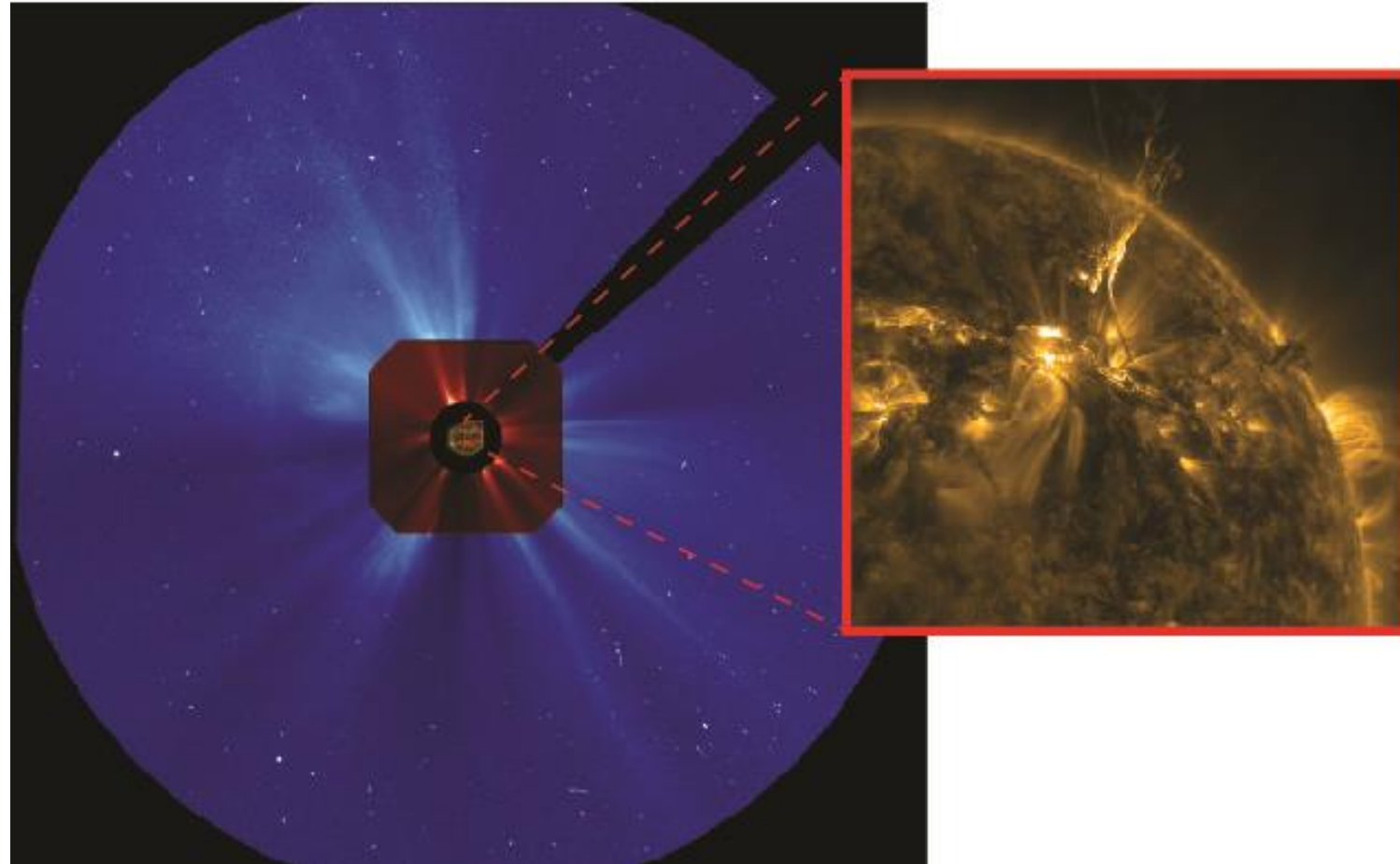
# Challenges

- Observational challenges
  - Missing or incomplete data: only a fraction is observed
  - Difficult interpretation: optically-thin + line-of-sight integration + multiple spectral bands
  - High data volumes from multiple instruments
- Physical complexity
  - Multi-scale, nonlinear processes



# Challenges

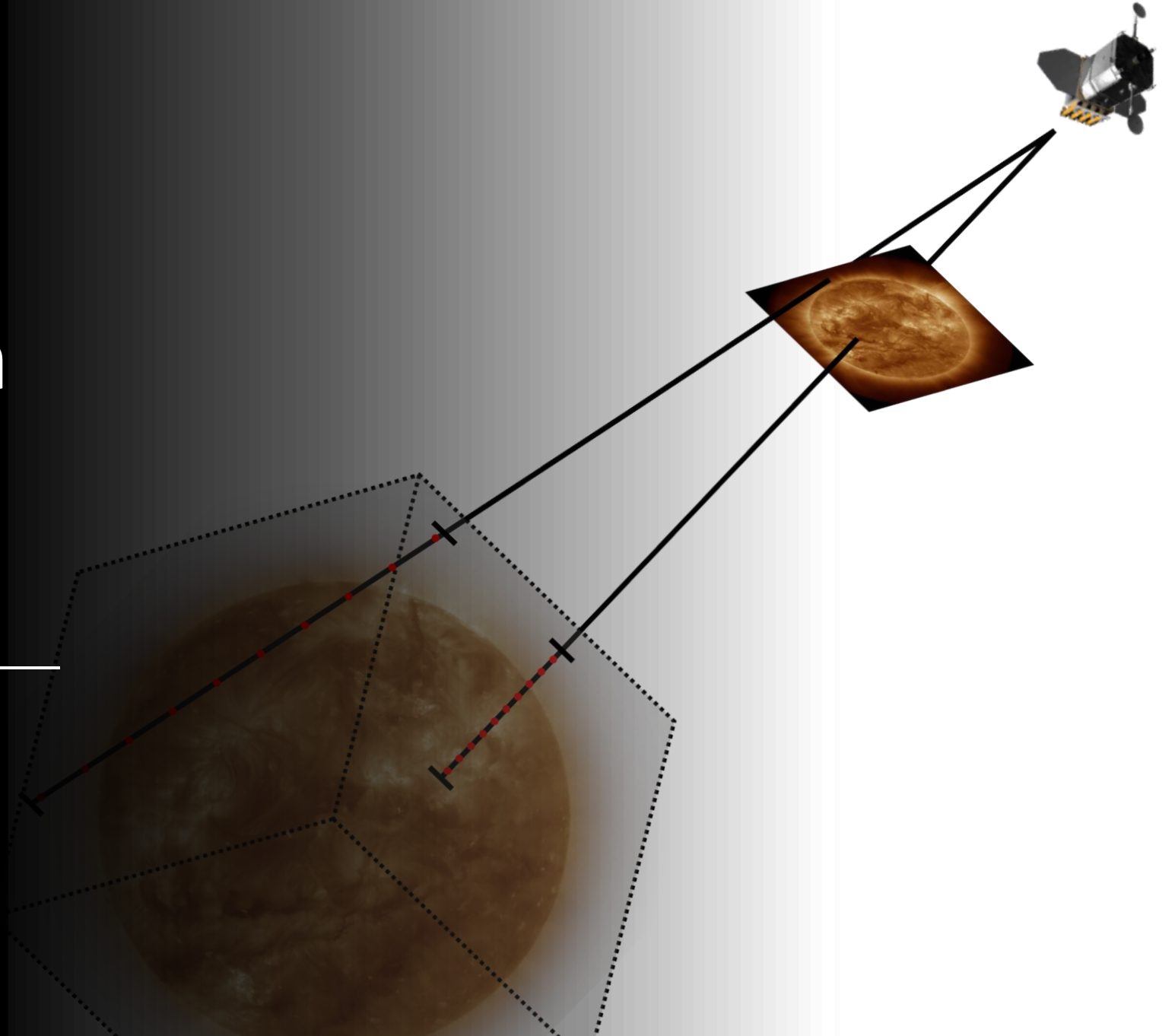
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  - High data volumes from multiple instruments
- Physical complexity
  - Multi-scale, nonlinear processes
- Advanced methods needed to fully exploit data



# 3D reconstruction of the solar corona

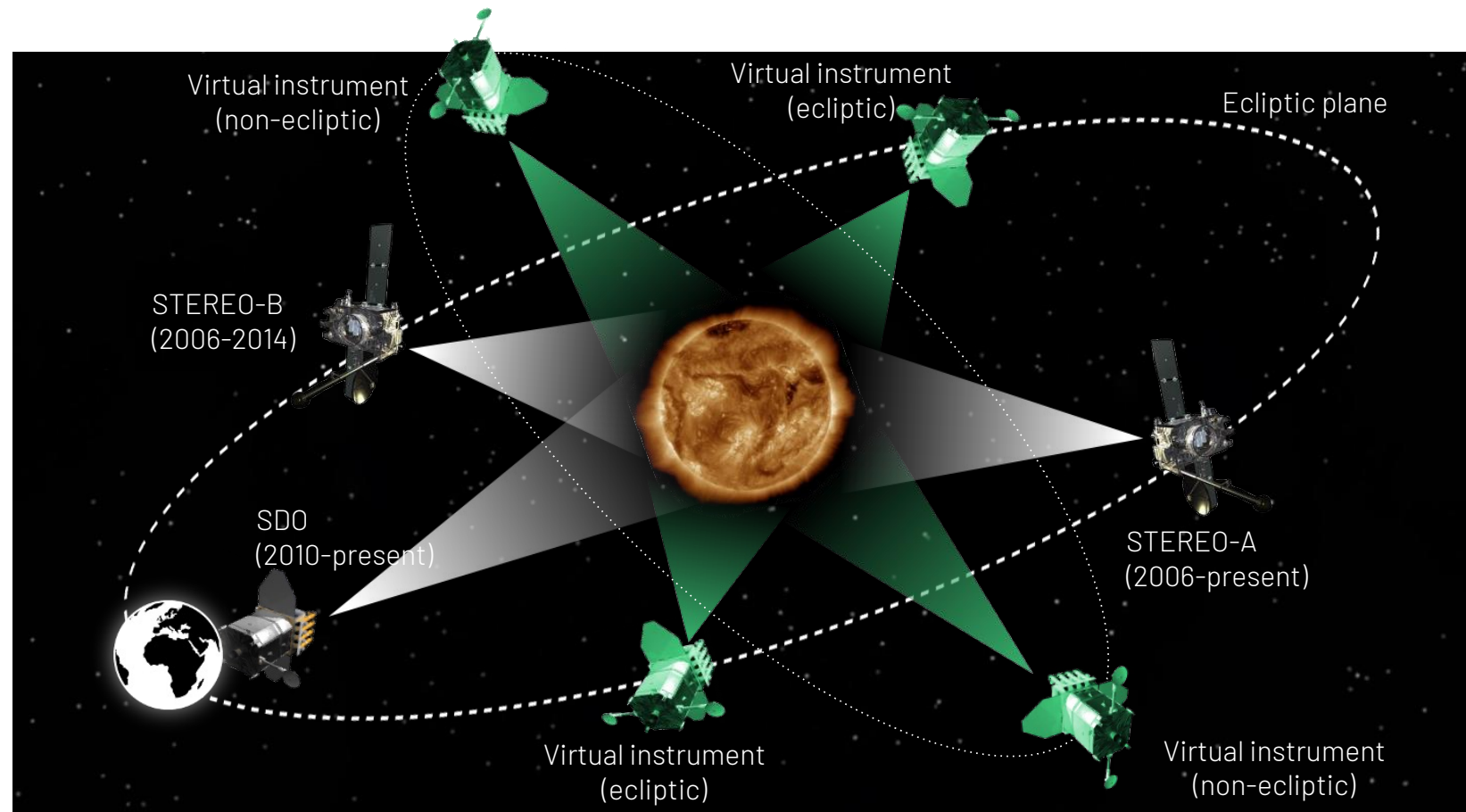
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- Jarolim et al. 2024b  
ApJL 961 L31
- Jarolim et al. 2026  
ApJ, under review
- FDL 2022 and 2023



# $4\pi$ EUV corona

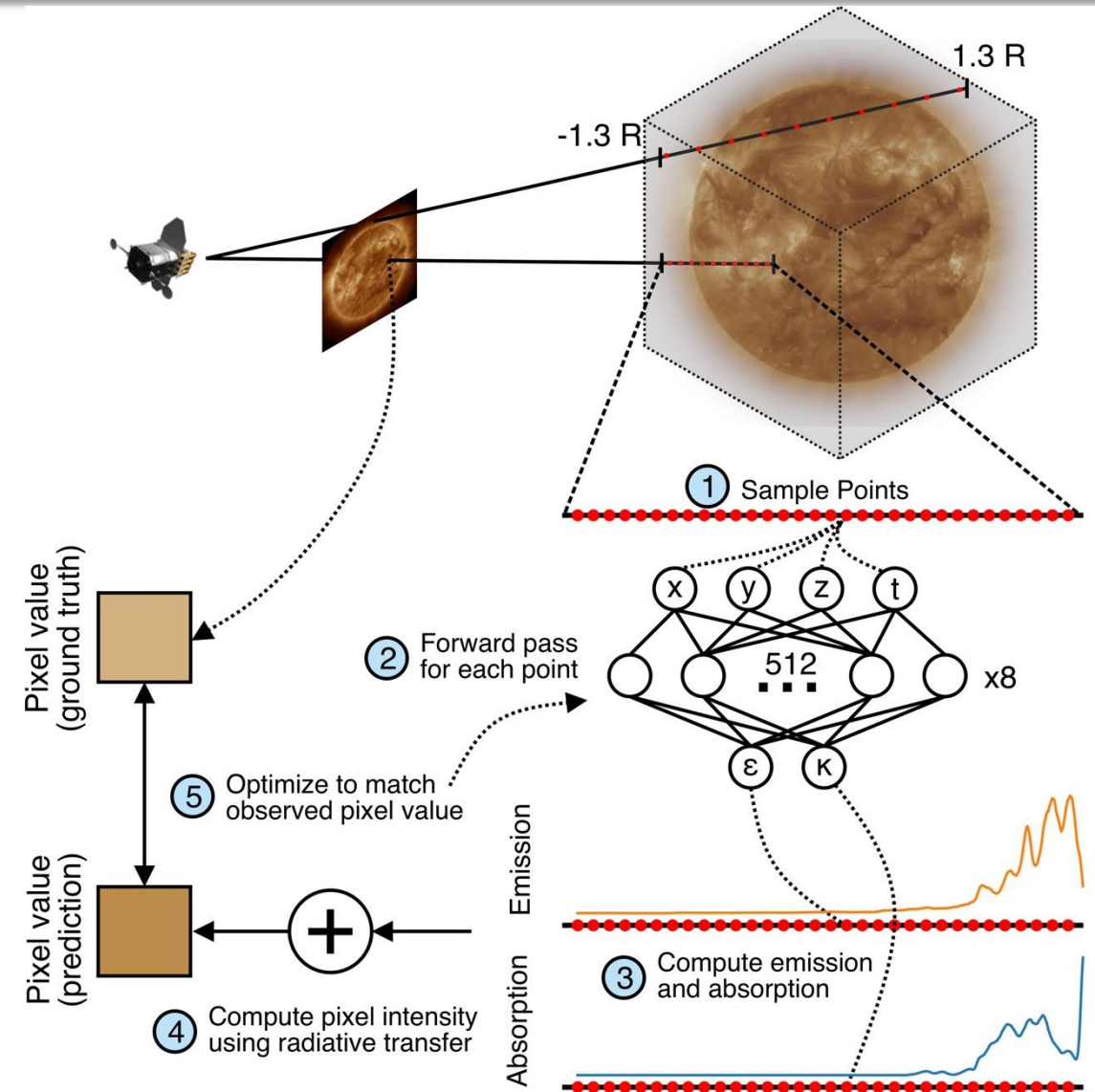
- **Limited amount of viewpoints**  
(SDO + STEREO A + B)
  - Optically thin plasma
  - Only ecliptic viewpoints
- Full 3D image enables
  - advanced studies of solar **activity**
  - **Forecasting**
  - connection to other **stars**
- **How can we observe the Sun from any perspective?**



# Method: SuNeRF

Sun Neural Radiance Fields:

1. Inputs: sampling along ray  $(x, y, z)$
2. Forward pass
3. Outputs:
  - Emission coefficient
  - Absorption coefficient
4. Integrate pixel intensity along ray
5. Optimization: match observations



# Method: SuNeRF

Sun Neural Radiance Fields:

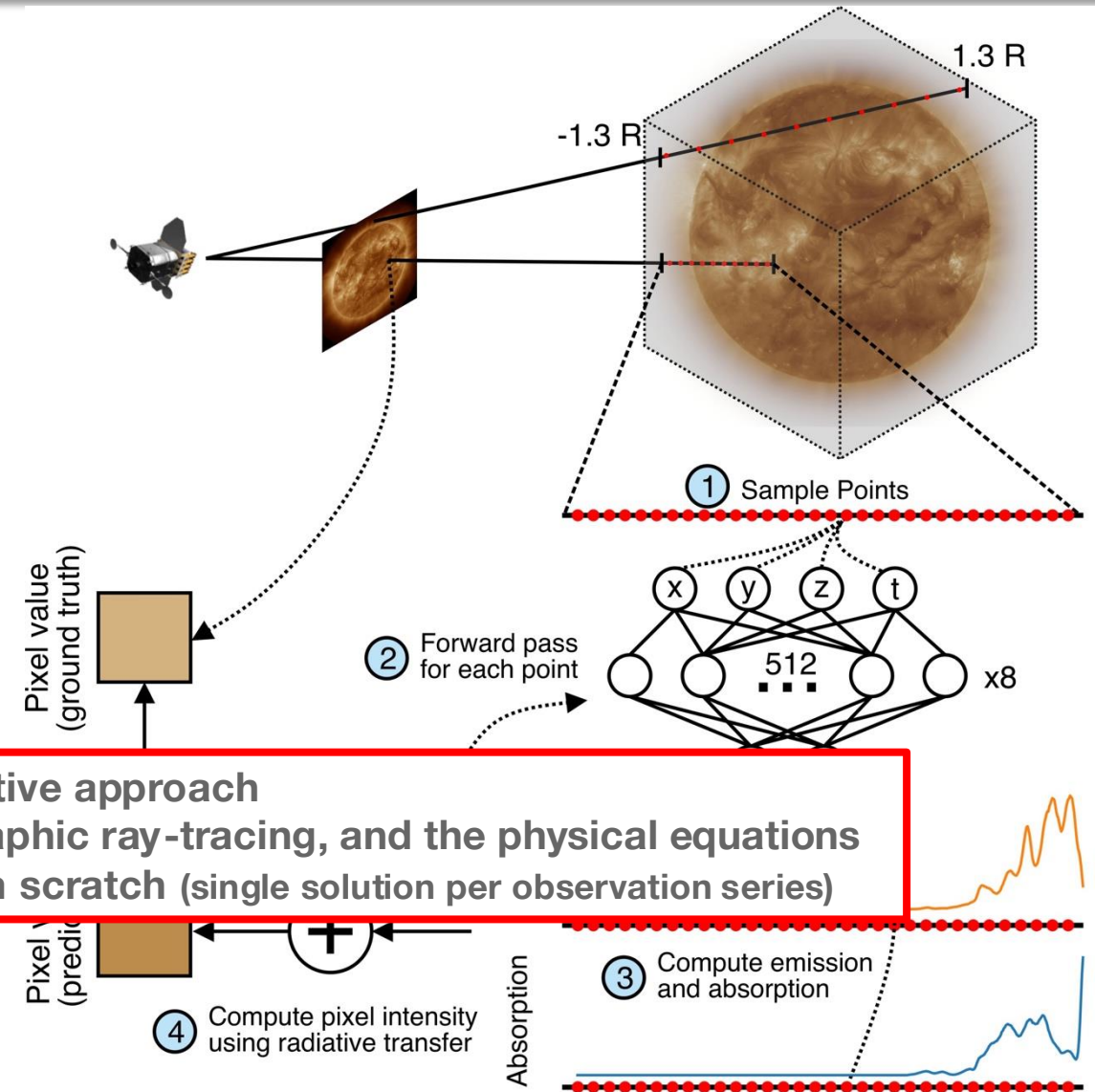
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3. Outputs:
  - Emission coefficient
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4. Integrate pixel intensity along ray

5. 

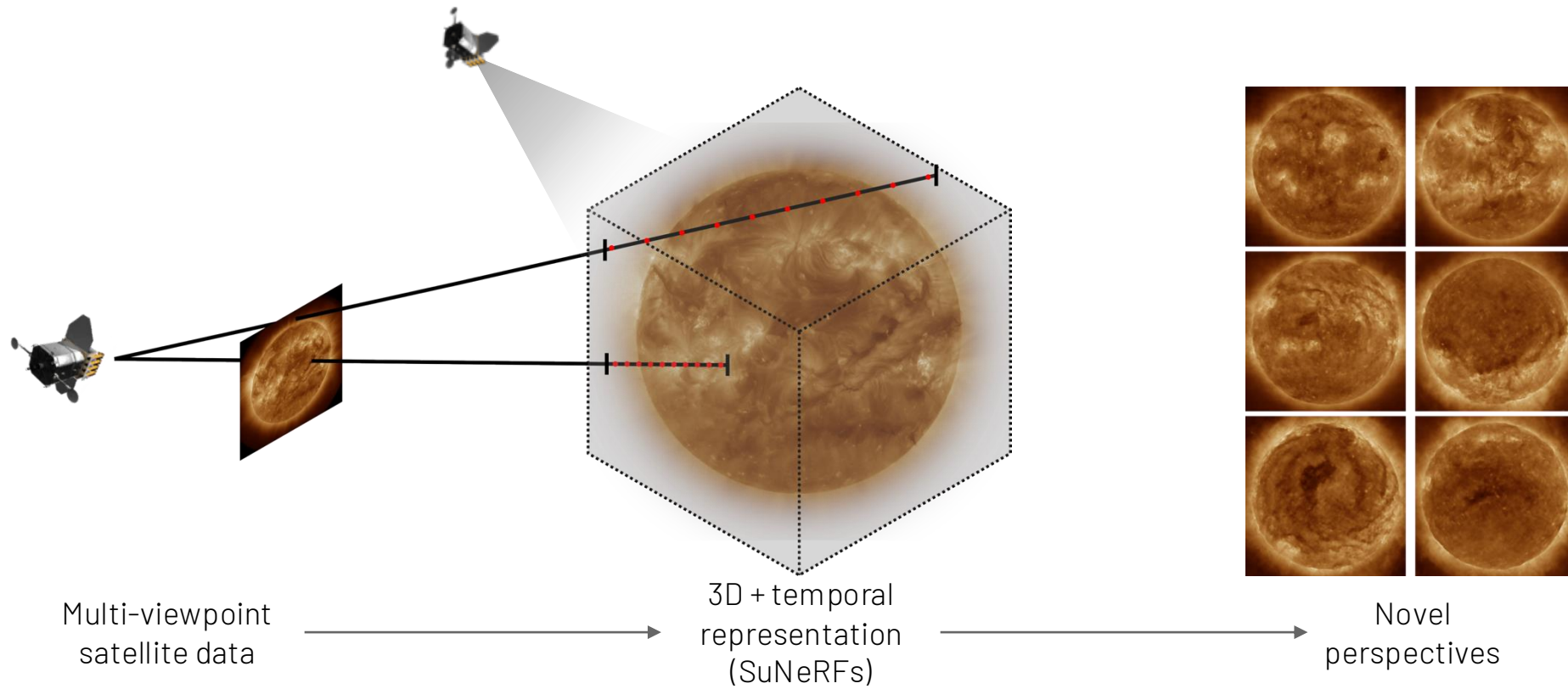
This is not a generative approach

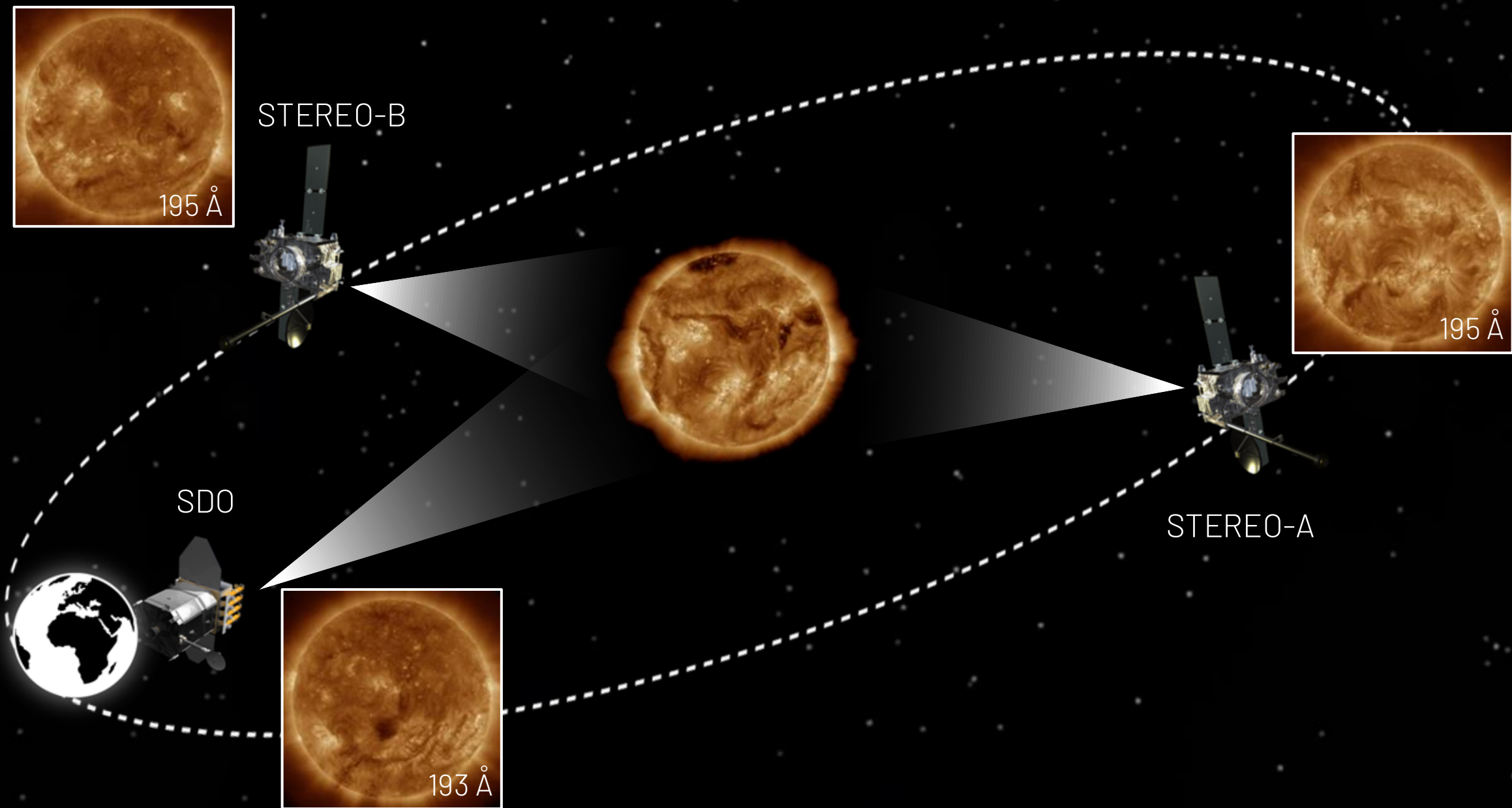
→ Results are based on the observations, tomographic ray-tracing, and the physical equations

→ New reconstructions require optimization from scratch (single solution per observation series)



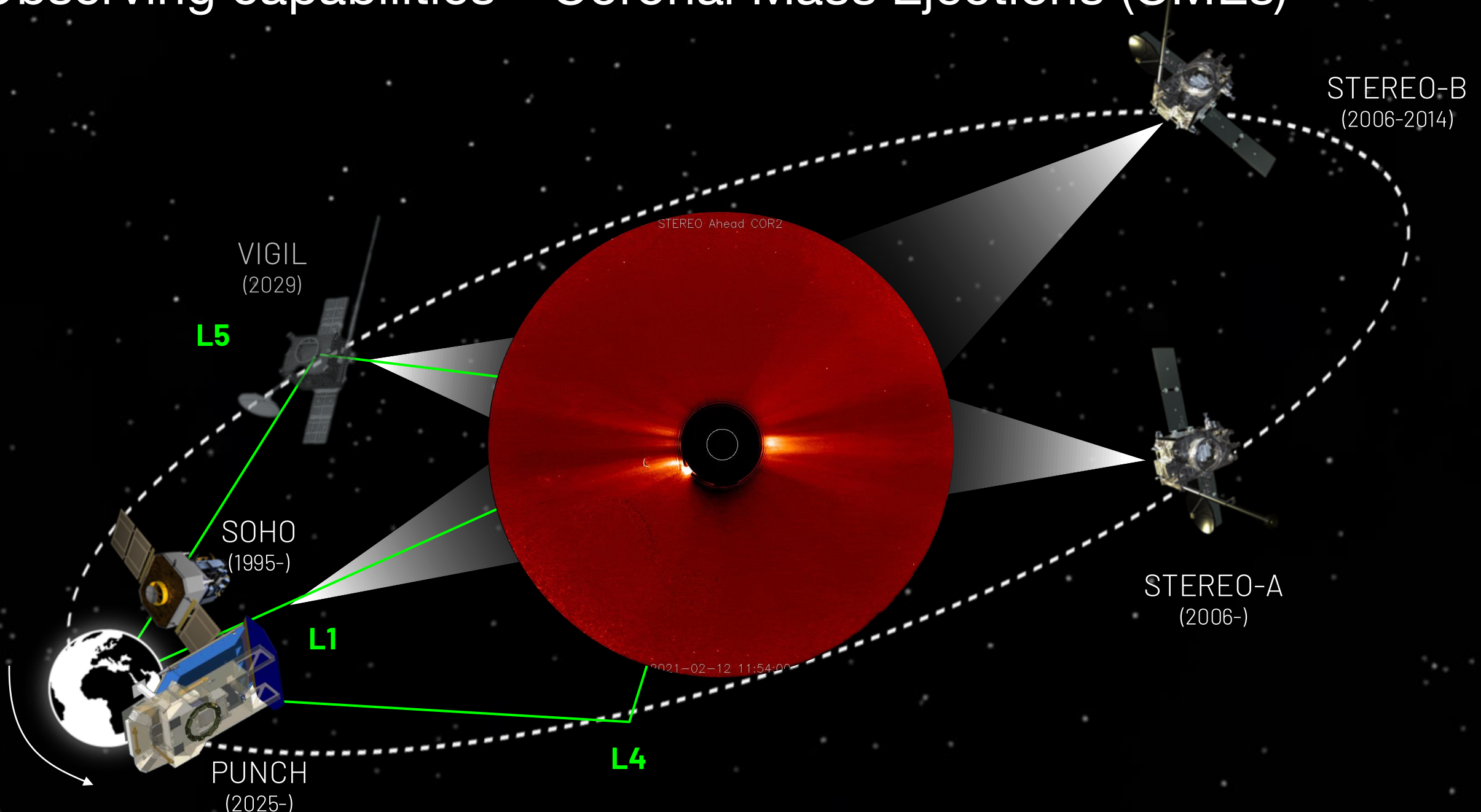
# Method: SuNeRF



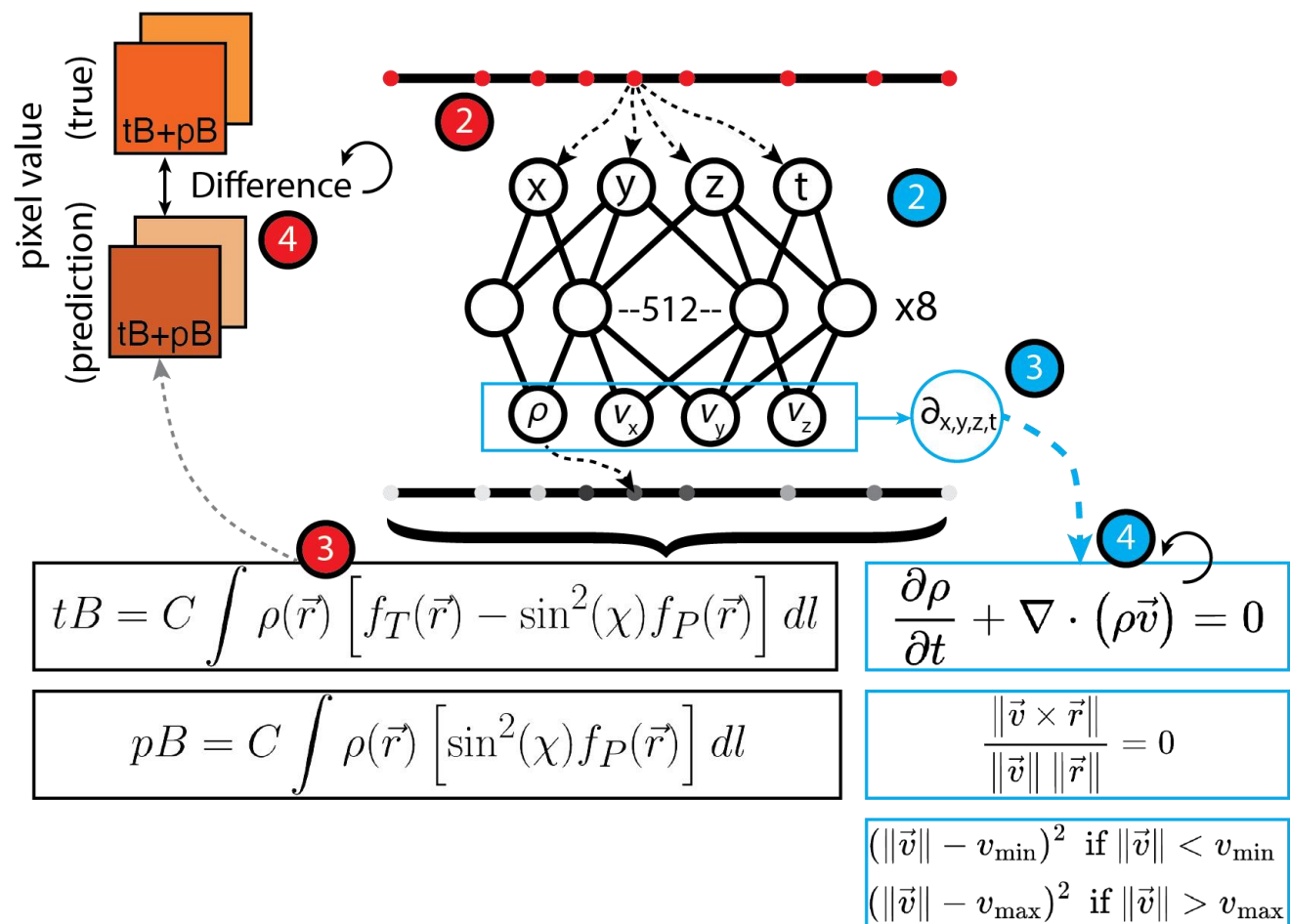
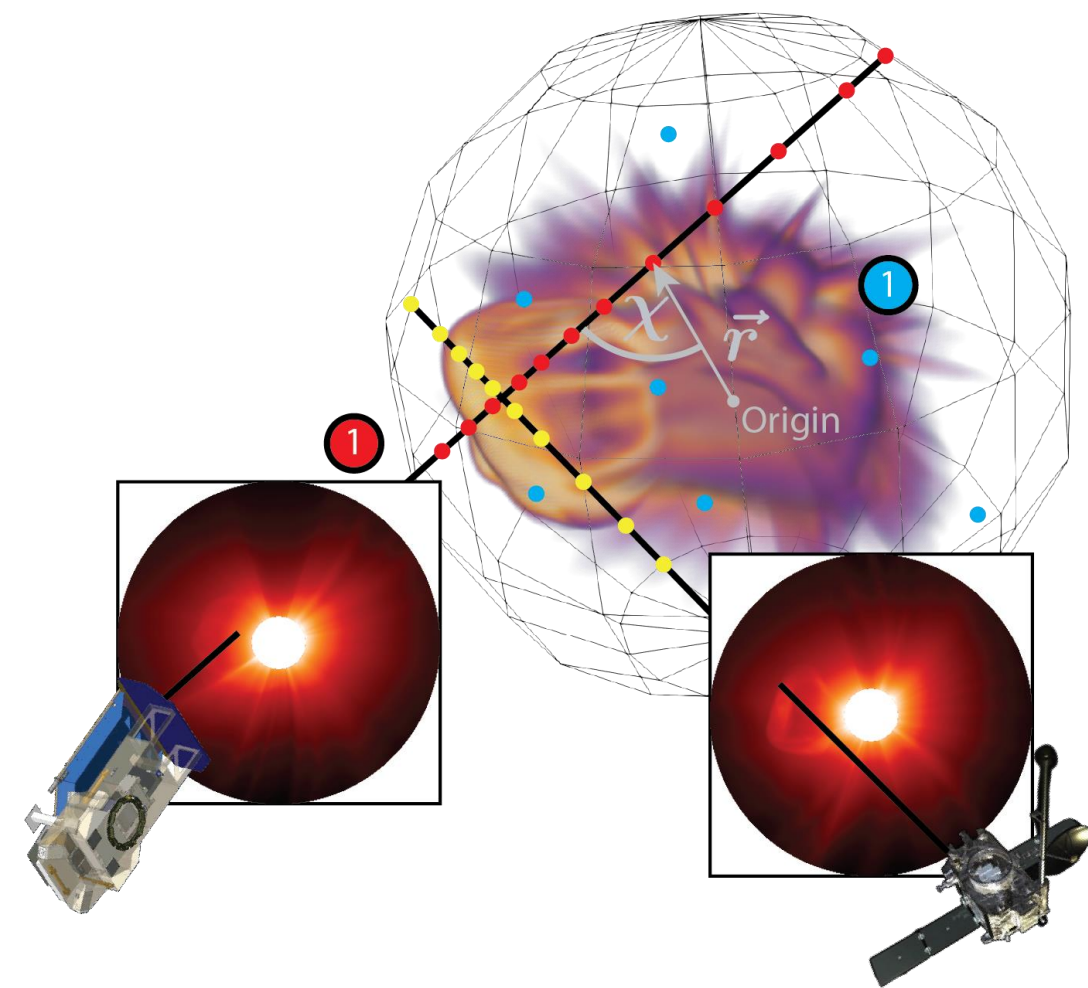




# Observing capabilities – Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs)



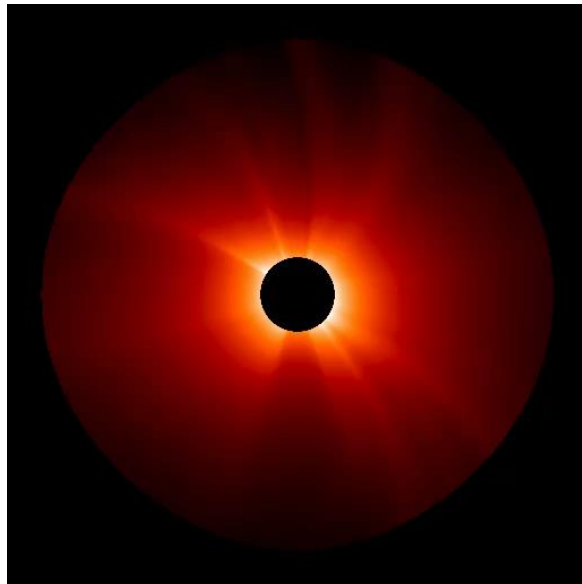
# Tomographic reconstructions



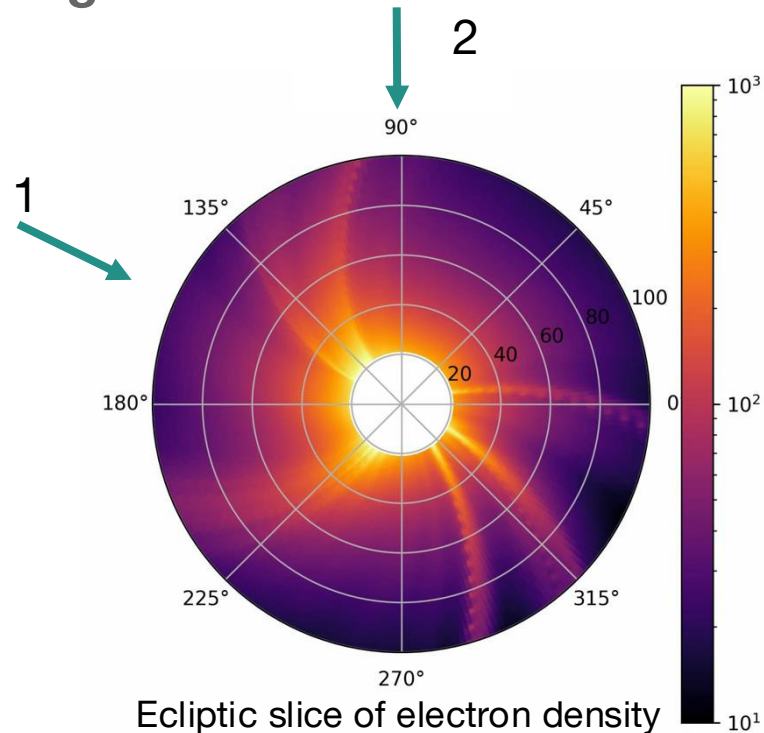
from Jarolim et al. under review

# CME Dataset

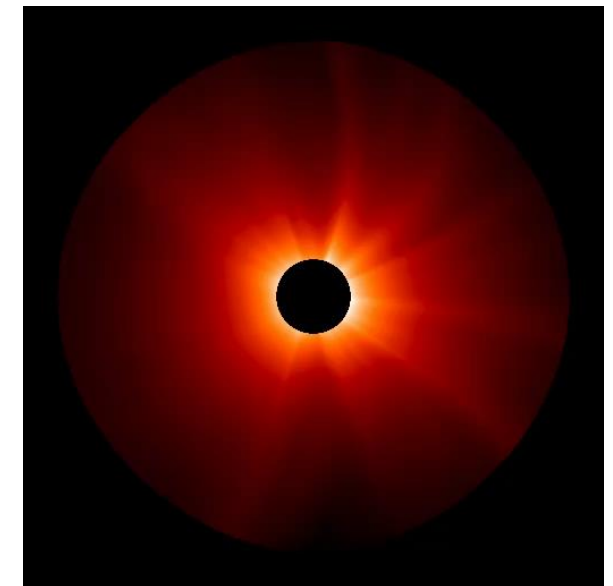
- Validation with **synthetic PUNCH observations** (Credits: A. Malanushenko)
  - GAMERA simulation – **0.1 AU to  $100 R_{\odot}$**
  - Ground truth reference – **electron density**
  - Idealized (no noise, artifacts, background stars)
  - Different **observer configurations** used for **method validation**



Polarized Brightness – Obs. 1



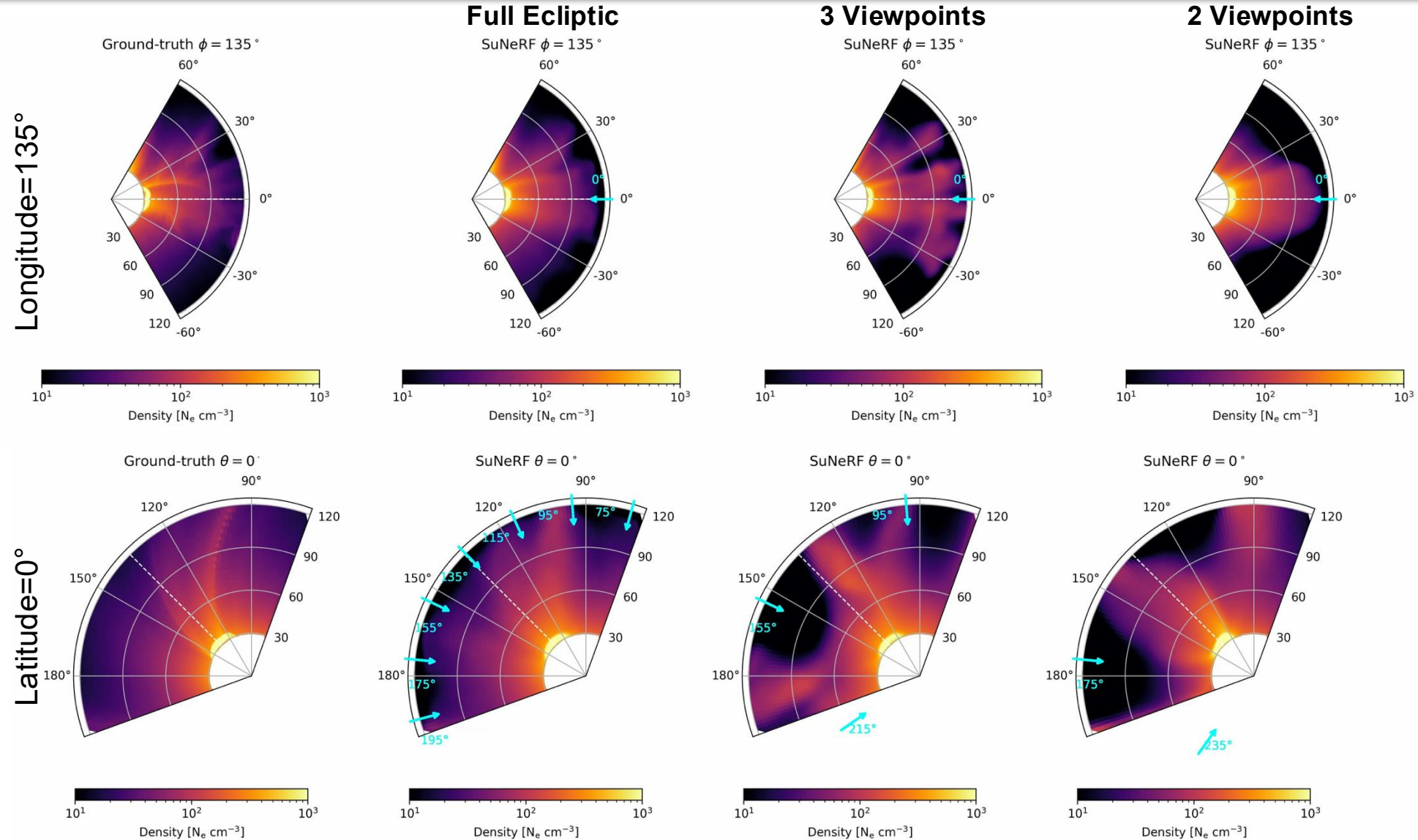
Ecliptic slice of electron density



Polarized Brightness – Obs. 2

# 3D reconstruction of CMEs

- Comparison of **latitudinal** and **longitudinal** slices
- Full coverage to only 2 viewpoints → **blue arrows**
- More viewpoints lead to better reconstructions
- **2 viewpoints** can provide a **full 3D reconstruction** of the CME

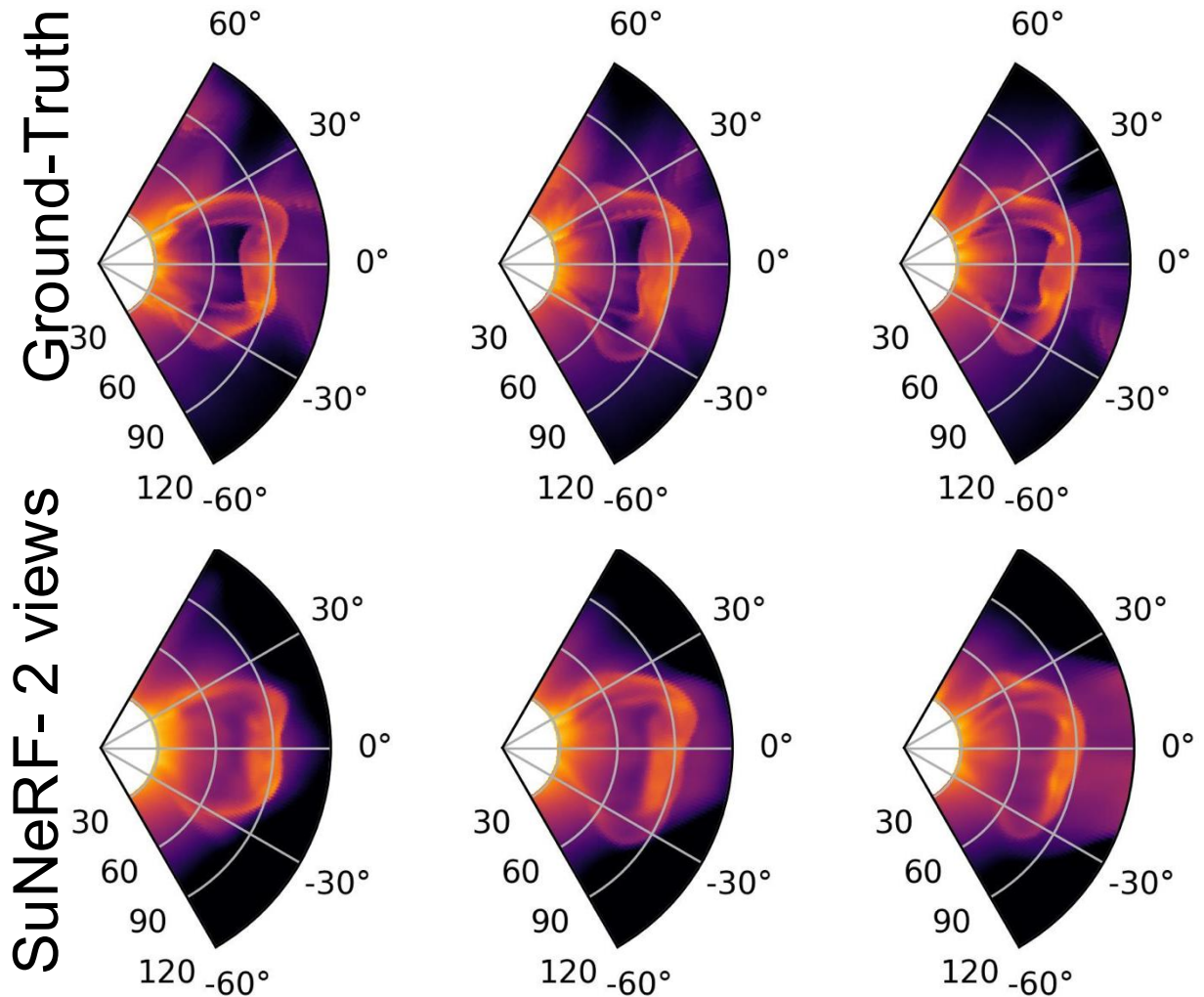
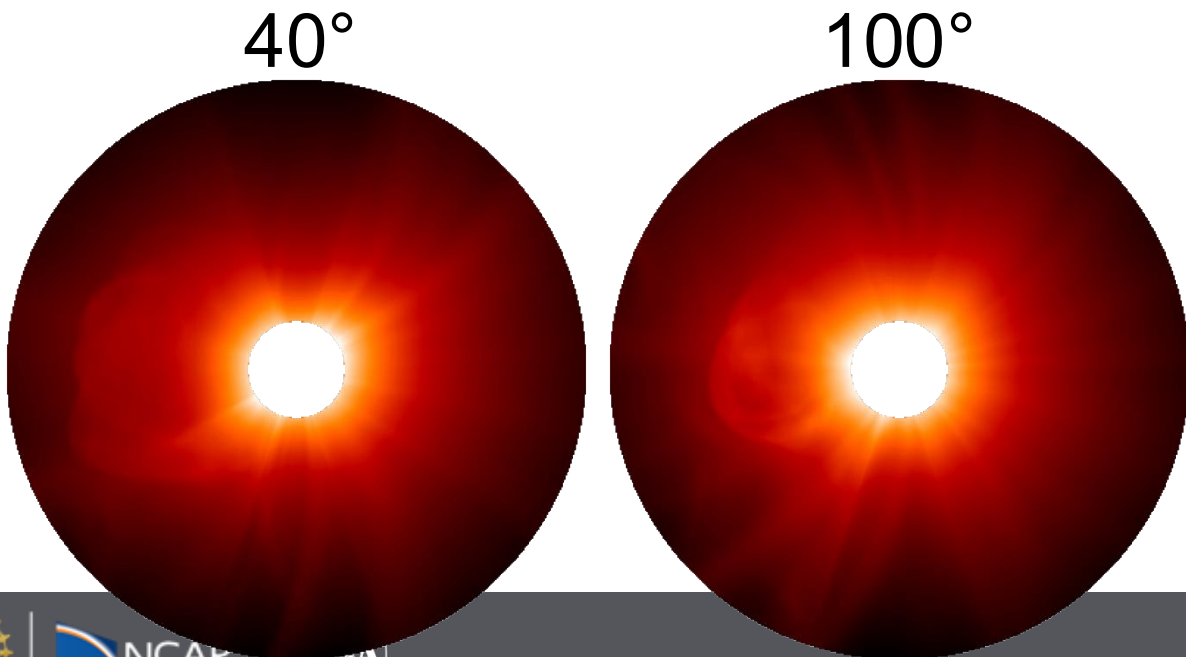


# CME Tomography – 2 Viewpoints

Longitude-slices:  $-10^\circ$   $0^\circ$   $10^\circ$

- Tomographic reconstruction
  - **Bright front** (high-density) + variations
  - **Dark cavity** (low-density)
  - **Bright core** (high-density)
- **2 Viewpoints** are sufficient to resolve the **3D topology of CMEs**
- Correct reconstruction of **deformed front**

Observations

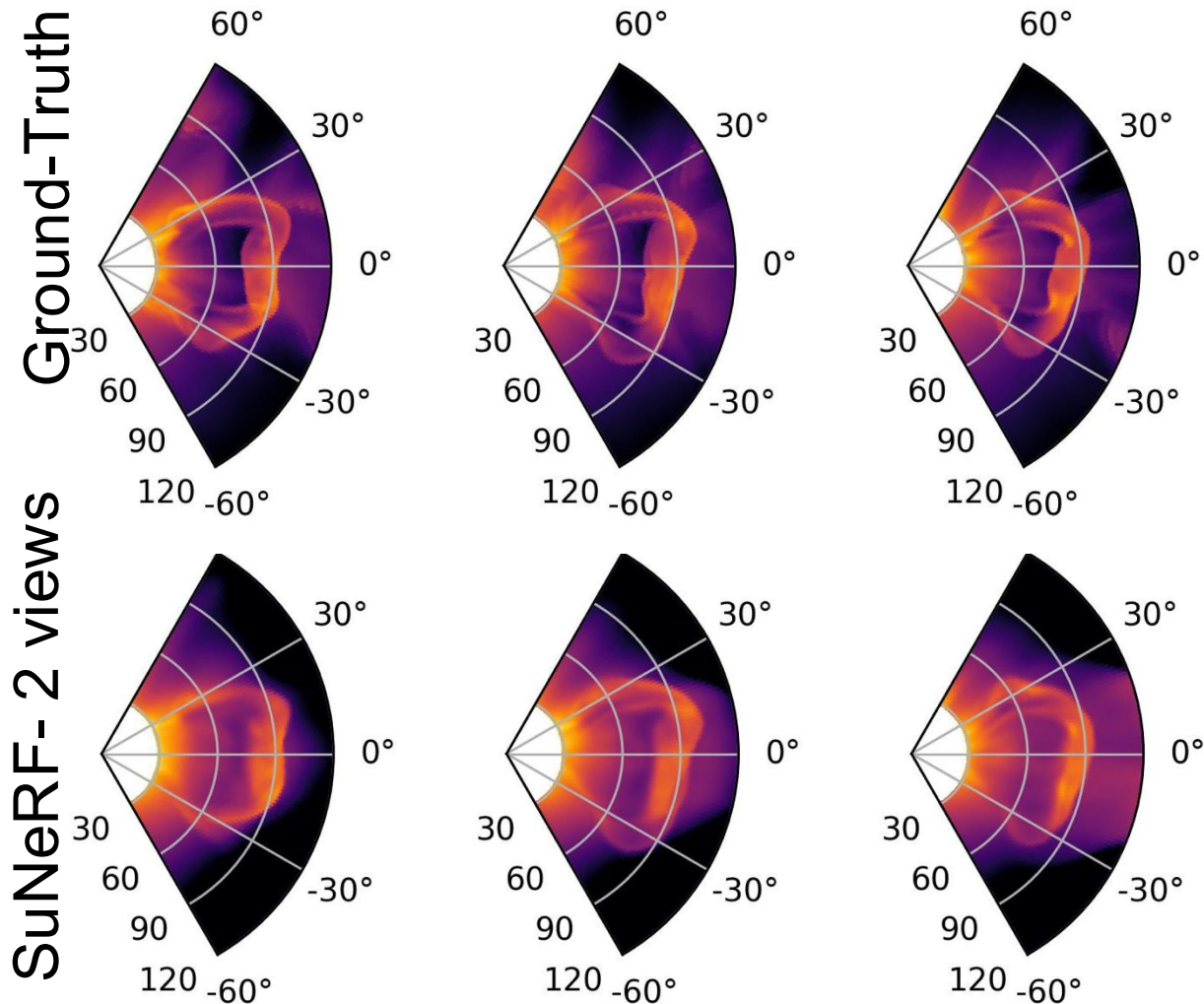
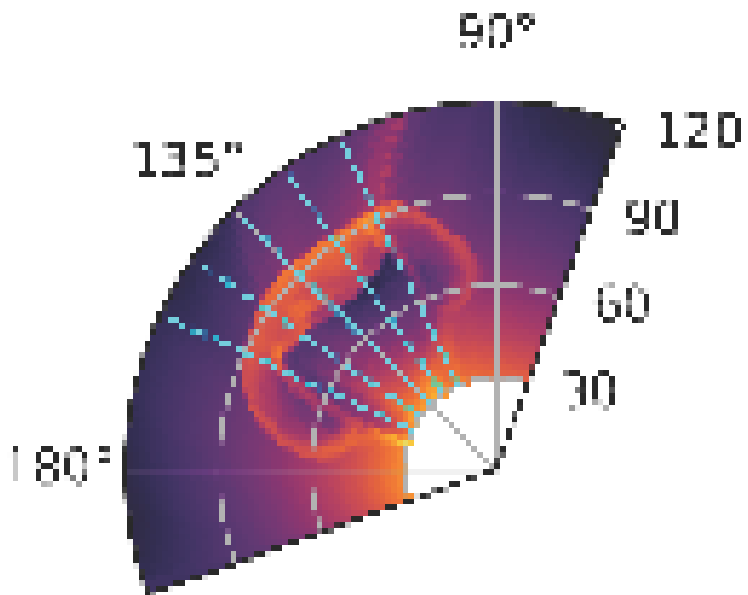


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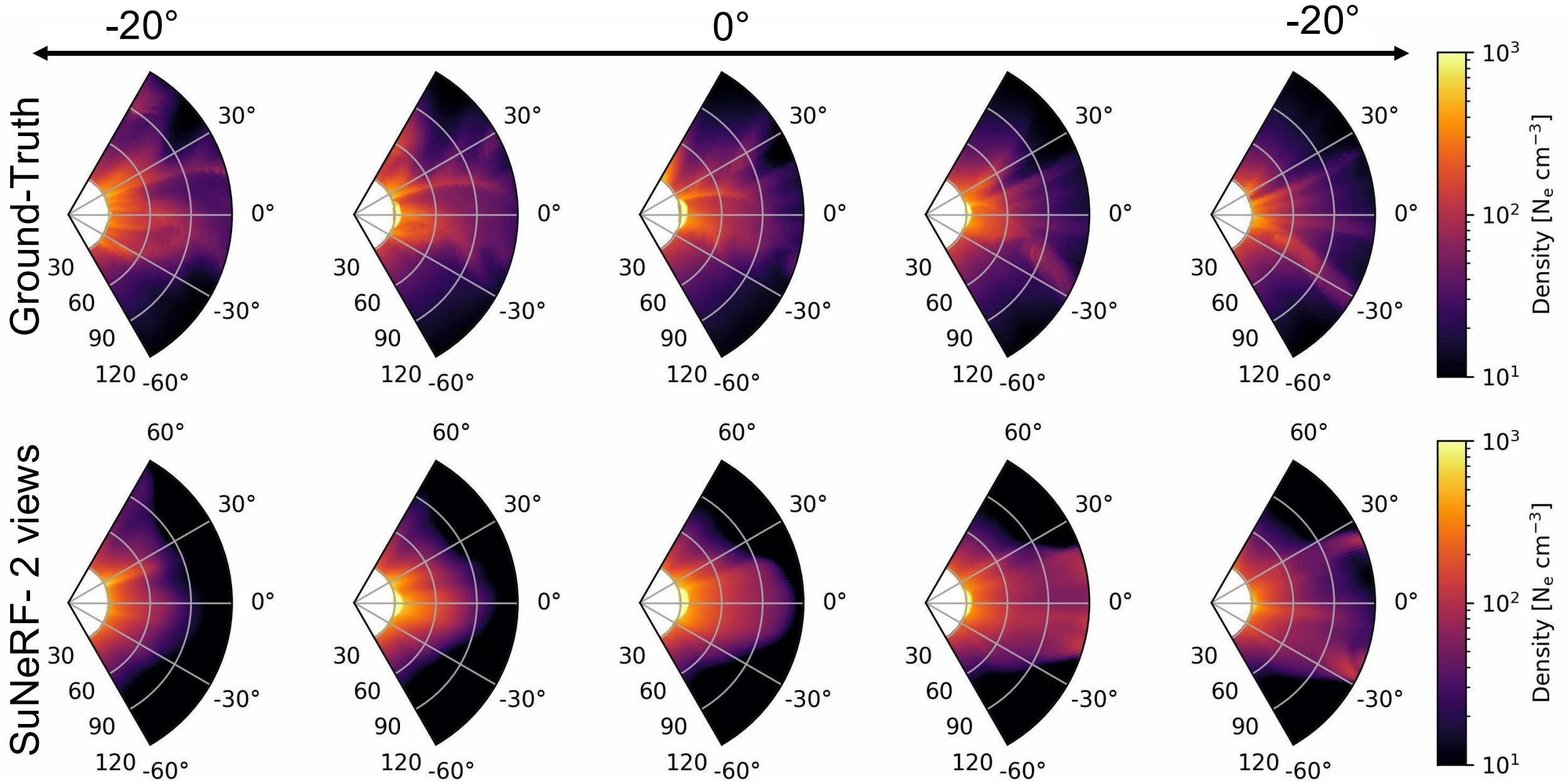
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Ground-Truth  
Ecliptic



# Full CME Tomography – 2 Viewpoints

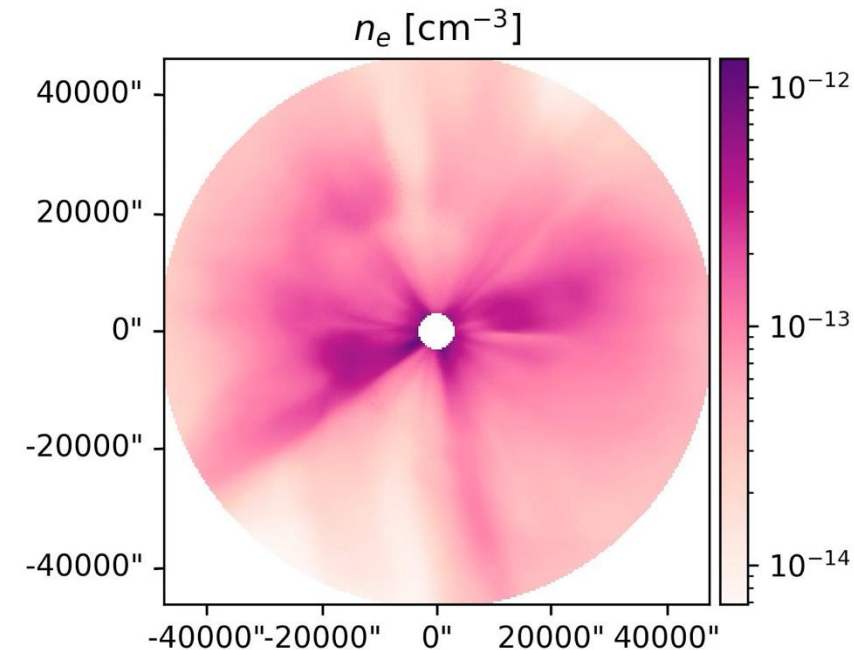
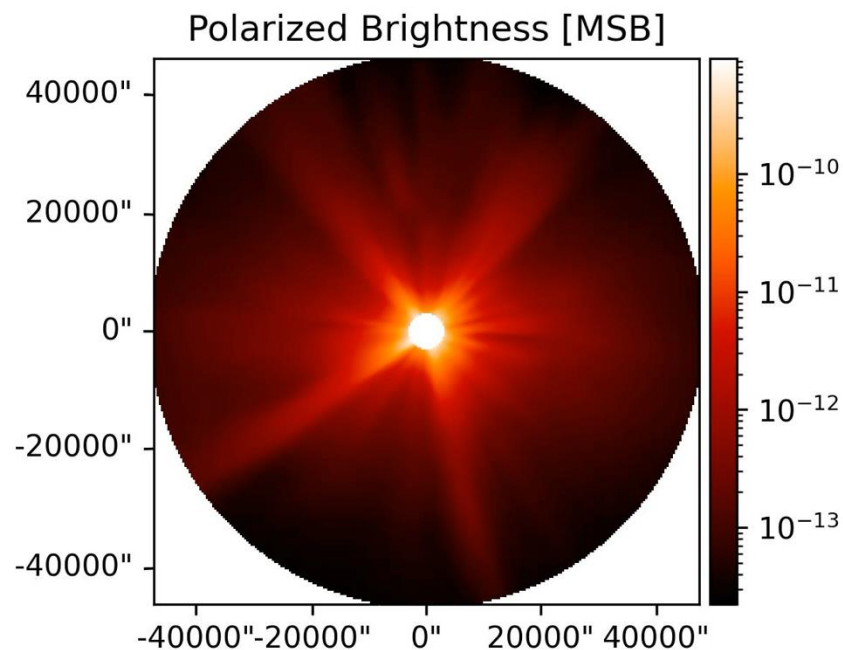
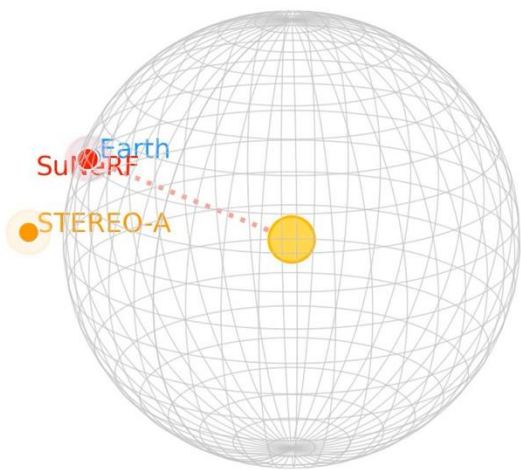


# Outlook: Application to Observations - PUNCH

- Reconstruction based on: **PUNCH/WFI, STEREO-A/COR2, GOES/CCOR**
- Video: observer location, forward rendered pB from 3D reconstruction, integrated density

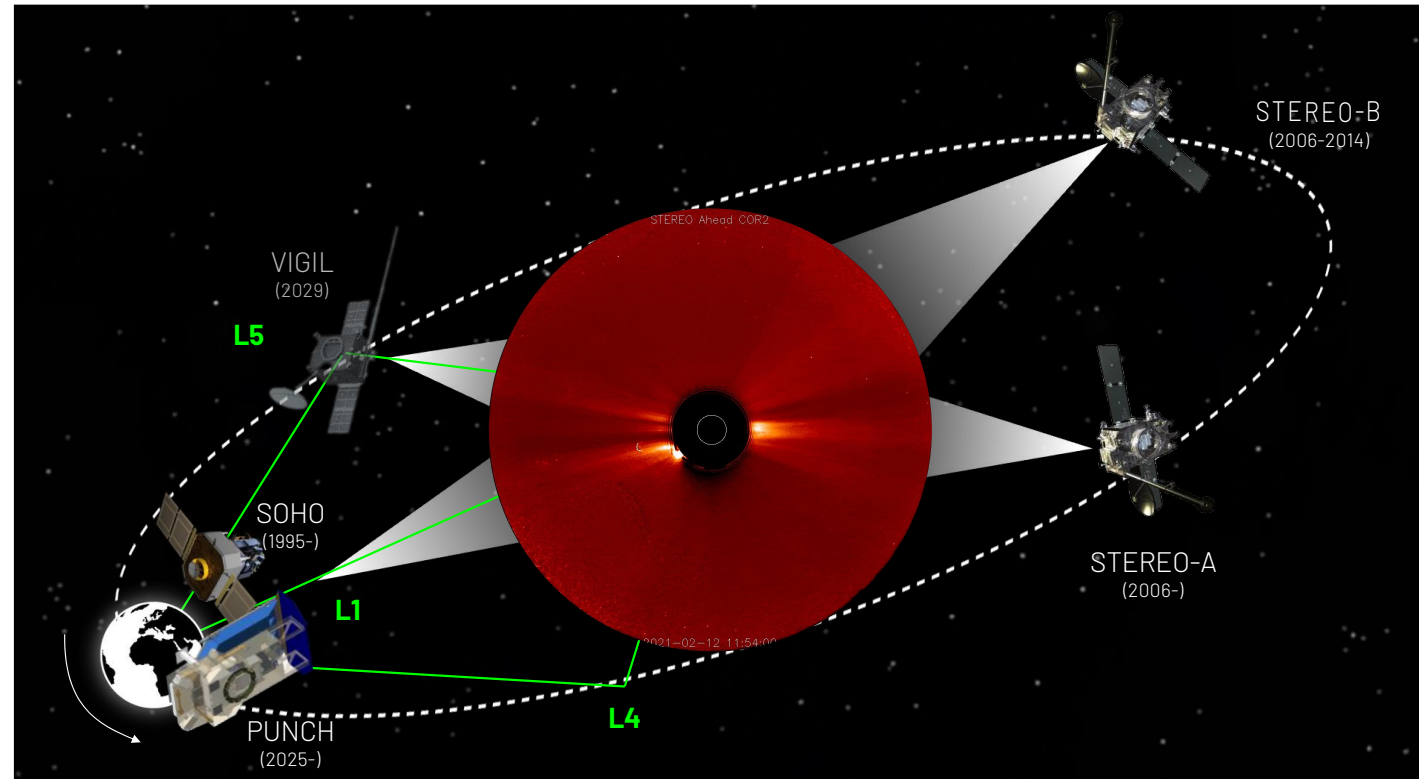
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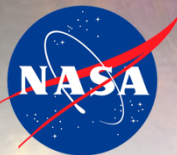


# Conclusion

- Physics-Informed Neural Radiance Fields enable reliable tomographic reconstruction of the corona
  - Including physical constraints can overcome viewpoint limitations
  - Time-dependent 3D reconstruction of solar atmosphere from sparse observations
- **Next step:**
  - Connect domains
- **SuNeRF:** [github.com/RobertJaro/SuNeRF](https://github.com/RobertJaro/SuNeRF)
  - Jarolim et al. 2024  
ApJL 961 L31
- **SuNeRF-CME;**
  - Jarolim et al. under review



# Thank you!



*Robert Jarolim*  
NASA Jack Eddy Fellow  
*High Altitude Observatory, NSF NCAR*



# References

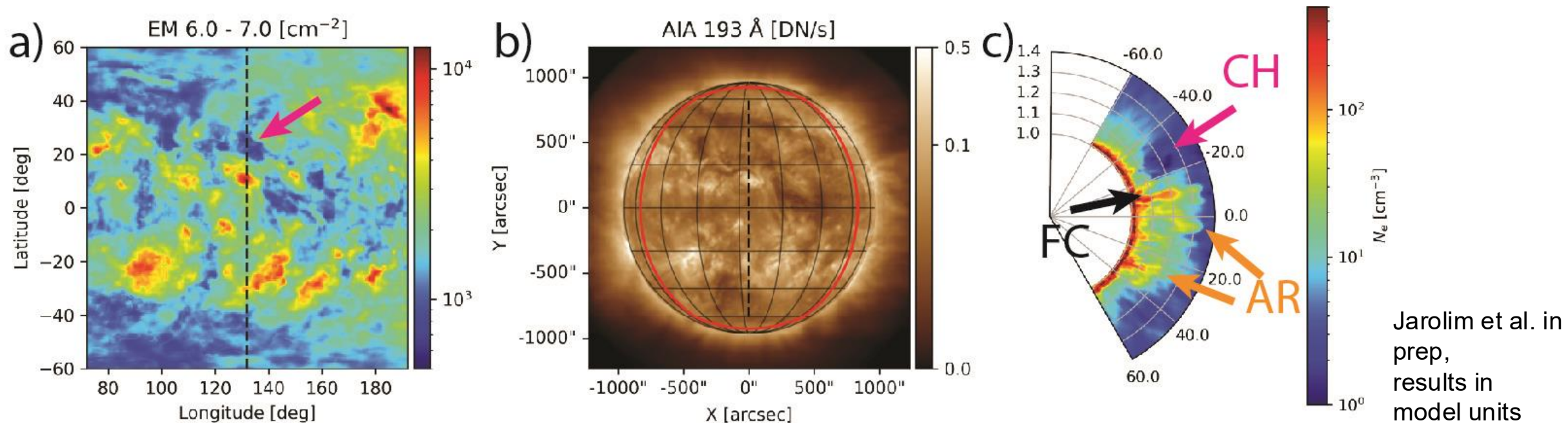
- Raissi, M., et al. Physics-informed neural networks: A deep learning framework for solving forward and inverse problems involving nonlinear partial differential equations. *Journal of Computational Physics* 378, 686–707 (2019).
- Karniadakis, George Em, et al. "Physics-informed machine learning." *Nature Reviews Physics* 3.6 (2021): 422-440.
- Jarolim, R., et al. "Probing the solar coronal magnetic field with physics-informed neural networks." *Nature Astronomy* 7.10 (2023): 1171-1179.
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- Wiegmann, T., et al. *Coronal Magnetic Field Models*. 210, 249–274 (2017).
- Baty, Hubert, and Vincent Vigon. "Modelling solar coronal magnetic fields with physics-informed neural networks." *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society* 527.2 (2024): 2575-2584.
- Camporeale, Enrico, et al. "Data-driven discovery of Fokker-Planck equation for the Earth's radiation belts electrons using Physics-Informed neural networks." *Journal of Geophysical Research: Space Physics* 127.7 (2022): e2022JA030377.
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- Athalathil, Jithu J., et al. "Surface Flux Transport Modeling Using Physics-informed Neural Networks." *The Astrophysical Journal* 975.2 (2024): 258.
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- Jarolim, Robert, et al. "SuNeRF: 3D reconstruction of the solar EUV corona using Neural Radiance Fields." *The Astrophysical Journal Letters* 961.2 (2024): L31.

# Backup Slides

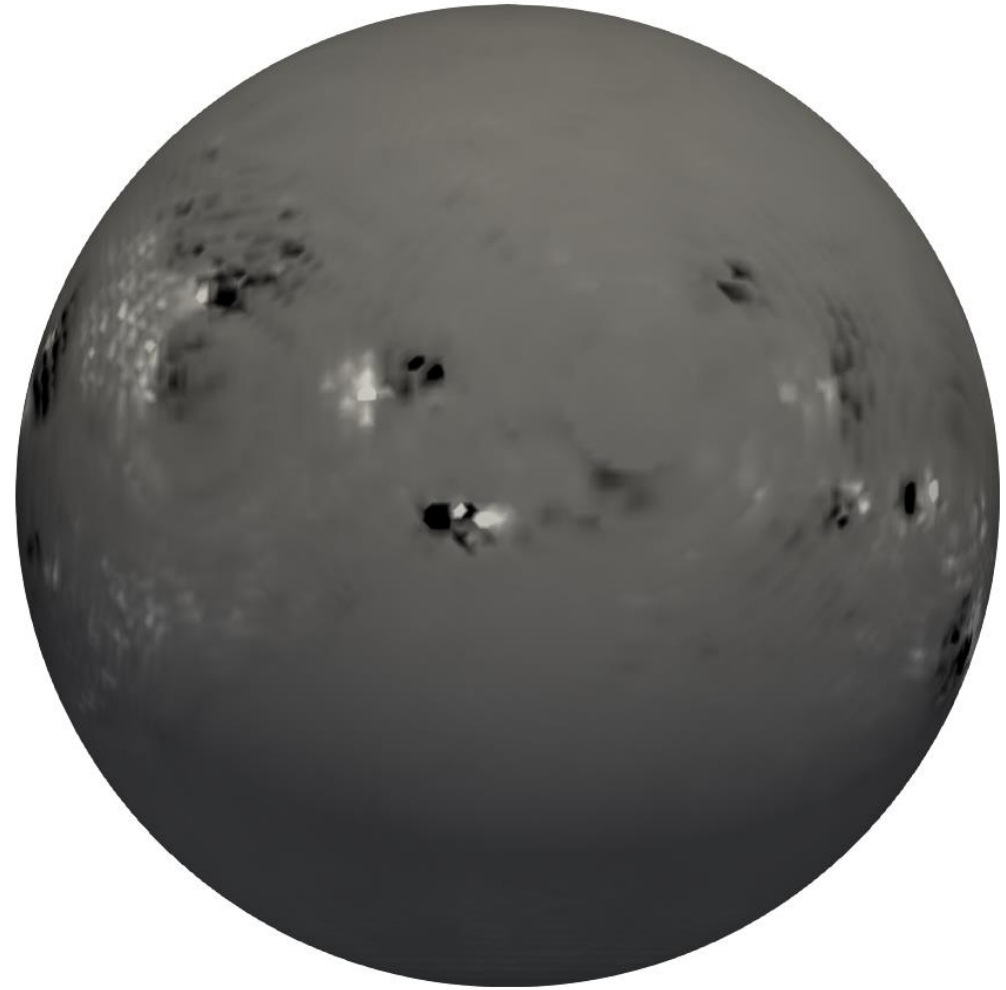
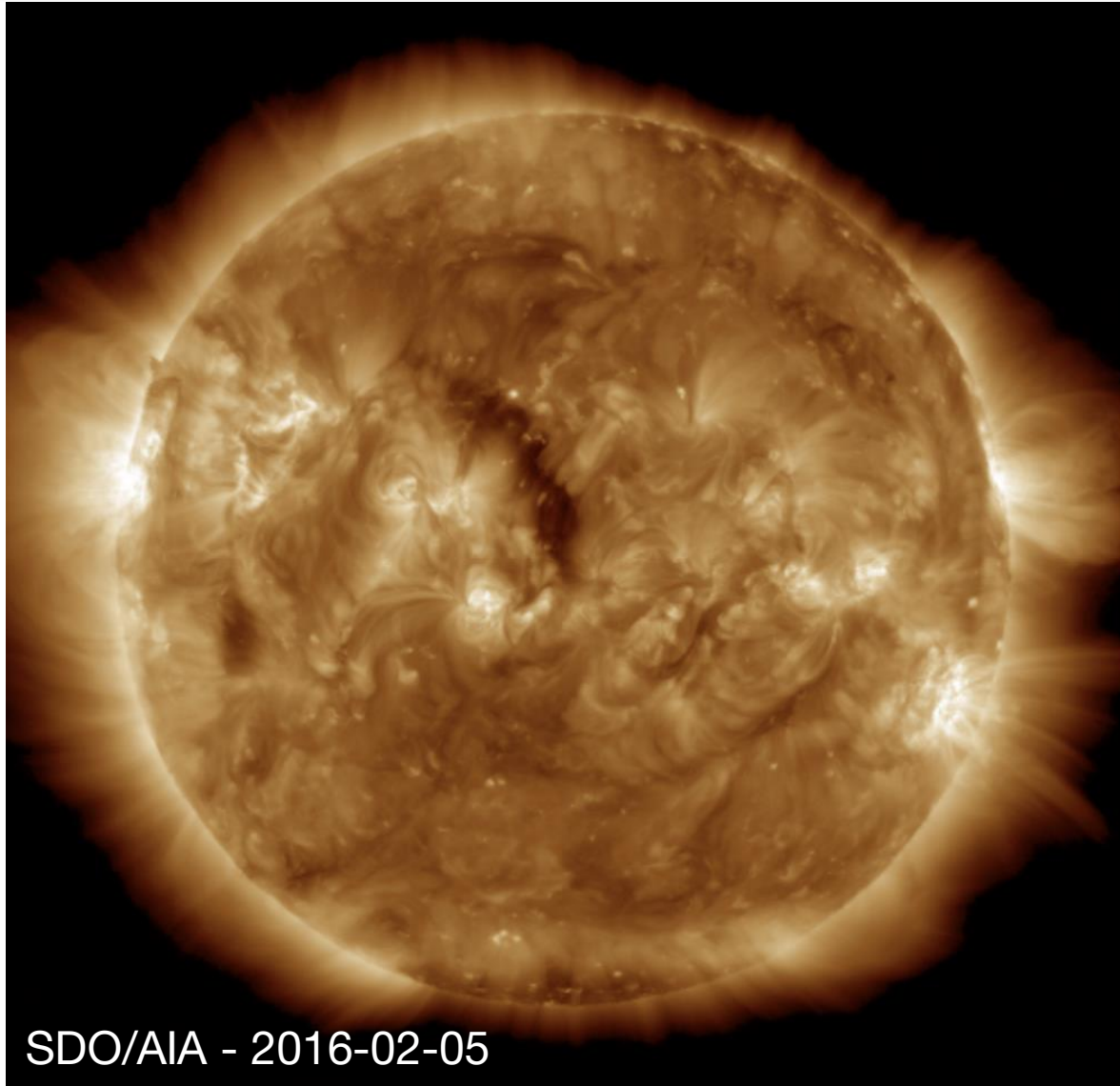


# Outlook: Density and Temperature reconstructions

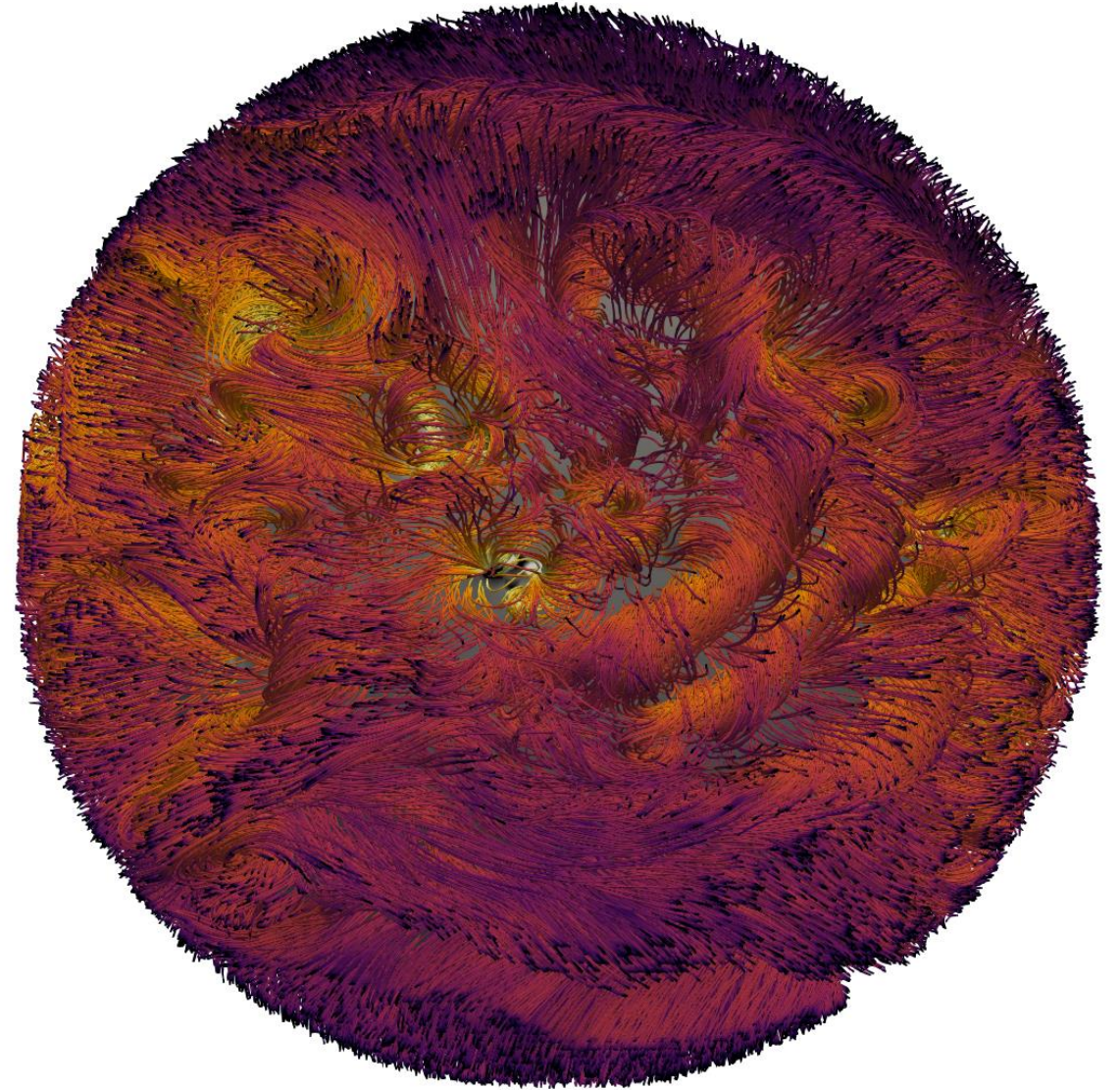
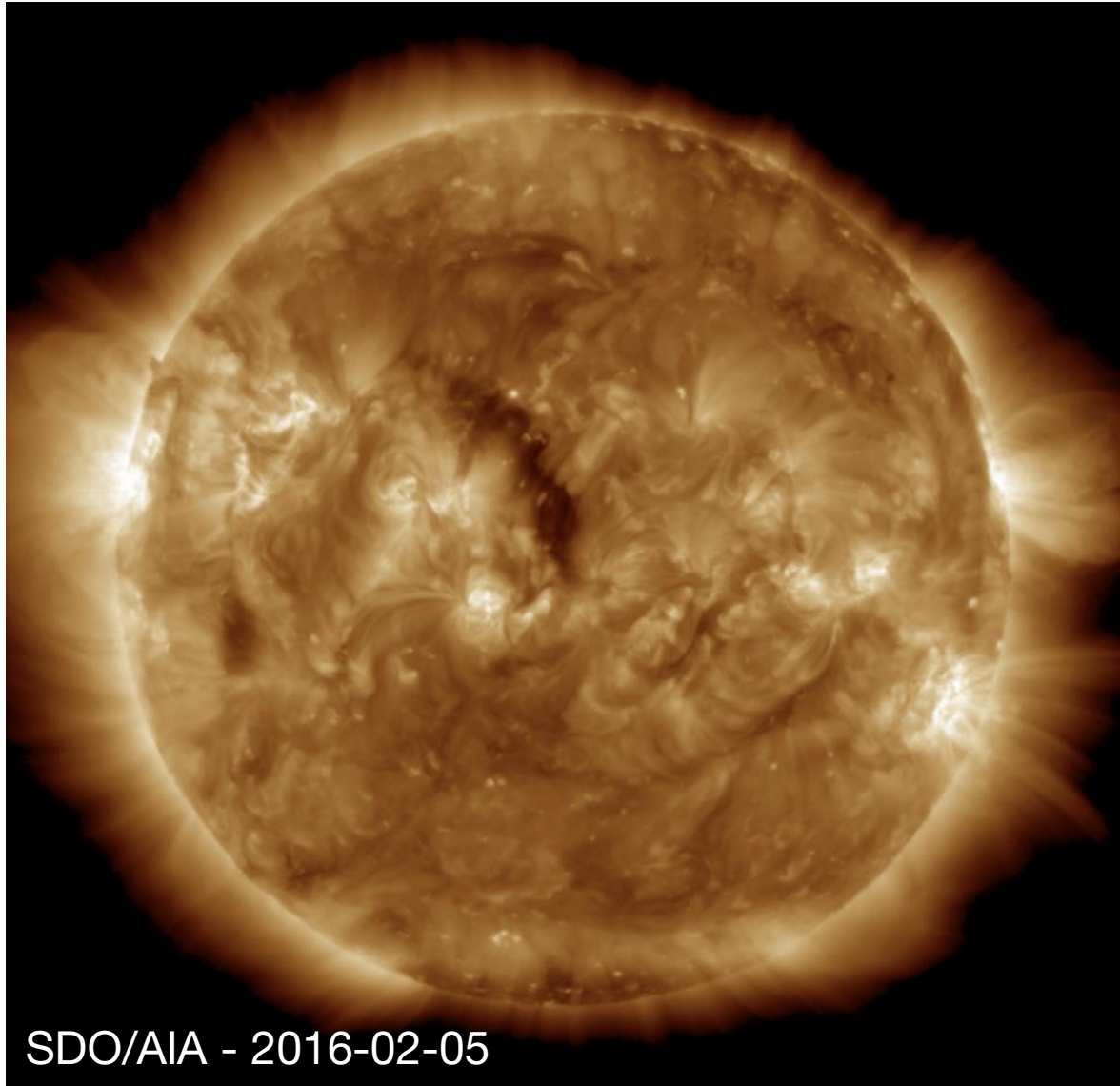
- Tomographic reconstruction of **electron density and temperature** through the **temperature response function**
- Directly combines observations of SDO/AIA and Solar Orbiter/EUI
- 3D density reconstruction of Coronal Hole Boundaries, Active Regions, and Filaments
- a) emission measure; b) rendered SDO/AIA filtergram; c) slice through 3D atmosphere



# Global Extrapolations of the solar magnetic field

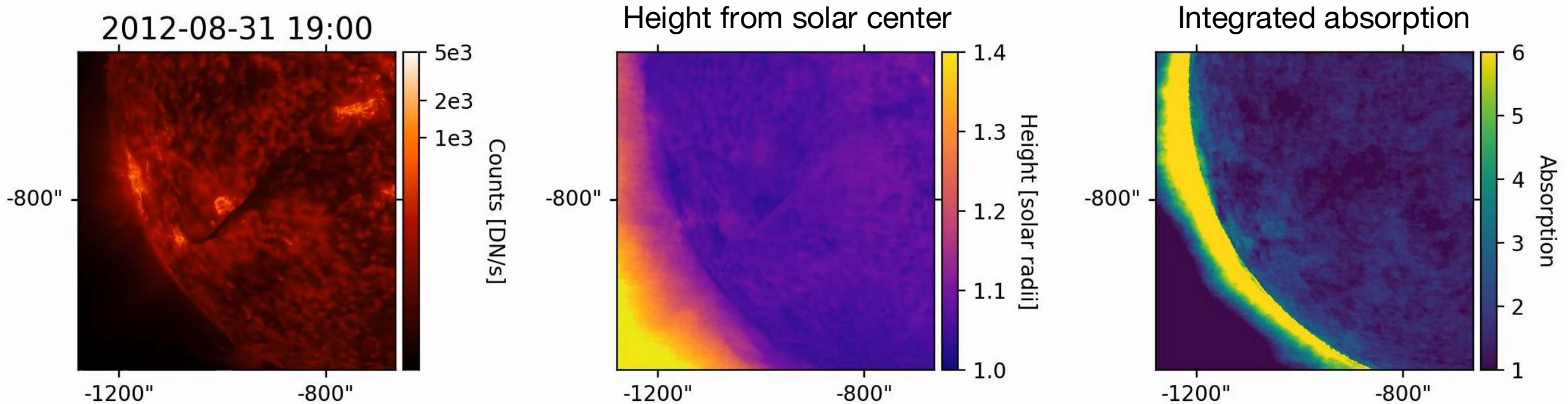


# Global Extrapolations of the solar magnetic field



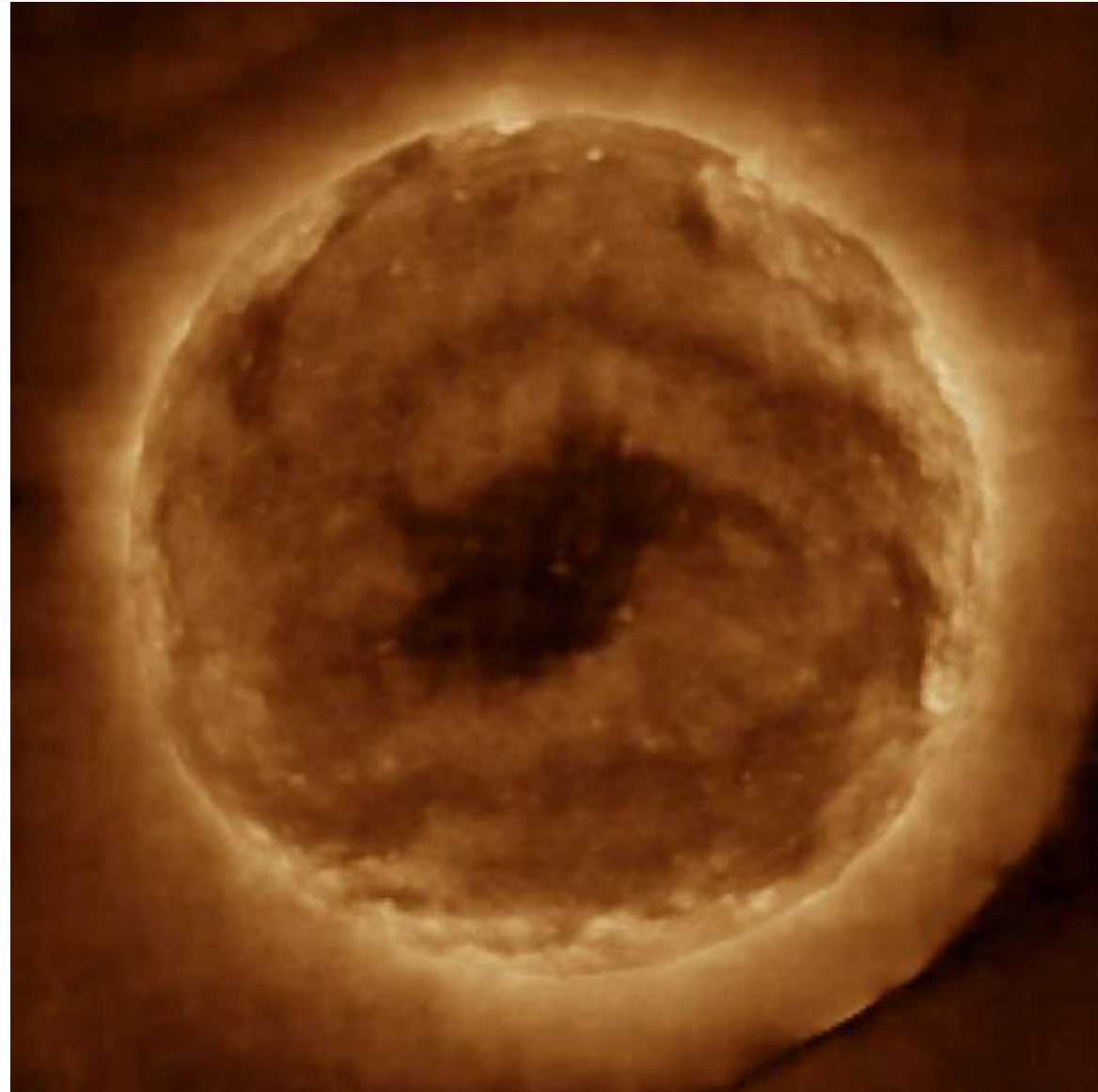
# Application to Filament Eruption (Jarolim et al. 2024)

- White-light and EUV observations could be combined into a single 3D reconstruction
- 3D reconstruction of filament eruption
- Reconstruction from 2 viewpoints (SDO/AIA + STEREO-A/EUVI)



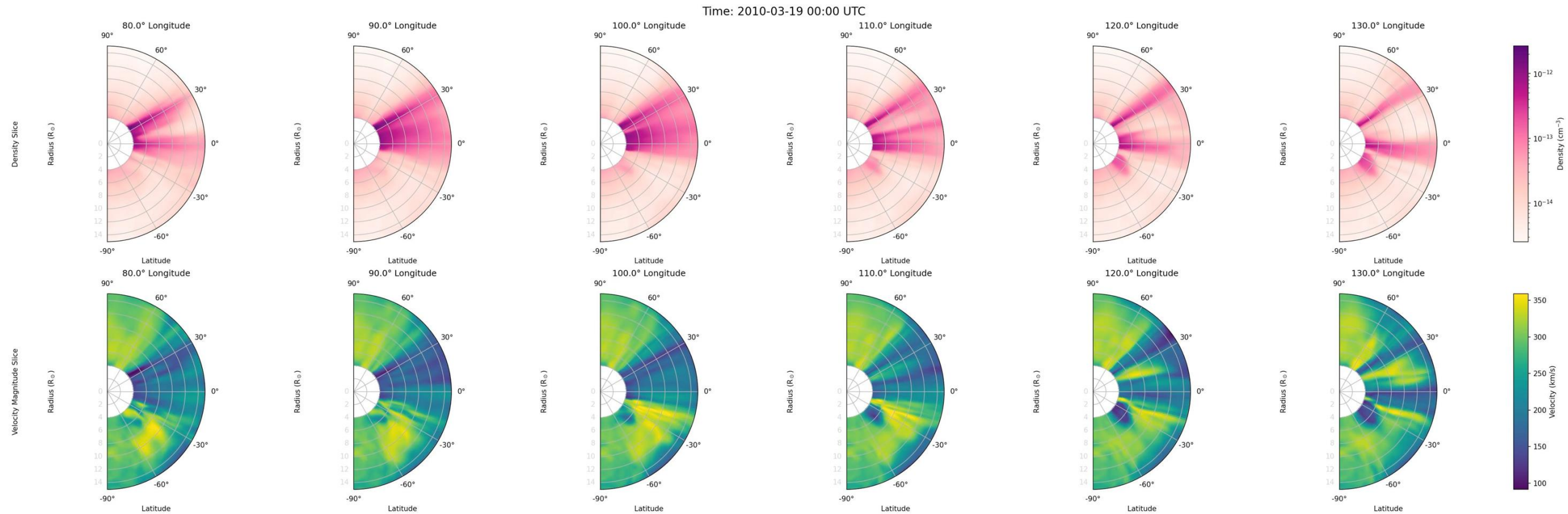
# Estimated Polar Viewpoint

- Temporal evolution of reconstructed polar observations ( $-90^\circ$  lat) over 14 days - AIA 193 Å EUV render
- Feasibility of polar reconstructions
  - Extended solar atmosphere
  - Viewpoint coverage
  - Limited applicability for photosphere

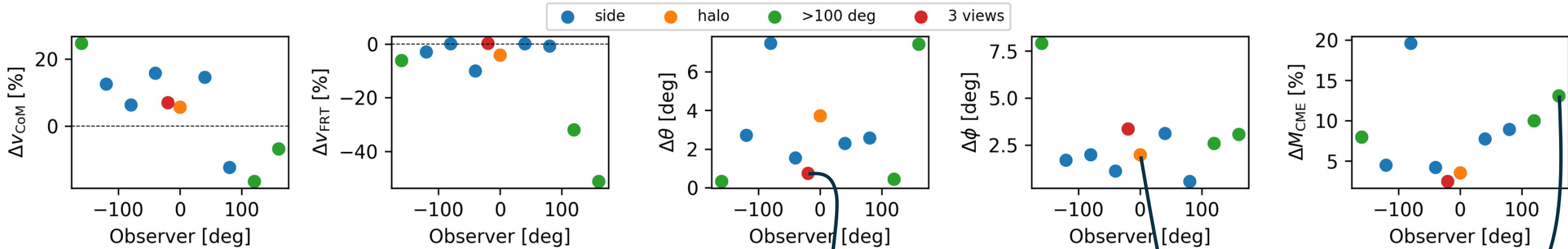


# Outlook: Application to Observations - STEREO

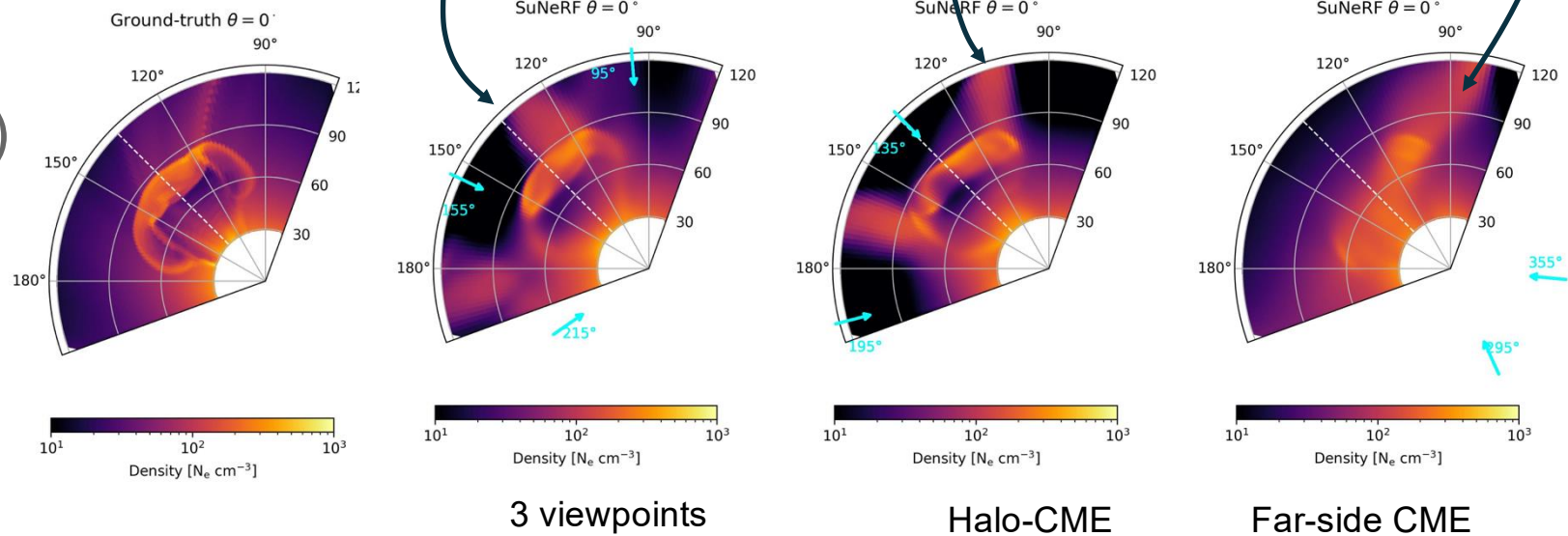
- Reconstruction based on: **STREREO-A/COR2, STREREO-B/COR2**
- Video: slices at constant longitude of **electron density** (top) and **velocity** (bottom)



# Derived CME parameters – 2 viewpoints



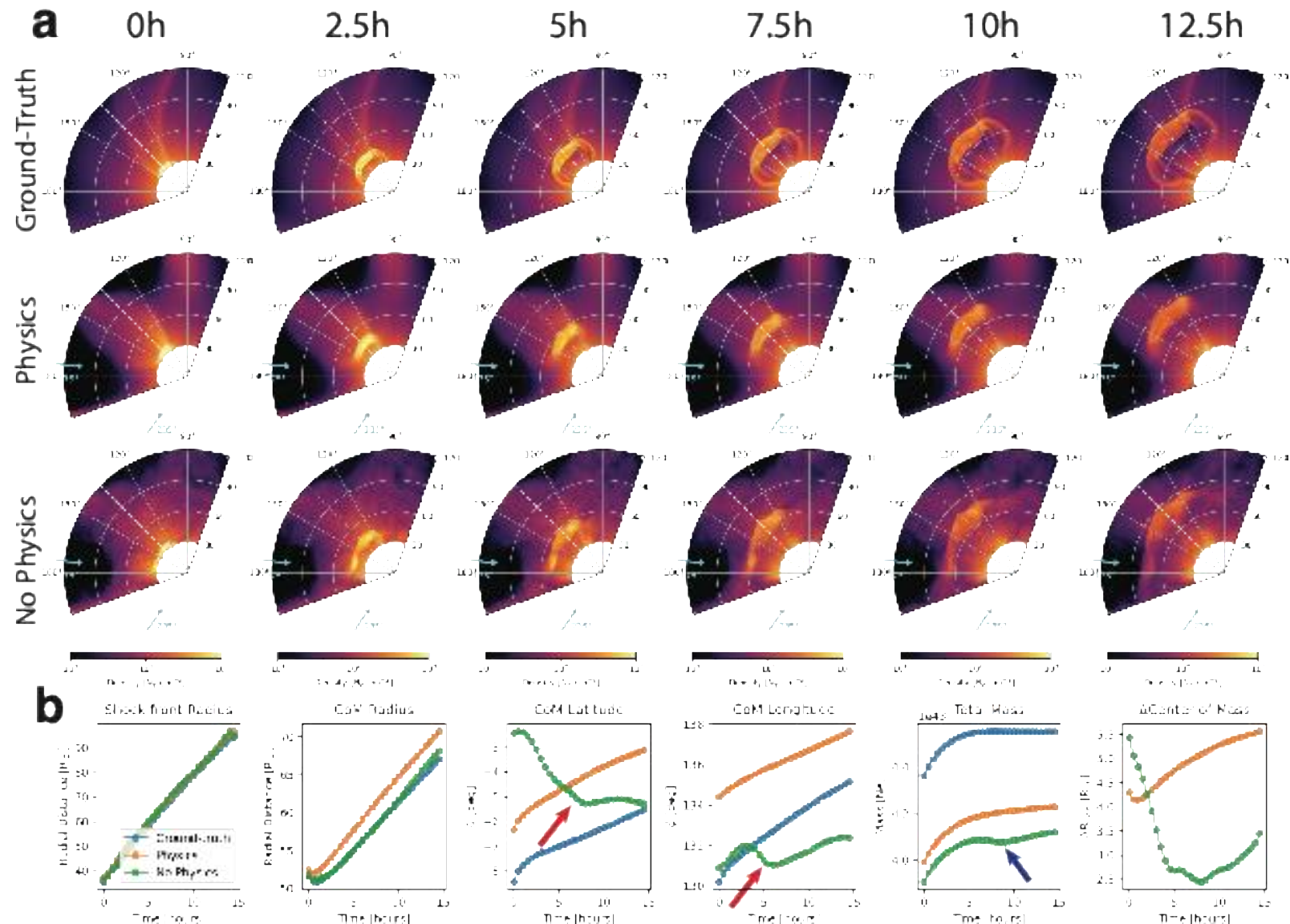
- CME parameters based on 2 observers from different viewpoints ( $60^\circ$  separation) ( $0^\circ$ =full halo CME)
- $<100^\circ$  separation to CME:
  - $\Delta$ Velocity (front): -3%
  - $\Delta$ Mass: 8%
  - $\Delta$ Latitude:  $3^\circ$
  - $\Delta$ Longitude:  $2^\circ$



# Importance of Physics Constraints

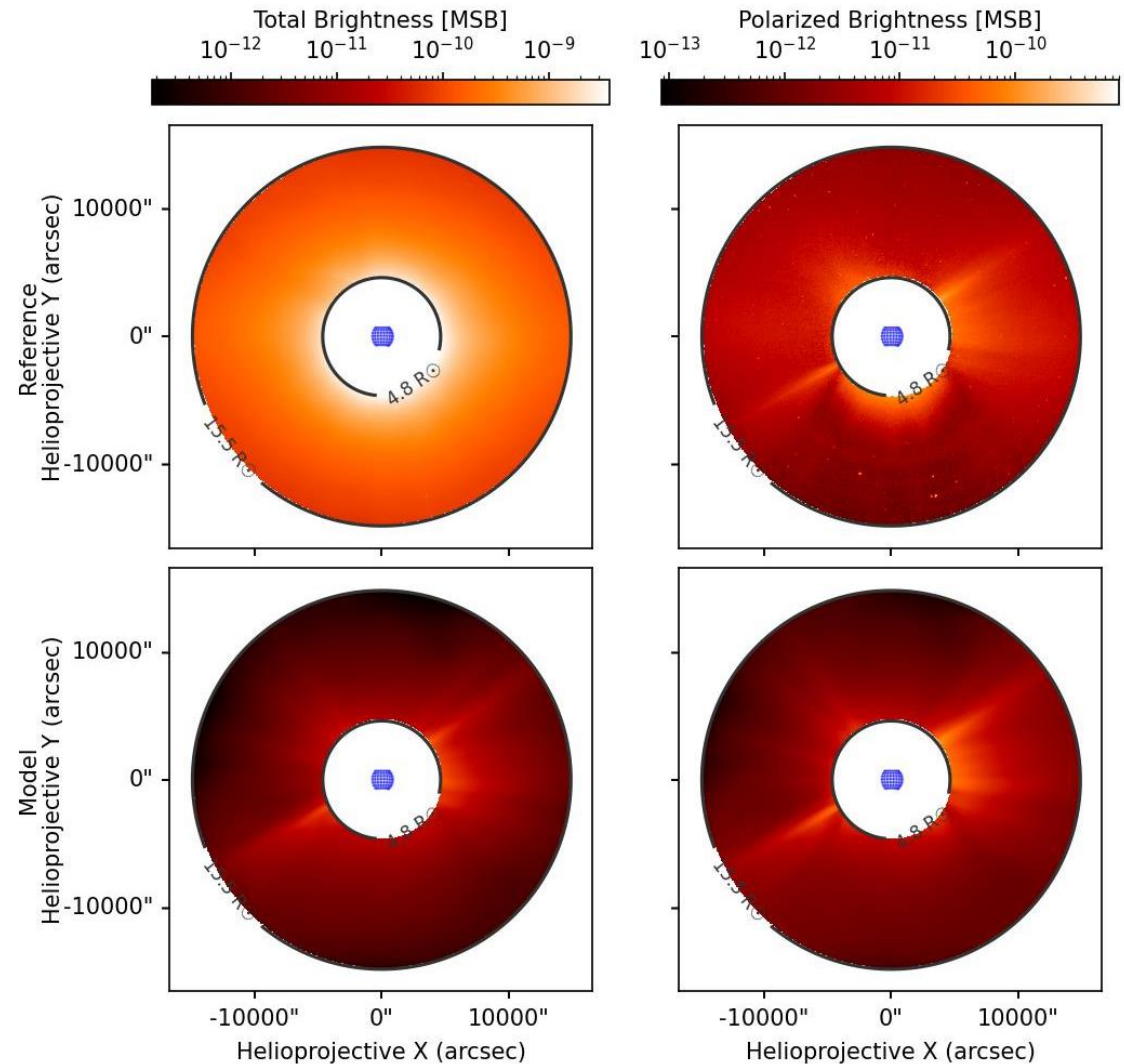
- Physics constraints **improve consistency** of reconstructions
- Reconstructions without physics show:
  - Spurious drift of center-of-mass
  - Variable mass
  - Potential ghost trajectory
  - Fuzzy background

- a) Slices through ecliptic plane
- b) Evolution of CME parameters



# Outlook: Application to Observations

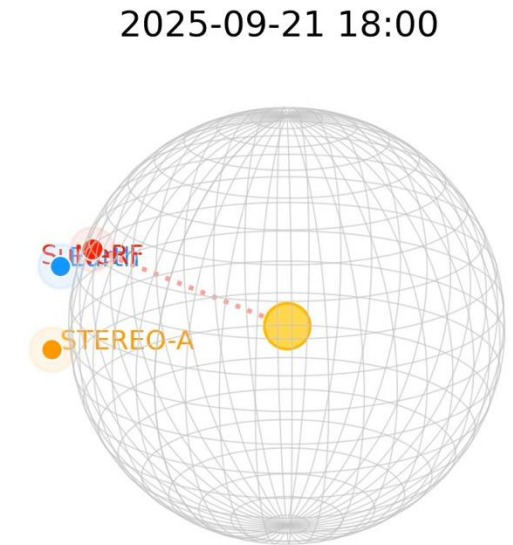
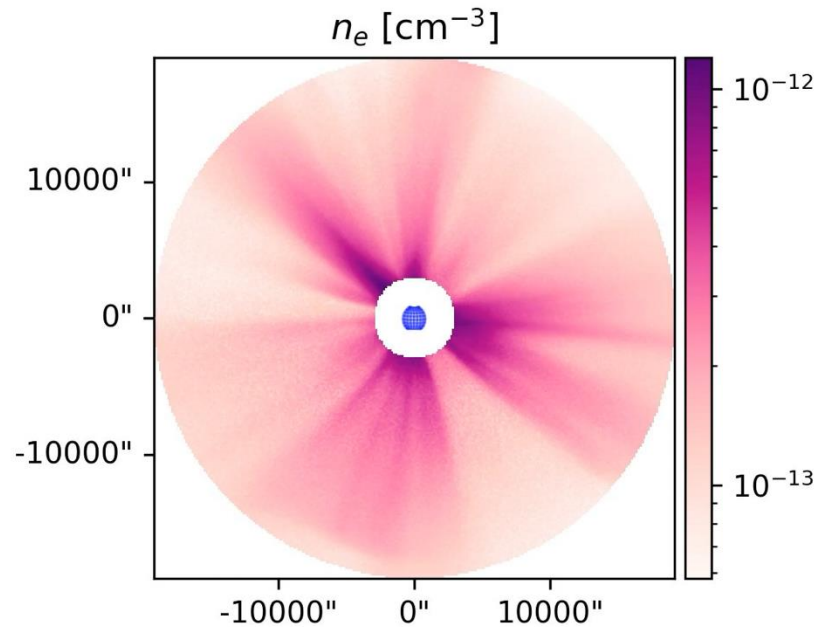
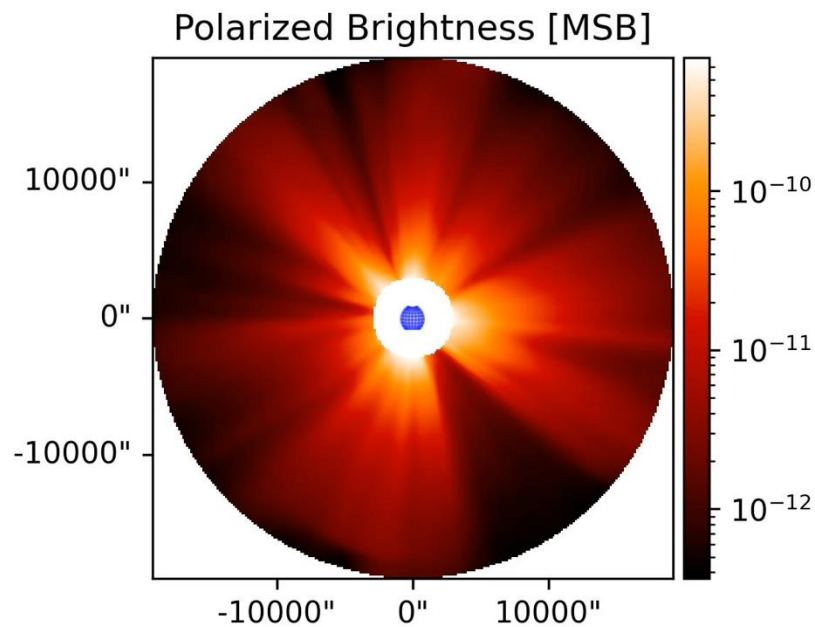
- Observational data has artifacts, calibration issues, and F-corona contributions
- We include additional learnable correction masks  $\rightarrow$  separate artifacts from data intrinsically
- Example: STEREO-A
  - Top: raw data
  - Bottom: forward rendered images from 3D reconstruction



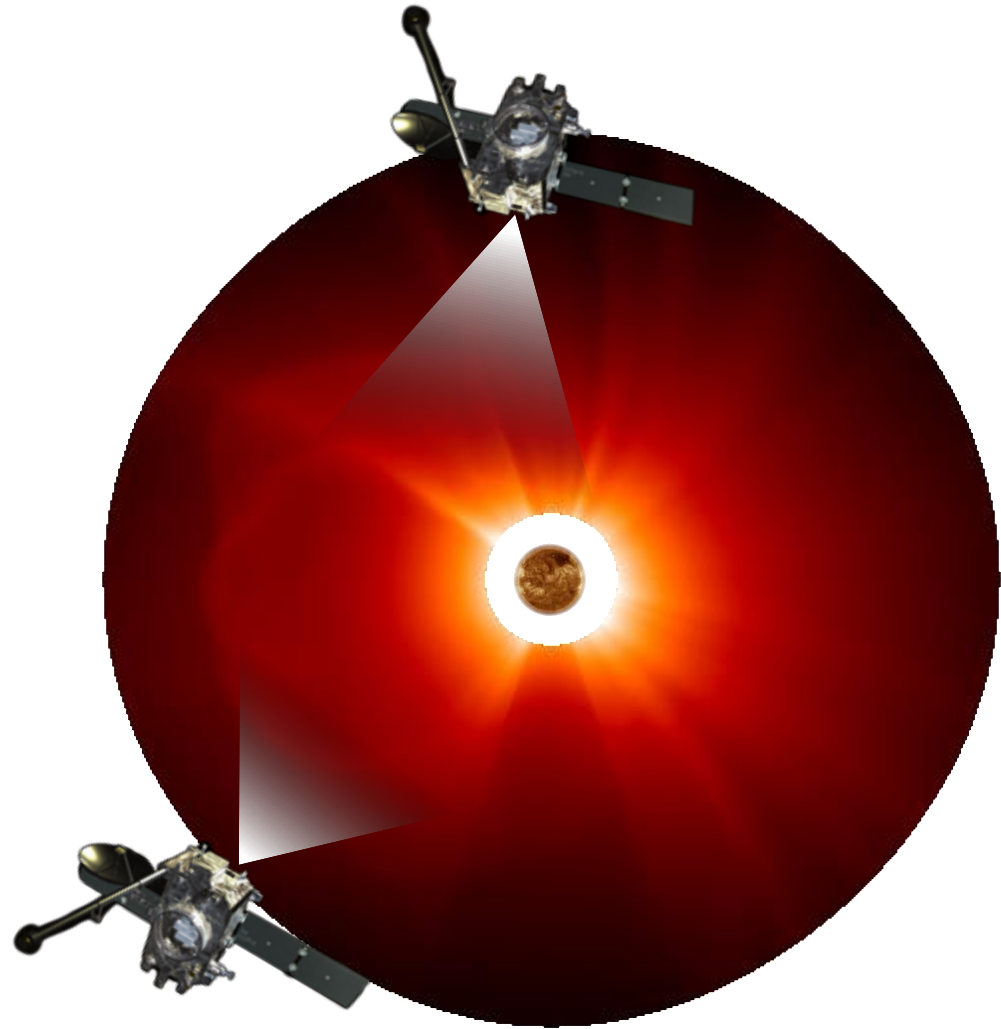
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Latitude (HCI): 7.3 deg, Longitude (HCI): -90.8 deg, Time: 2025-09-21 18:00

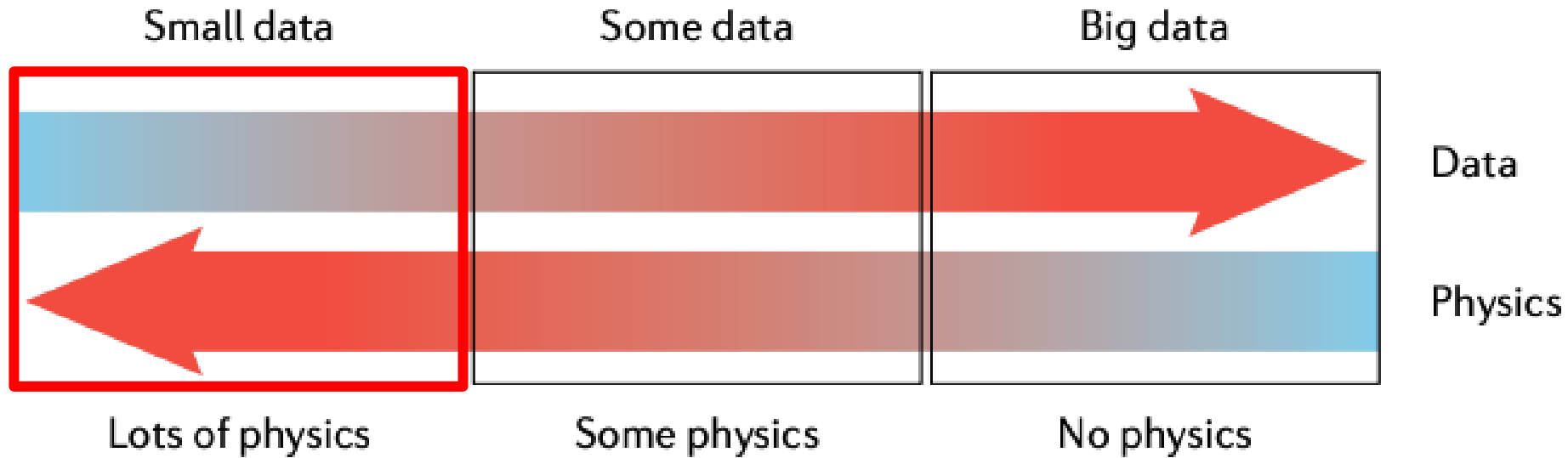


# Tomographic reconstruction with Physics-Informed Neural Radiance Fields

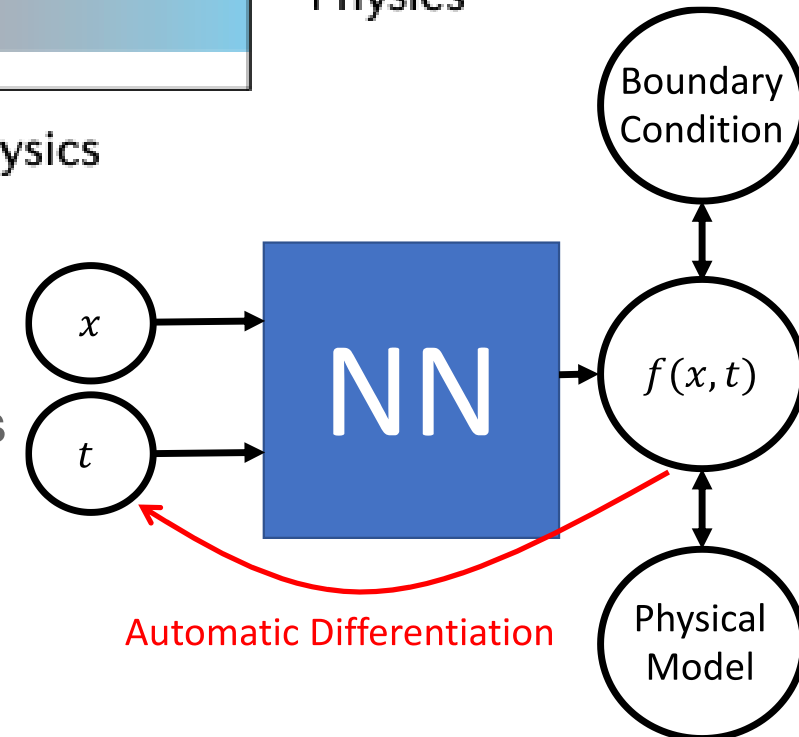


- Coronal observations are difficult to interpret
  - Human fitting can be **subjective**  
(e.g., triangulation, CGS reconstruction; Verbeke et al. 2022)
- **Tomography:** Use observations from **multiple viewpoints** to reconstruct the **3D plasma distribution** in the corona and heliosphere.

# Tomographic reconstruction with Physics-Informed Neural Radiance Fields

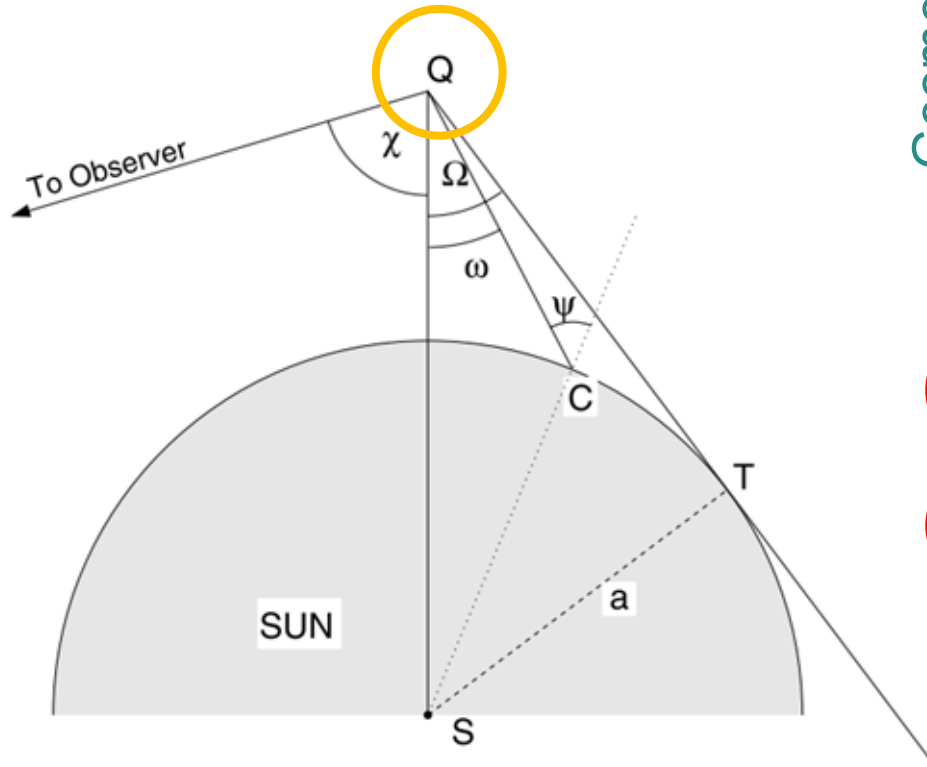


- Small data: known **physics** and **boundary condition**
- **Solver method** for **Partial Differential Equations (PDEs)**
- Incorporate additional physics constraints to overcome limitations
- Neural network acts as function approximation of simulation/reconstruction volume



# Tomographic reconstructions

## Thomson Scattering



Geometry

$$A = \cos \Omega \sin^2 \Omega,$$

$$B = -\frac{1}{8} \left[ 1 - 3 \sin^2 \Omega - \frac{\cos^2 \Omega}{\sin \Omega} (1 + 3 \sin^2 \Omega) \ln \left( \frac{1 + \sin \Omega}{\cos \Omega} \right) \right],$$

$$C = \frac{4}{3} - \cos \Omega - \frac{\cos^3 \Omega}{3},$$

$$D = \frac{1}{8} \left[ 5 + \sin^2 \Omega - \frac{\cos^2 \Omega}{\sin \Omega} (5 - \sin^2 \Omega) \ln \left( \frac{1 + \sin \Omega}{\cos \Omega} \right) \right].$$

$$I_T = I_0 \frac{\pi \sigma_e}{2z^2} [(1 - u)C + uD]$$

$$I_P = I_0 \frac{\pi \sigma_e}{2z^2} \sin^2 \chi [(1 - u)A + uB]$$

$$I_{tot} = 2I_T - I_P$$

Observed brightness depends on scattering **geometry**

**Ghost trajectories** can be unphysical solutions (DeForest et al. 2013)

Observed brightness and temporal evolution provides spatial information

Howard, Timothy A., and S. James Tappin. "Interplanetary coronal mass ejections observed in the heliosphere: 1. Review of theory." *Space science reviews* 147 (2009): 31-54.