

# A Direct Imager's Guide to Debris Disks

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**STScI** | SPACE TELESCOPE  
SCIENCE INSTITUTE

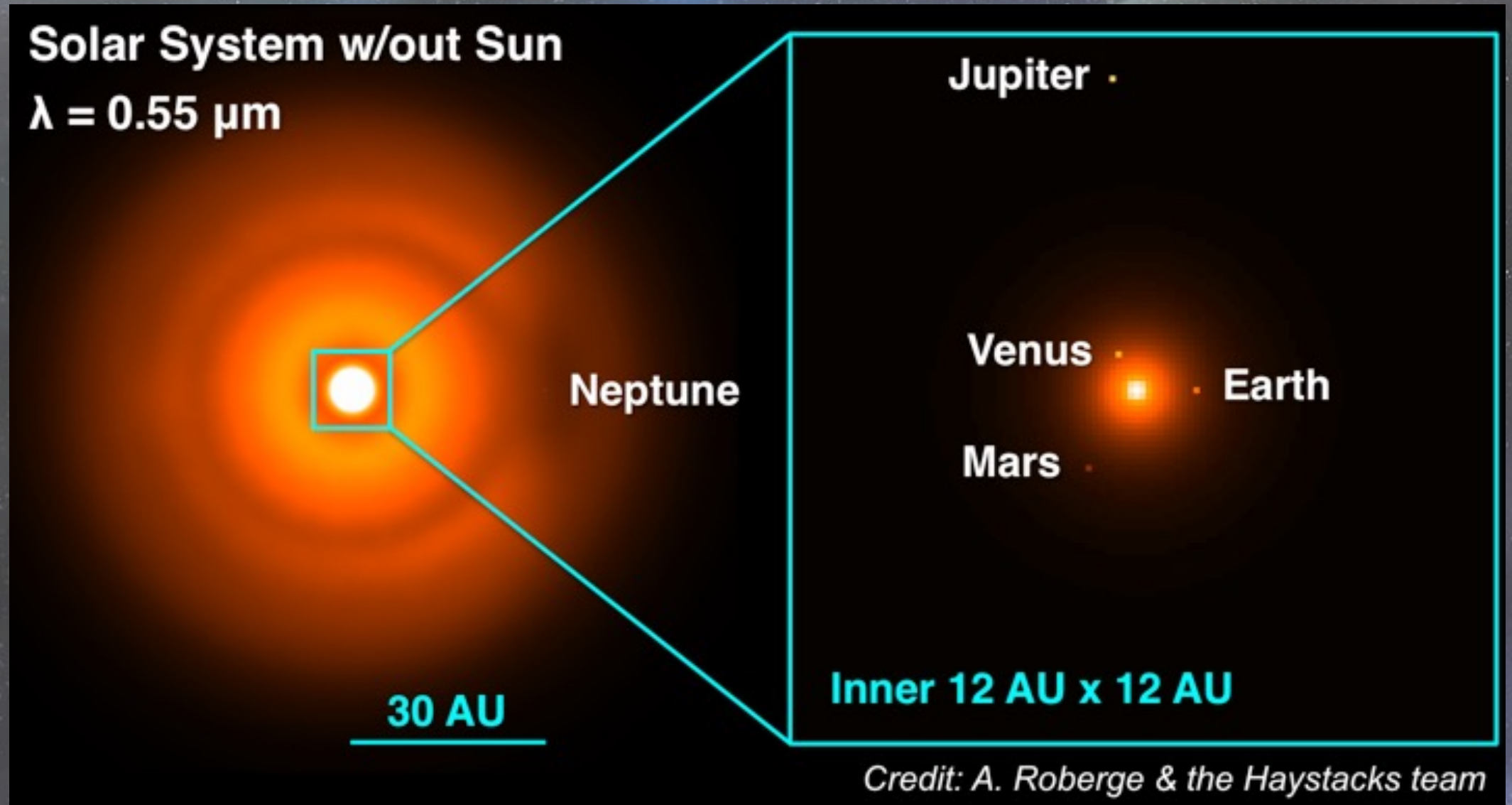


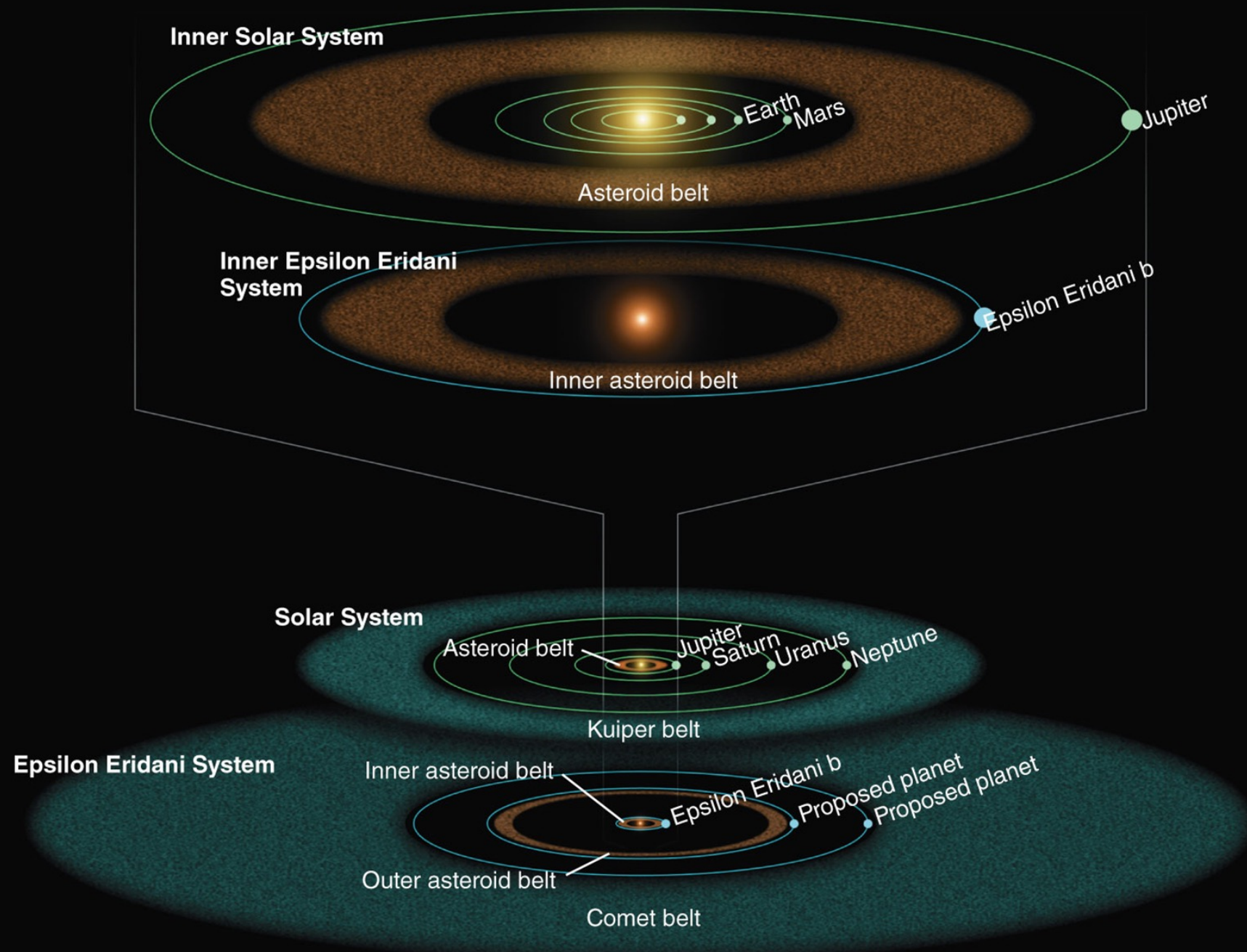
# Circumstellar dust samples the environment of stars



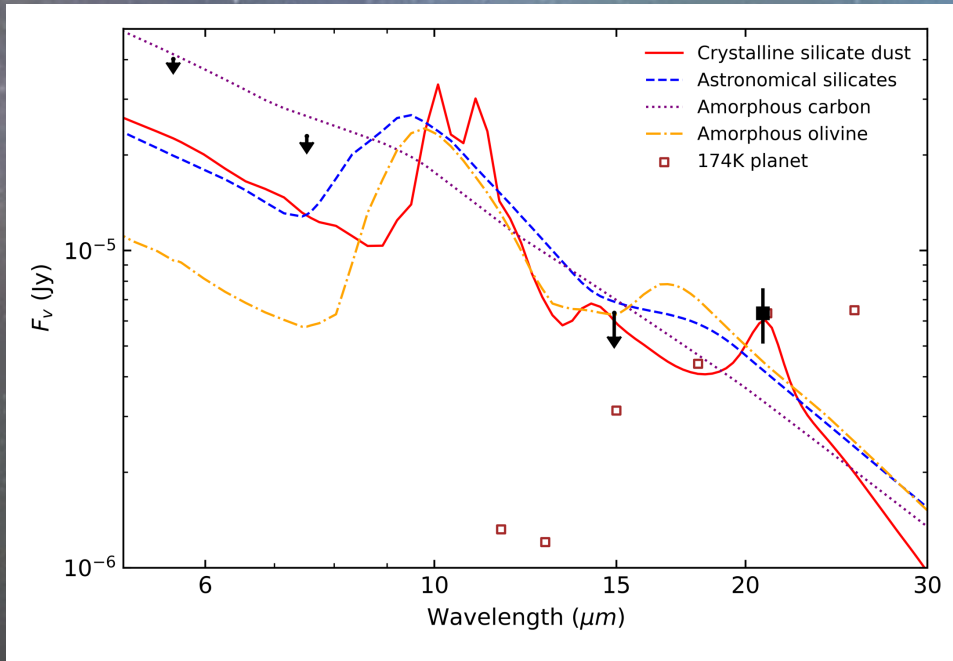
(c) Talbot Wilson

# Debris Disks—a diversity of types

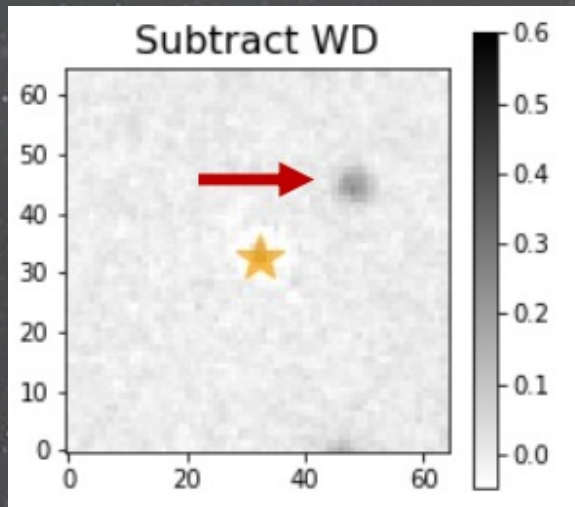




## White Dwarf Debris Disks

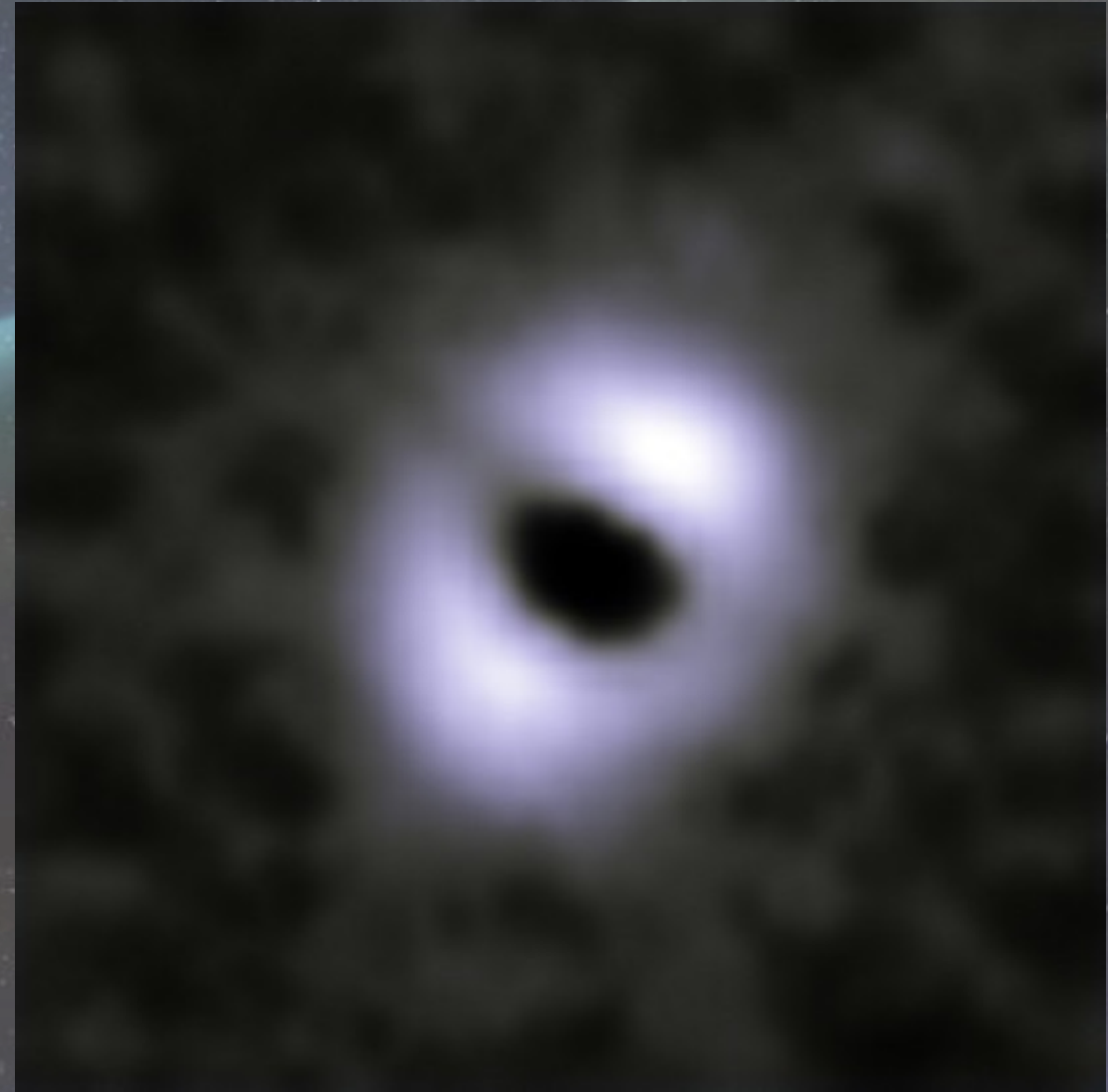


## White Dwarf Planets with JWST?



Messier et al., (in prep.); Mullally et al., (2024)

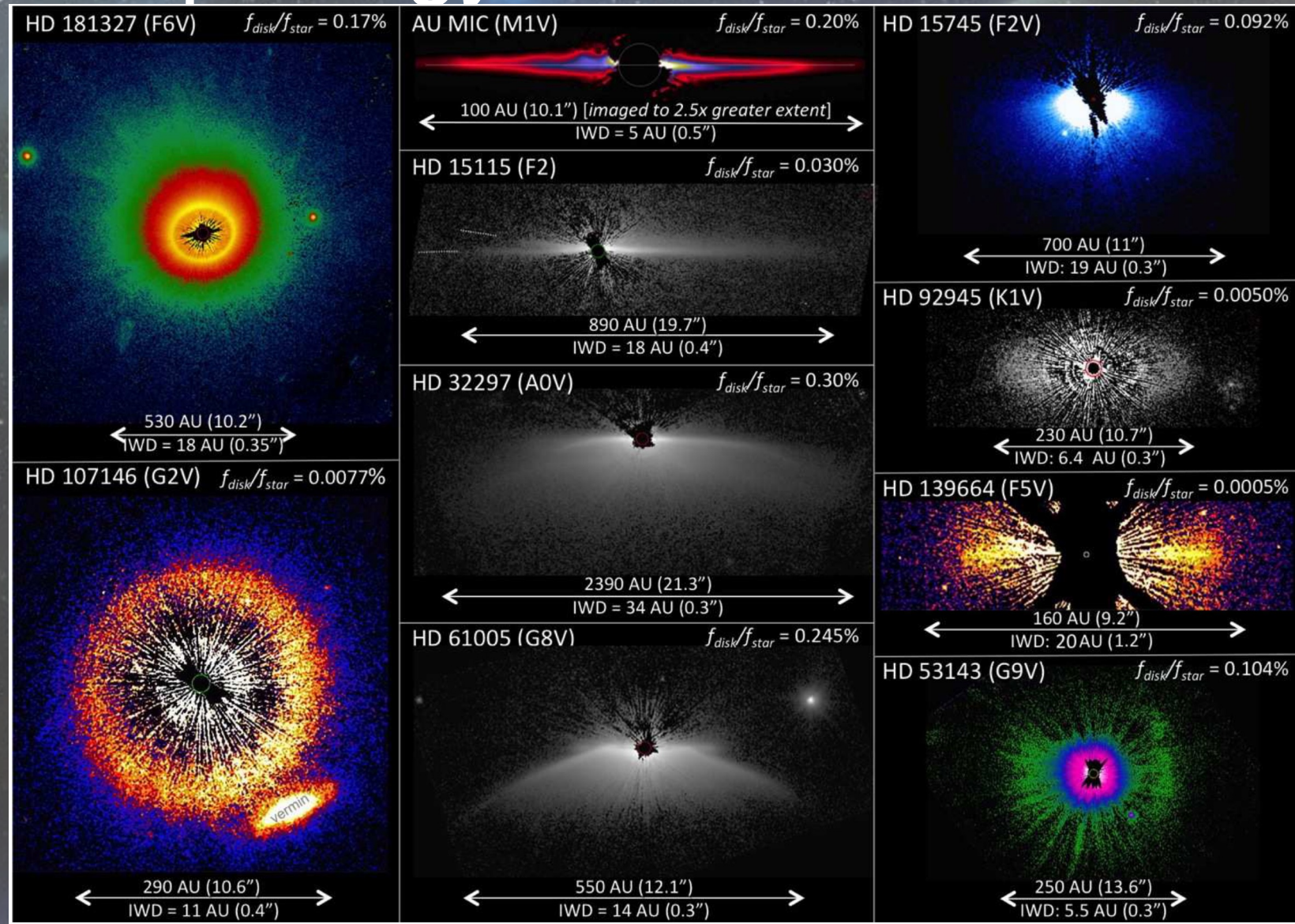
## Giant Star Debris Disks



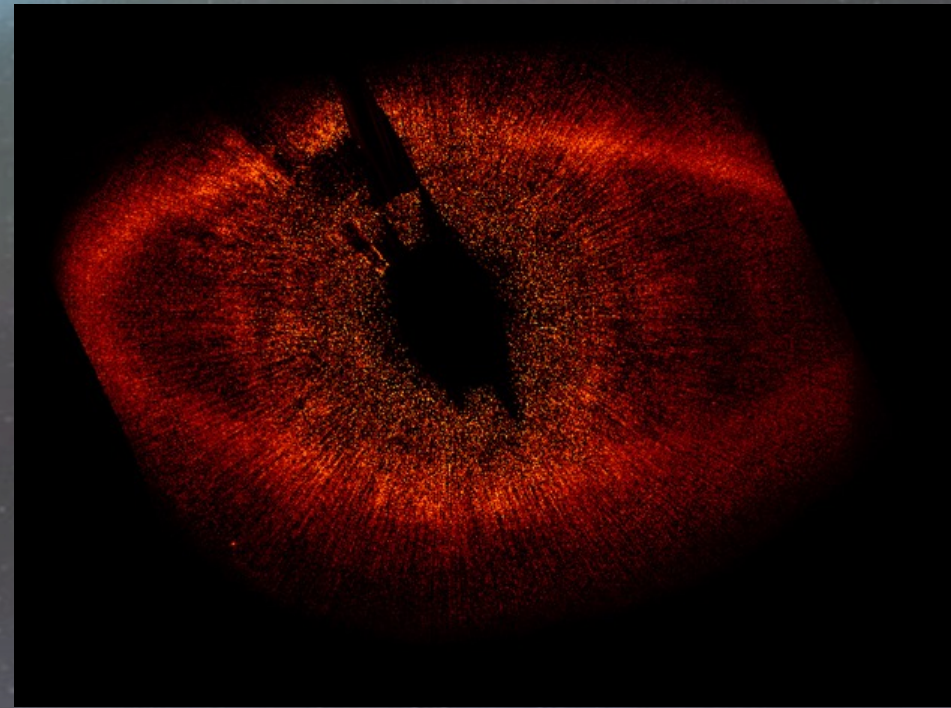
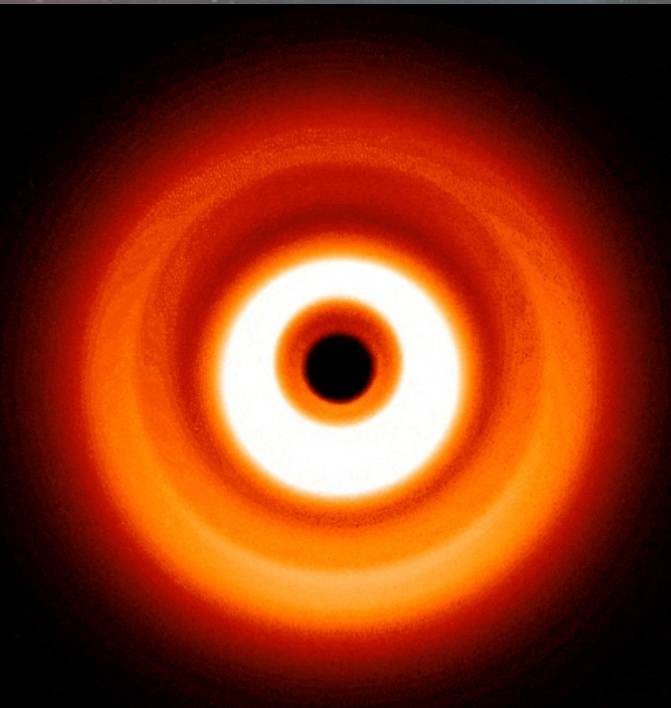
Credit: A.Bonsor/ESA

Posters: 23 Hosseinezhad; 51 Voyer

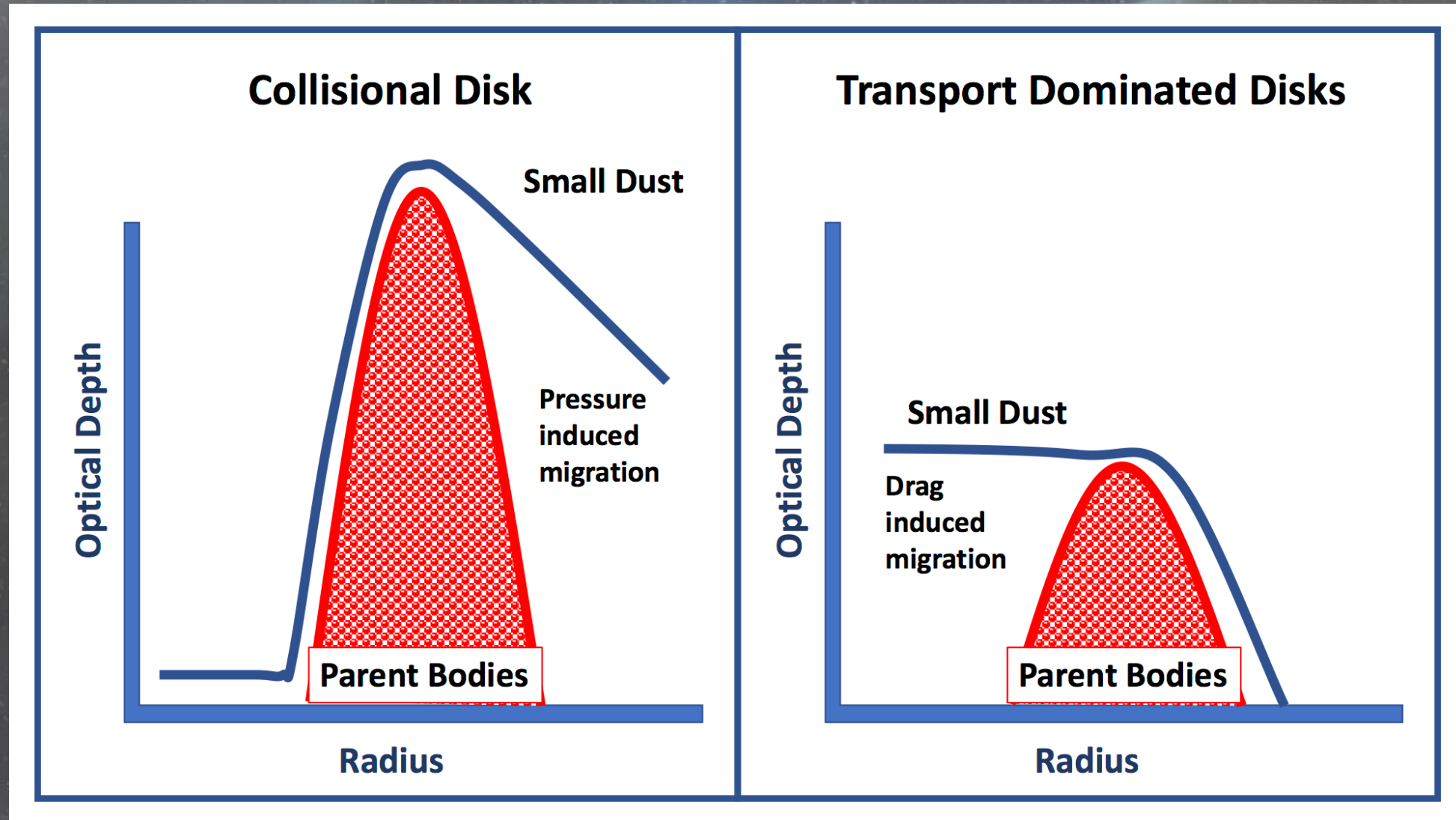
# Diverse morphology



# Simple(?) Explanation



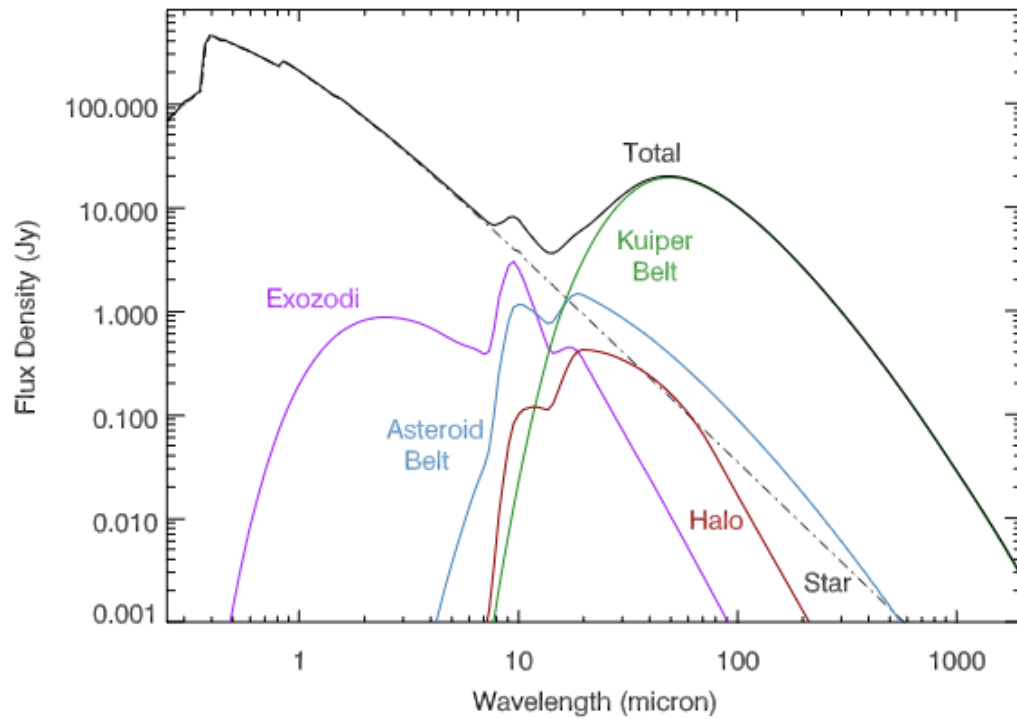
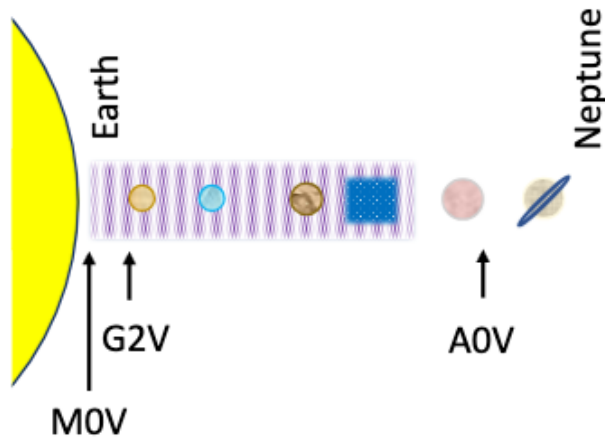
# Simple(?) Explanation



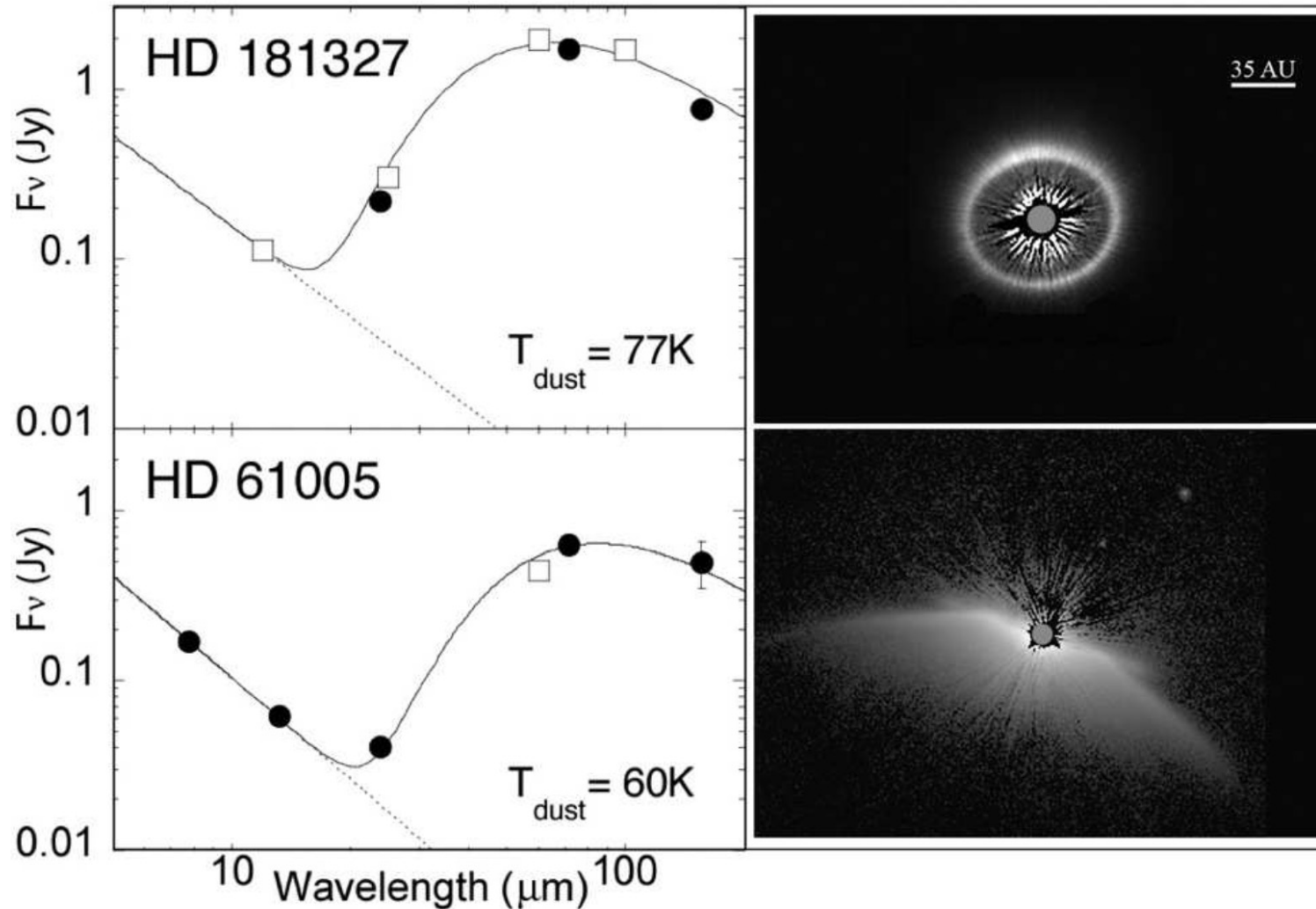


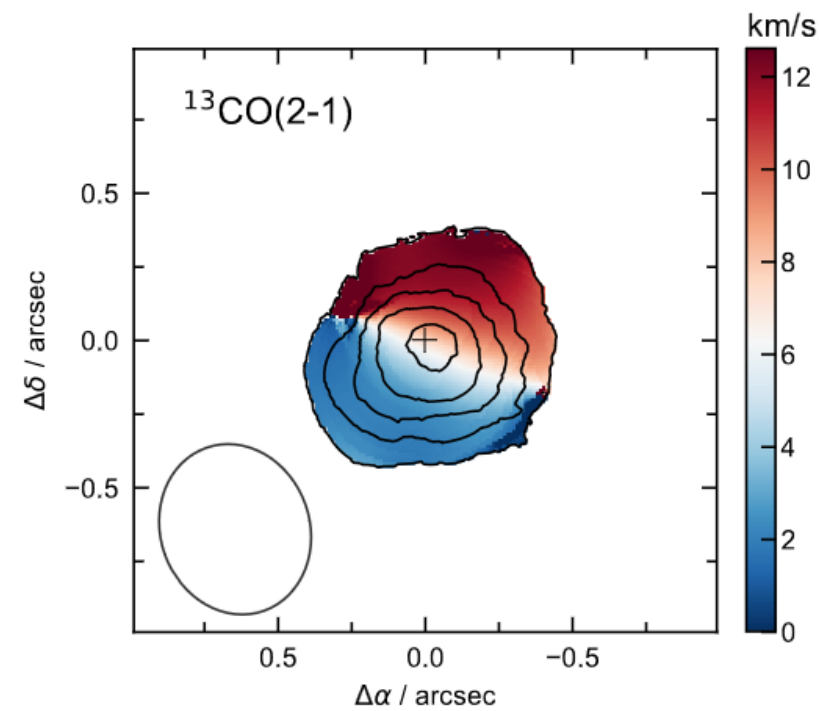
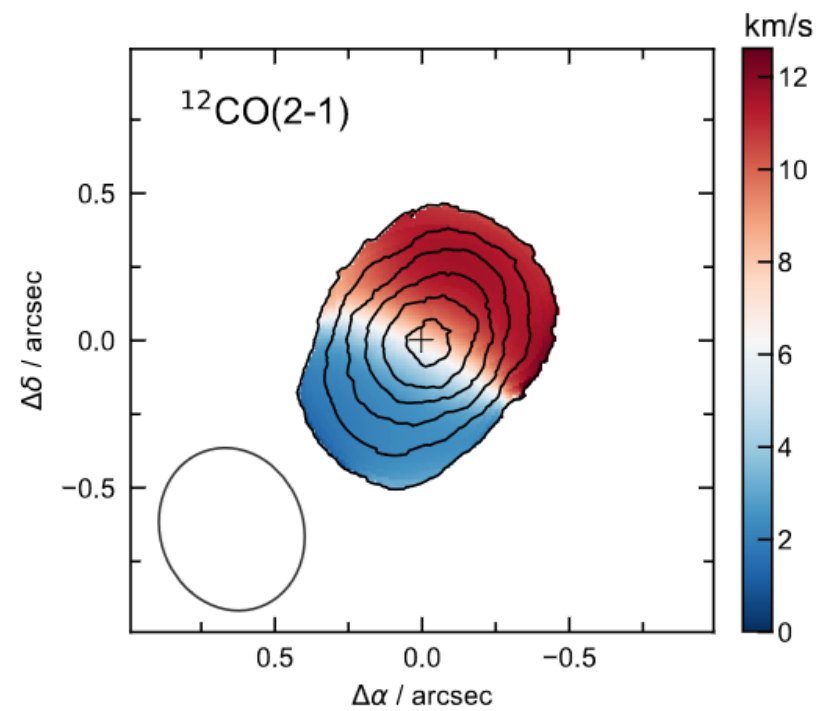
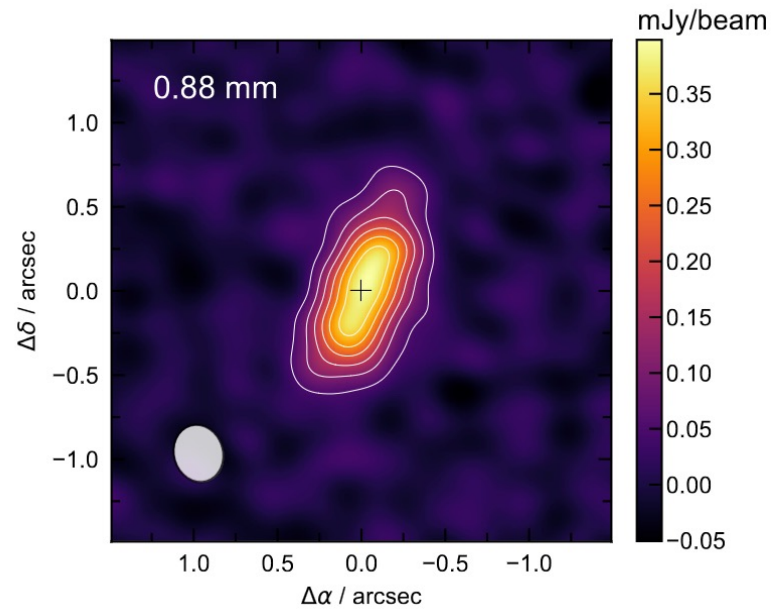
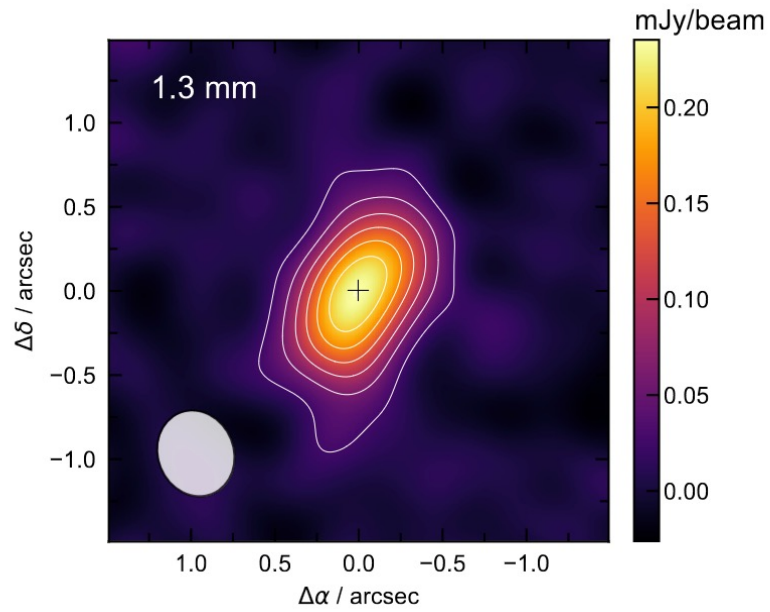
# Observing Disks

- Exozodi – small grains
- Asteroid Belt analogue
- Kuiper Belt analogue
- Halo – small grains



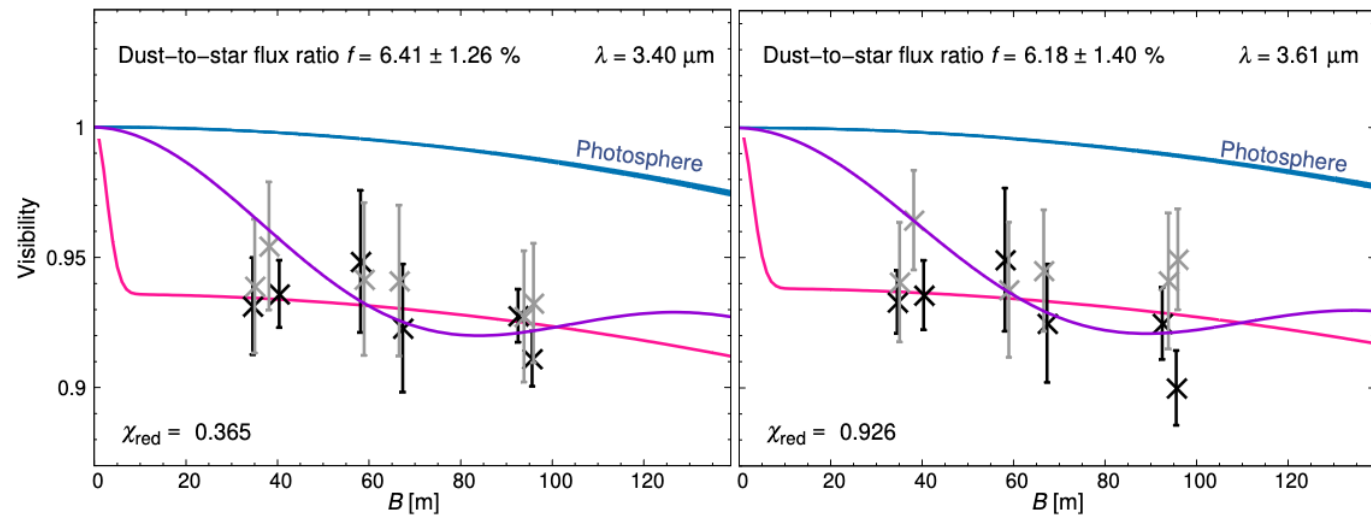
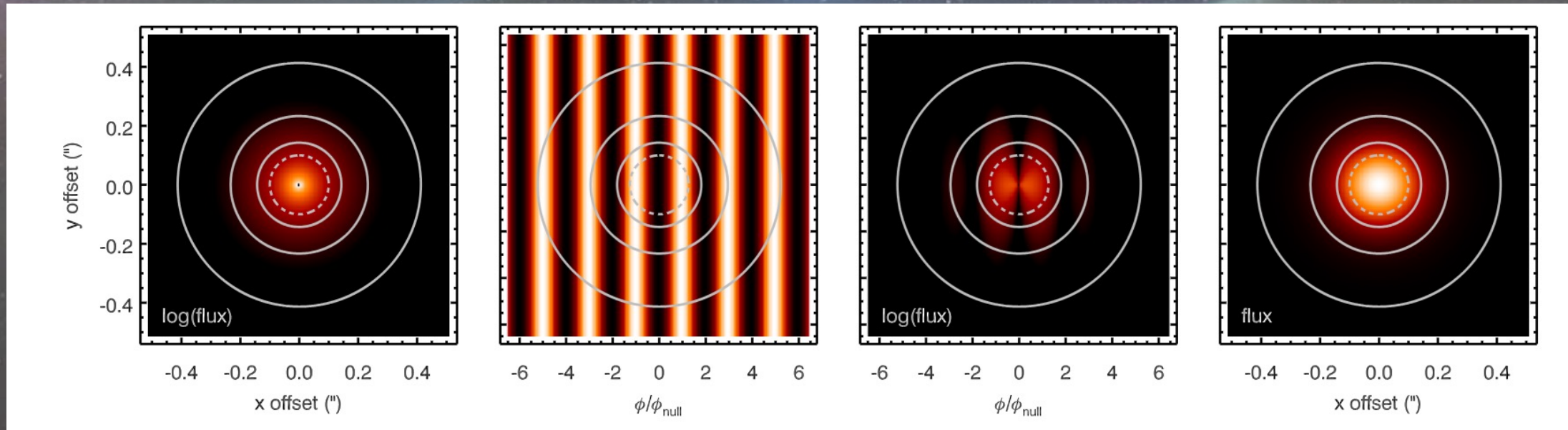
# SEDs are limited in interpreting morphology





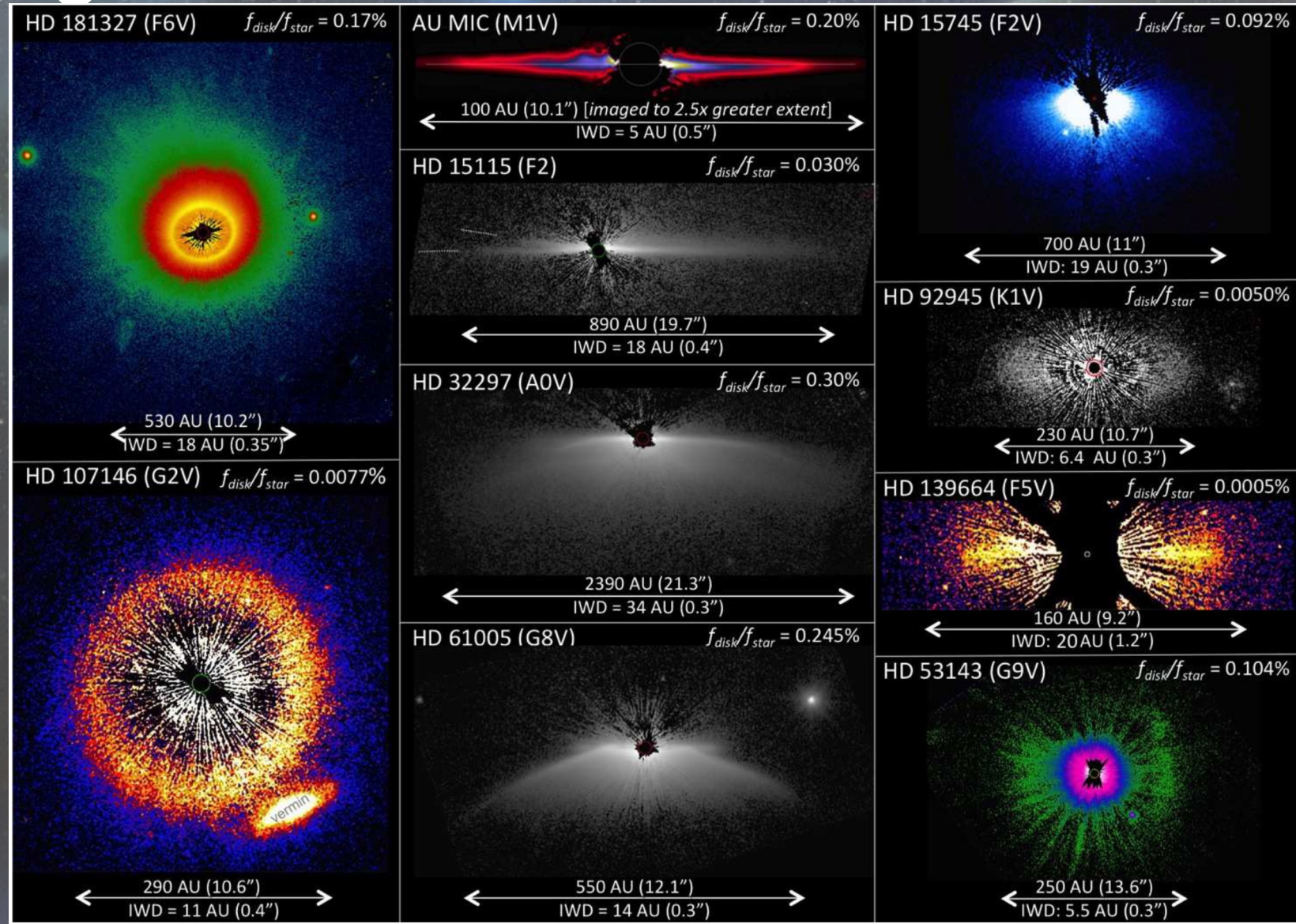
# Observing disks

Ertel et al., (2018b)

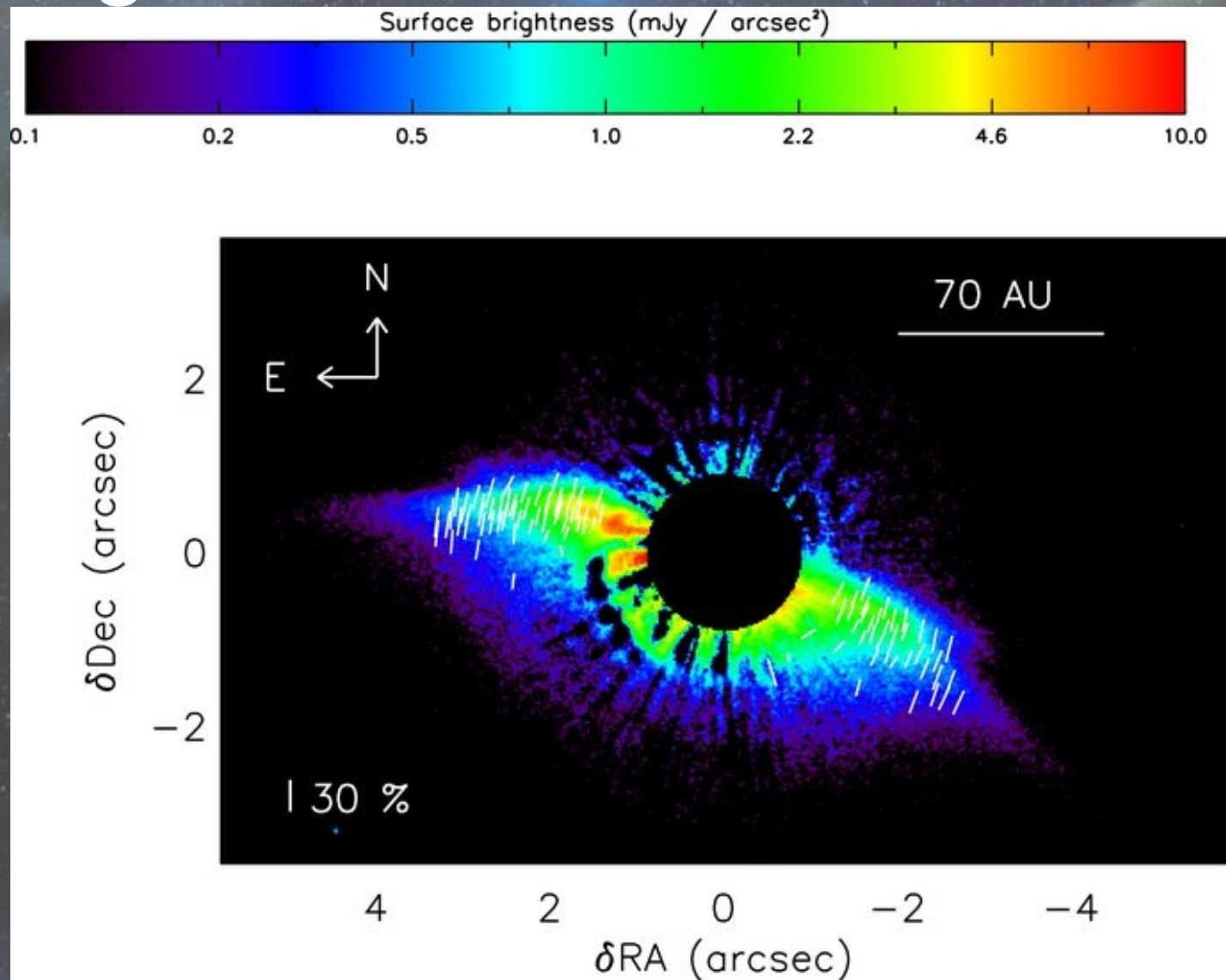


Kirchsclager et al., (2020)

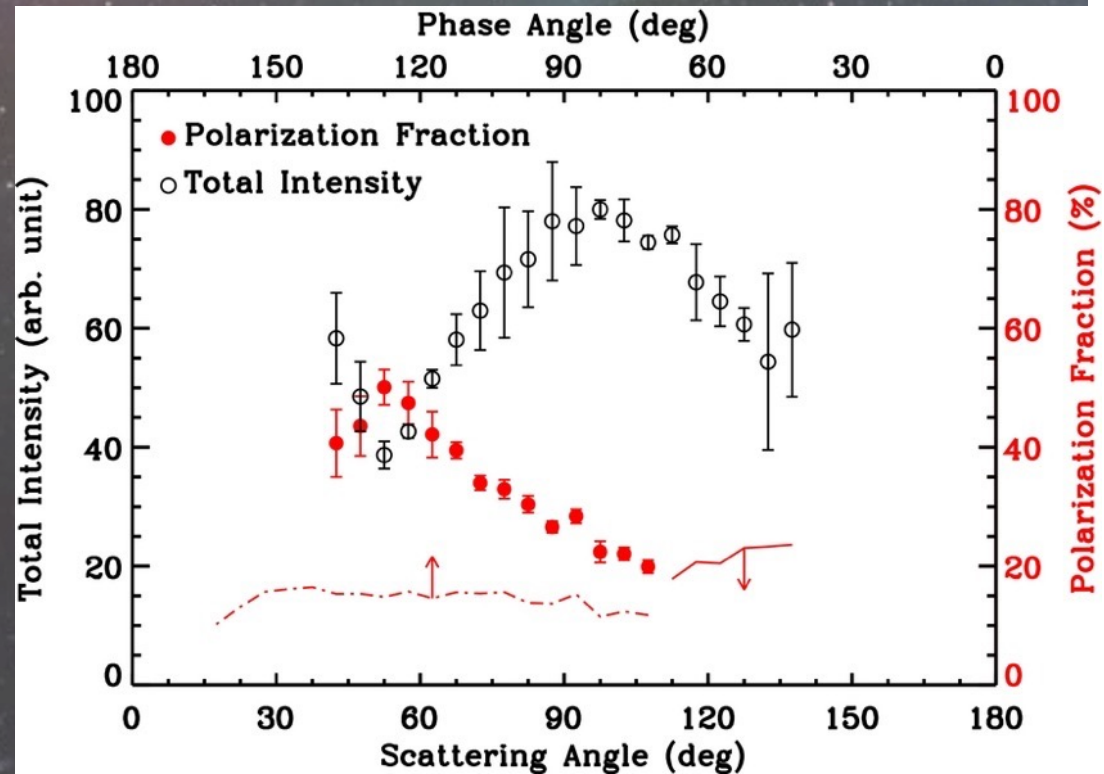
# Observing disks



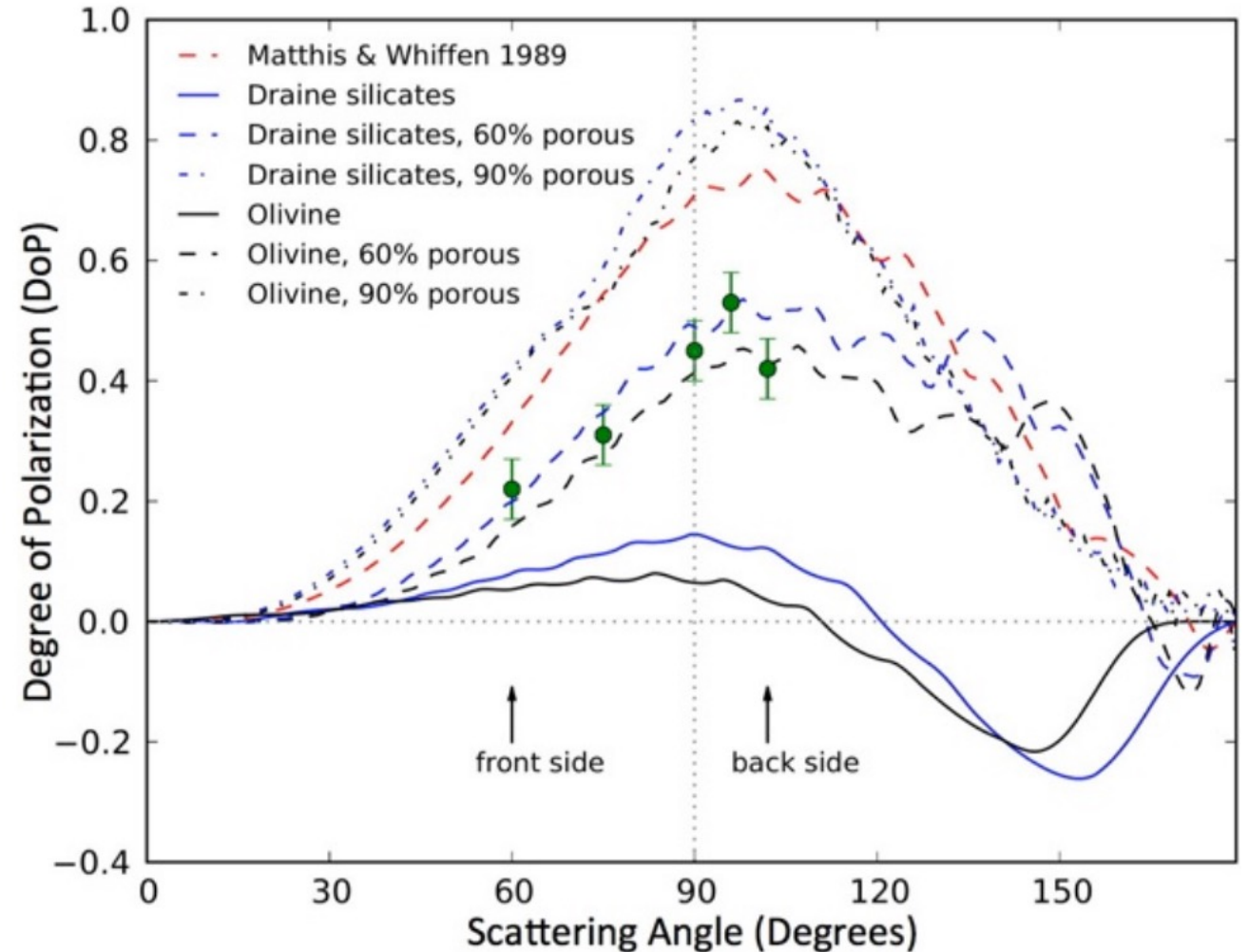
# Observing Disks



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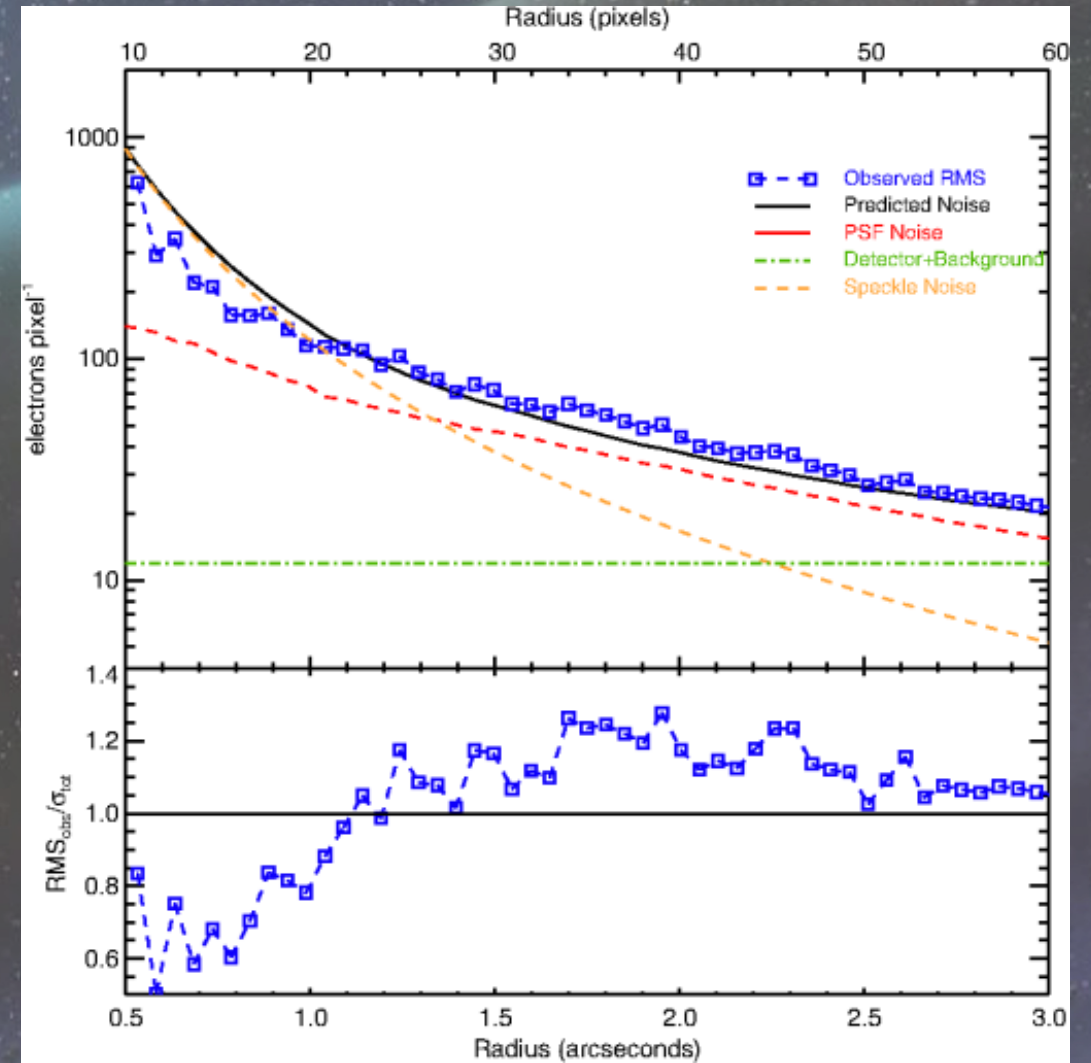
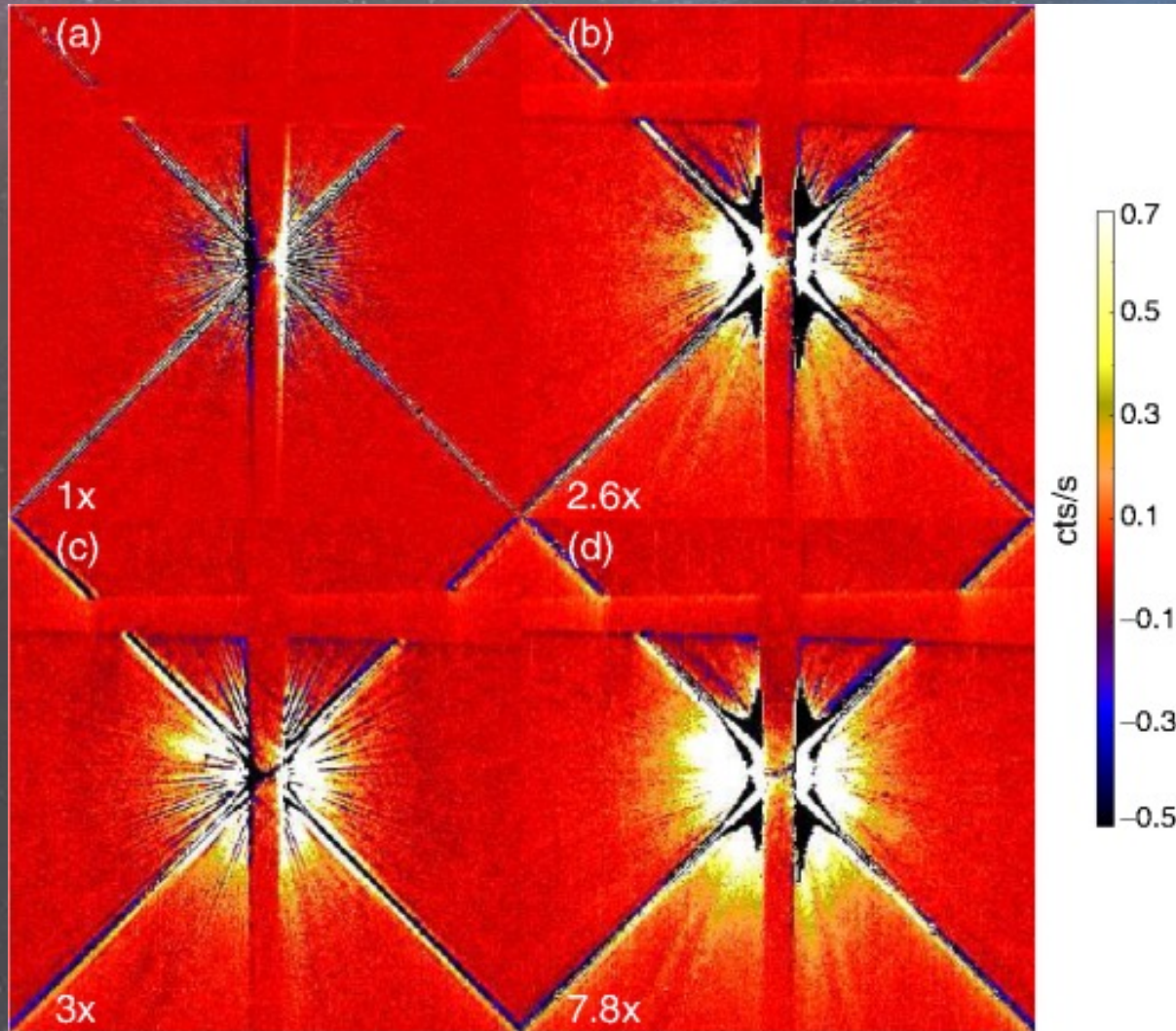


Perrin et al., 2015



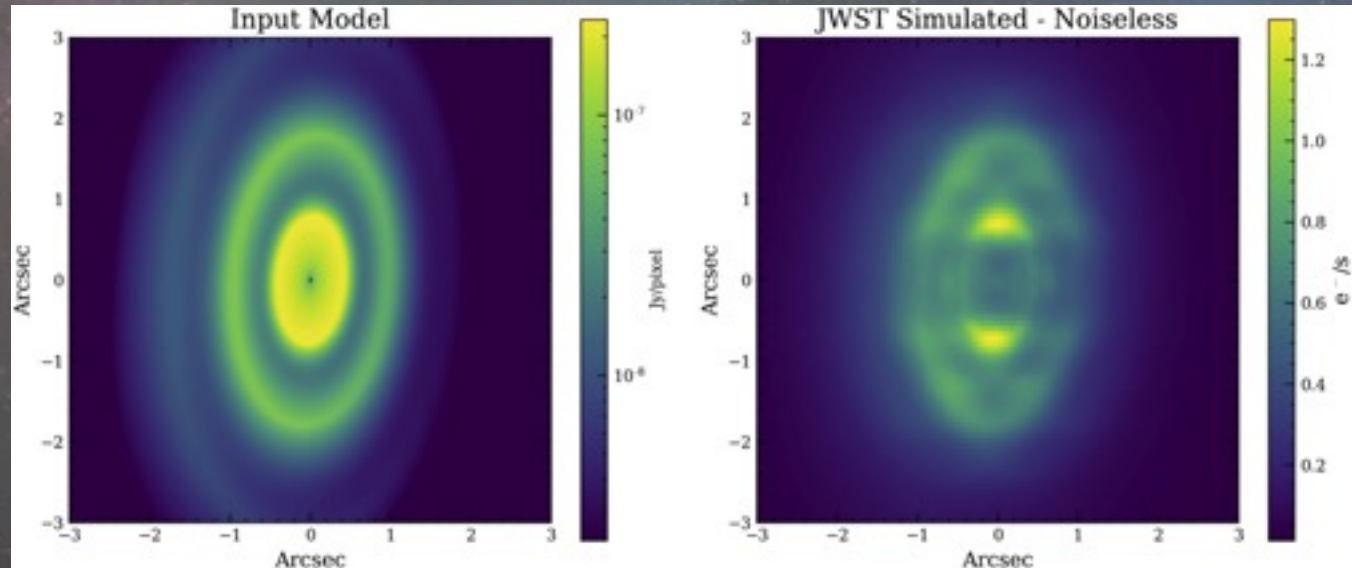
Schneider et al., 2016

# Technical details to directly imaging disks

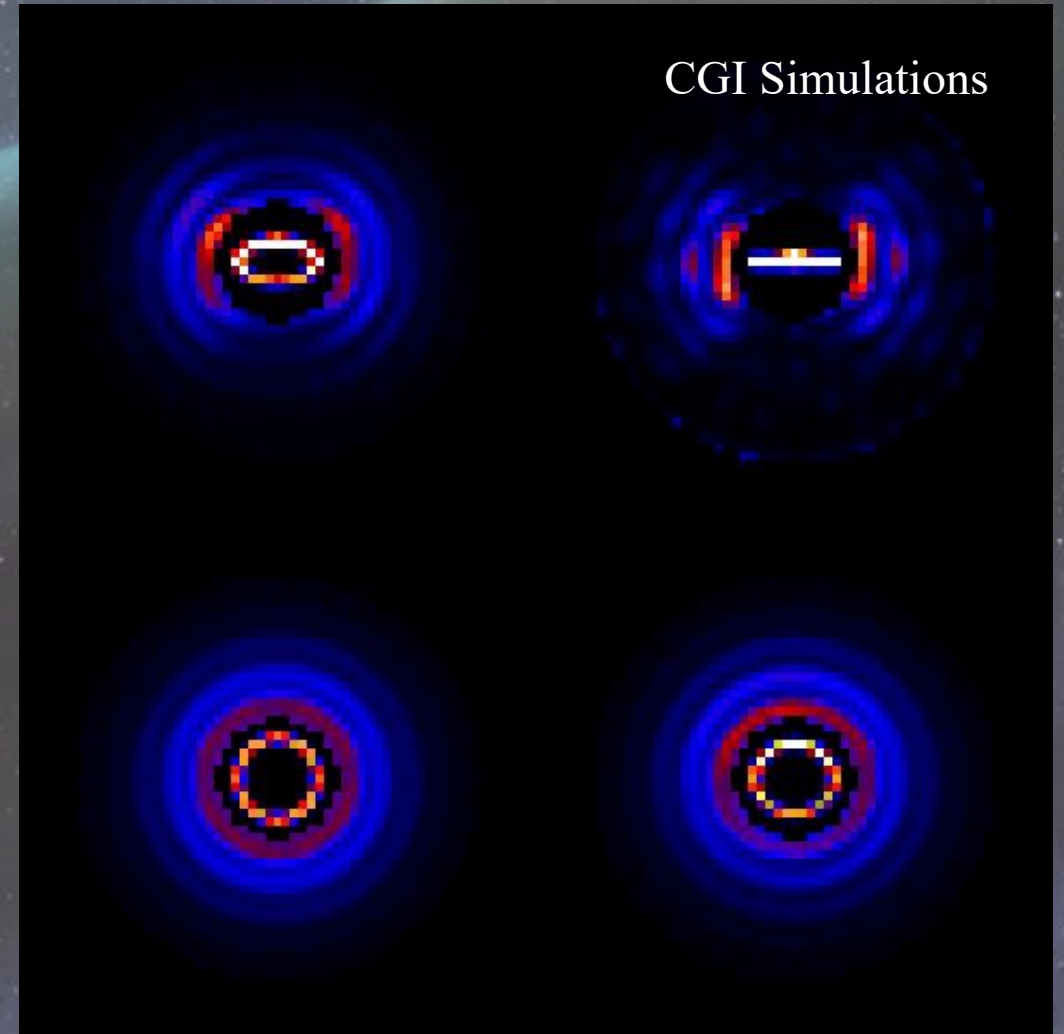




# Technical Details to Imaging Disks

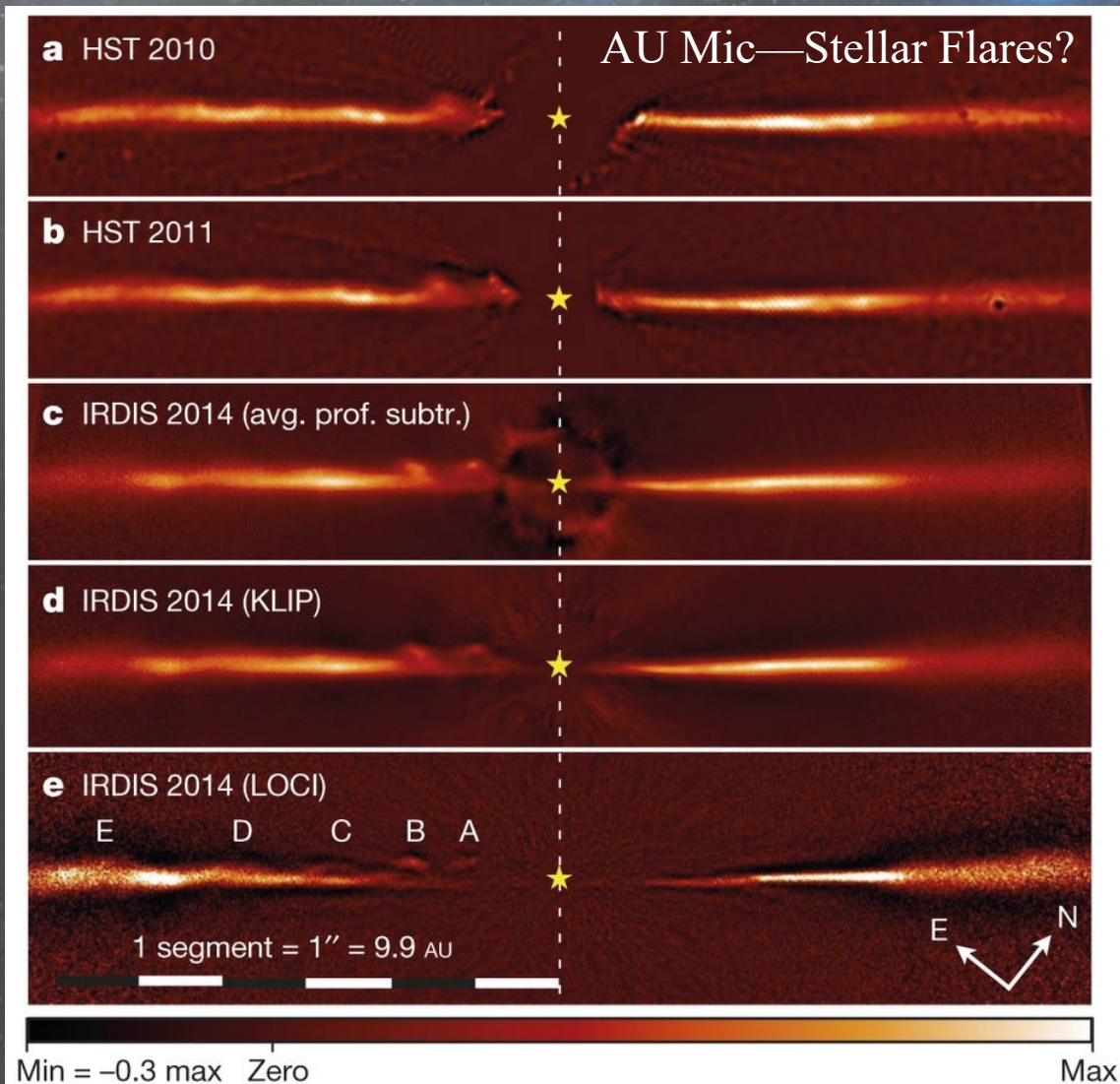


Hinkley et al., (2022)

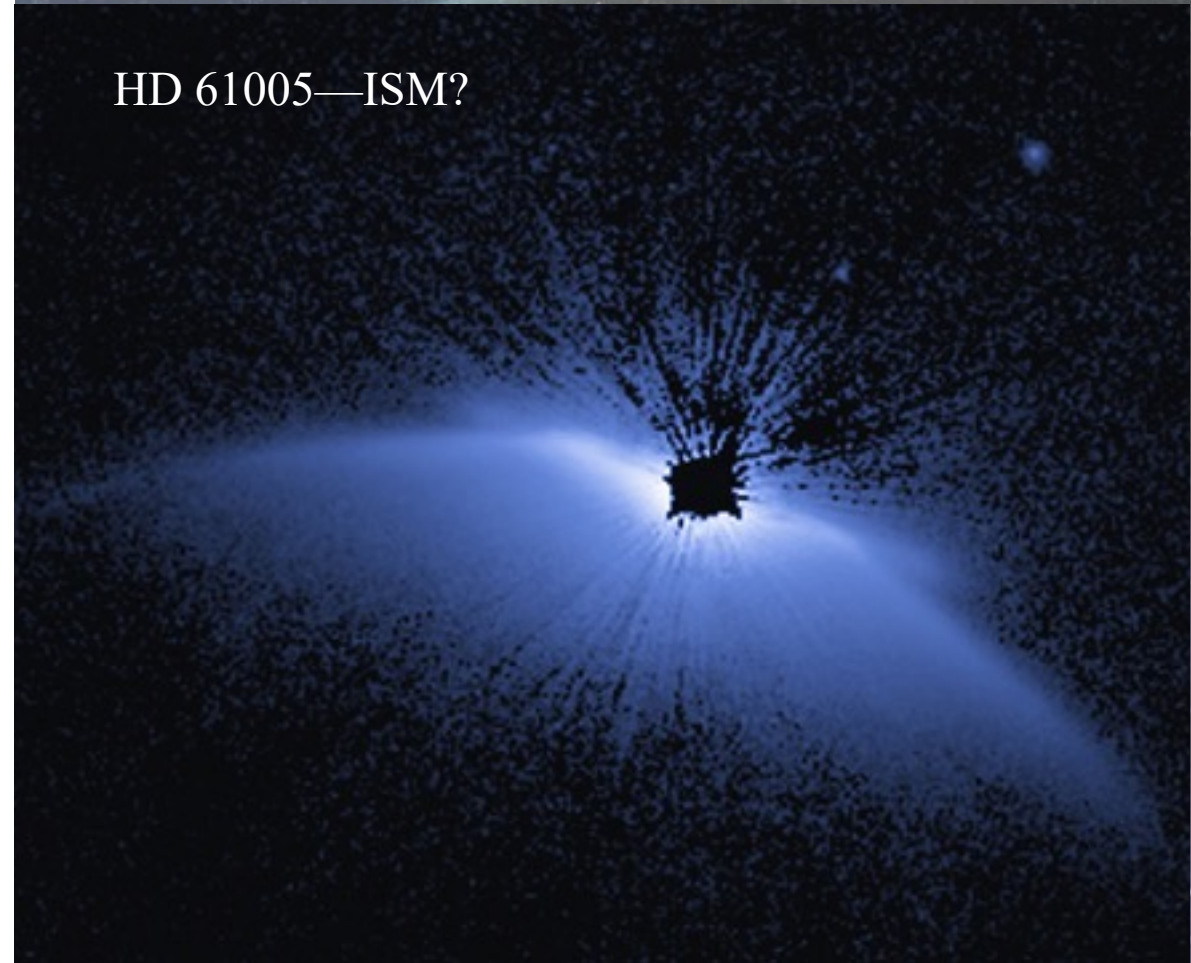


Posters: 31 Lin; 36 Mullin

# Forces on debris disk dust

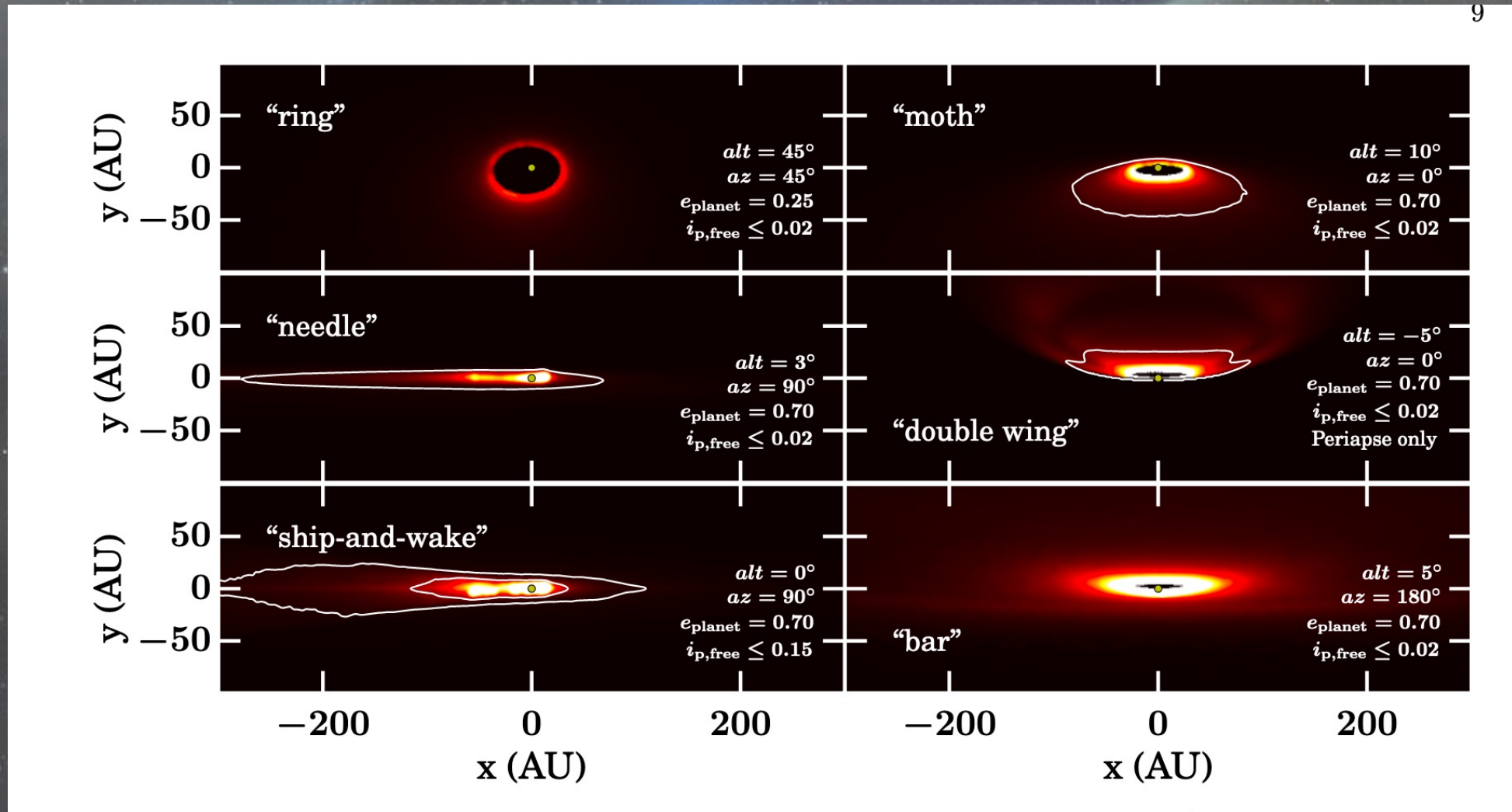


Boccaletti et al., 2015

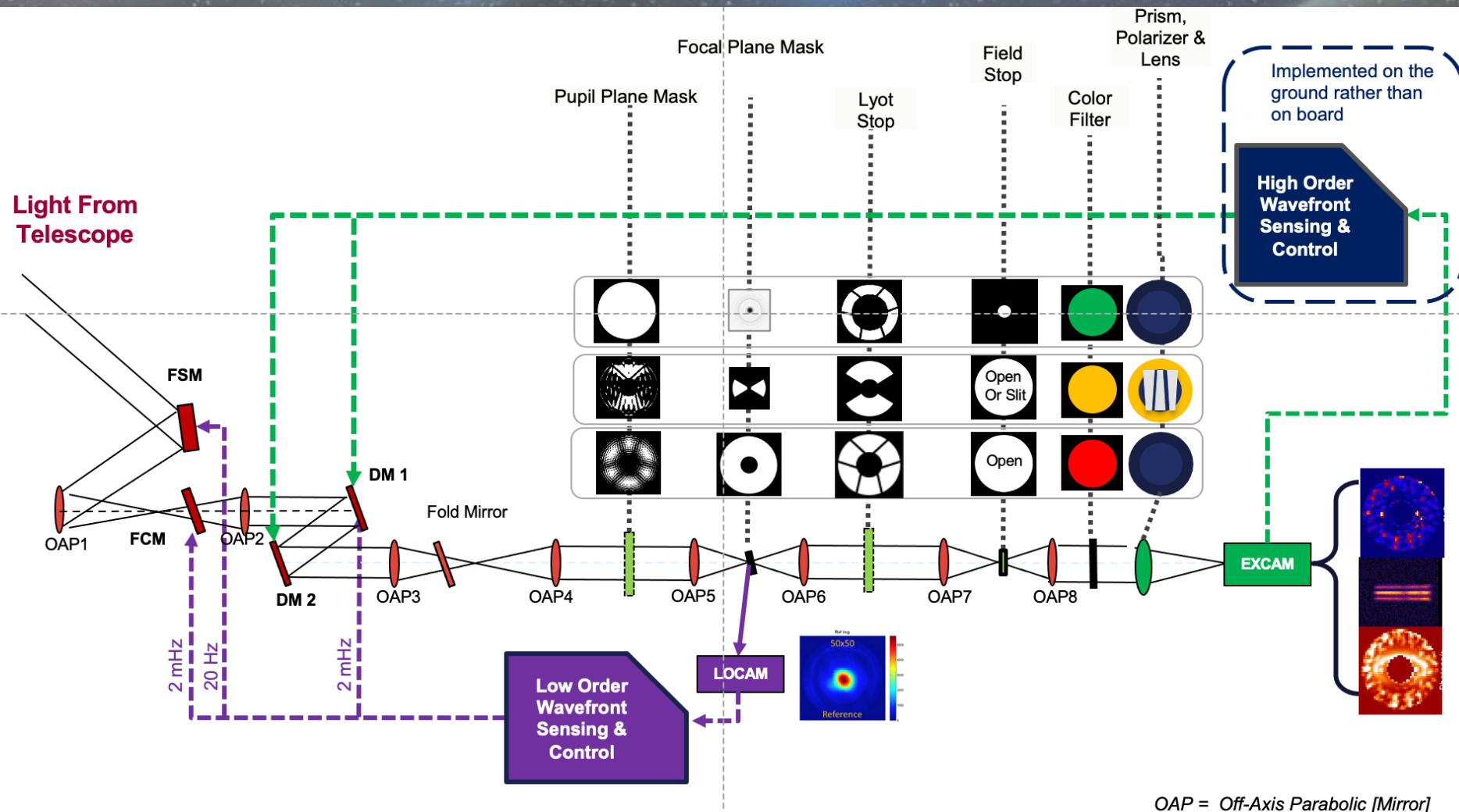


Schneider et al., 2014

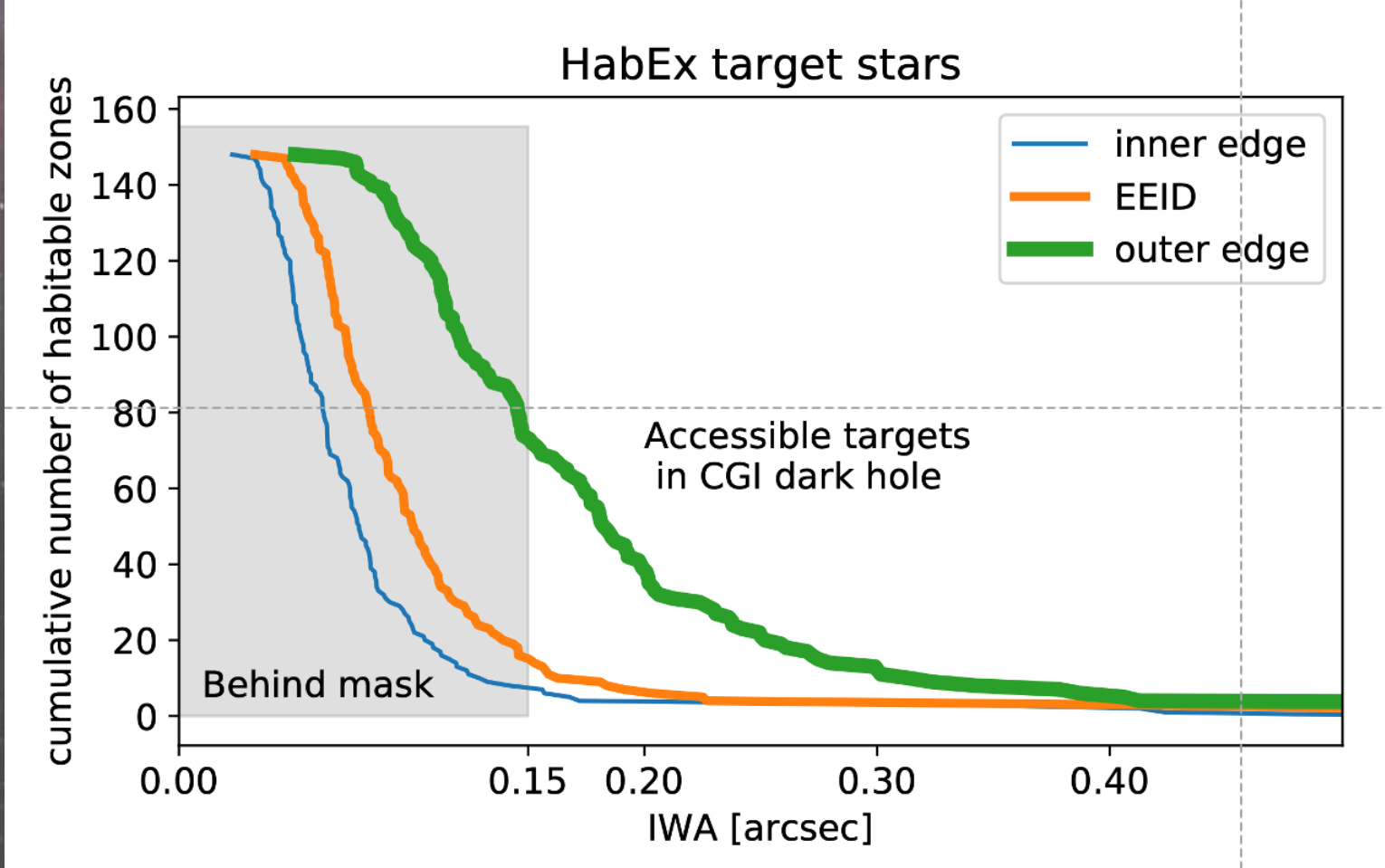
# Forces on debris disk dust



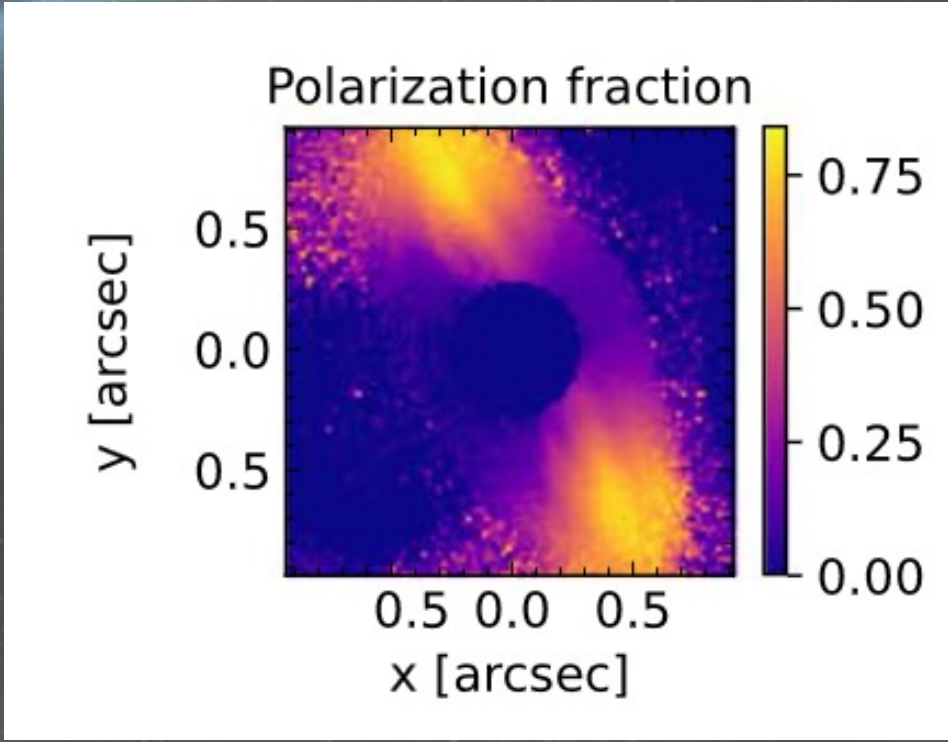
# New Frontiers—Exozodis and Hot Dust



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Douglas et al., (2022)

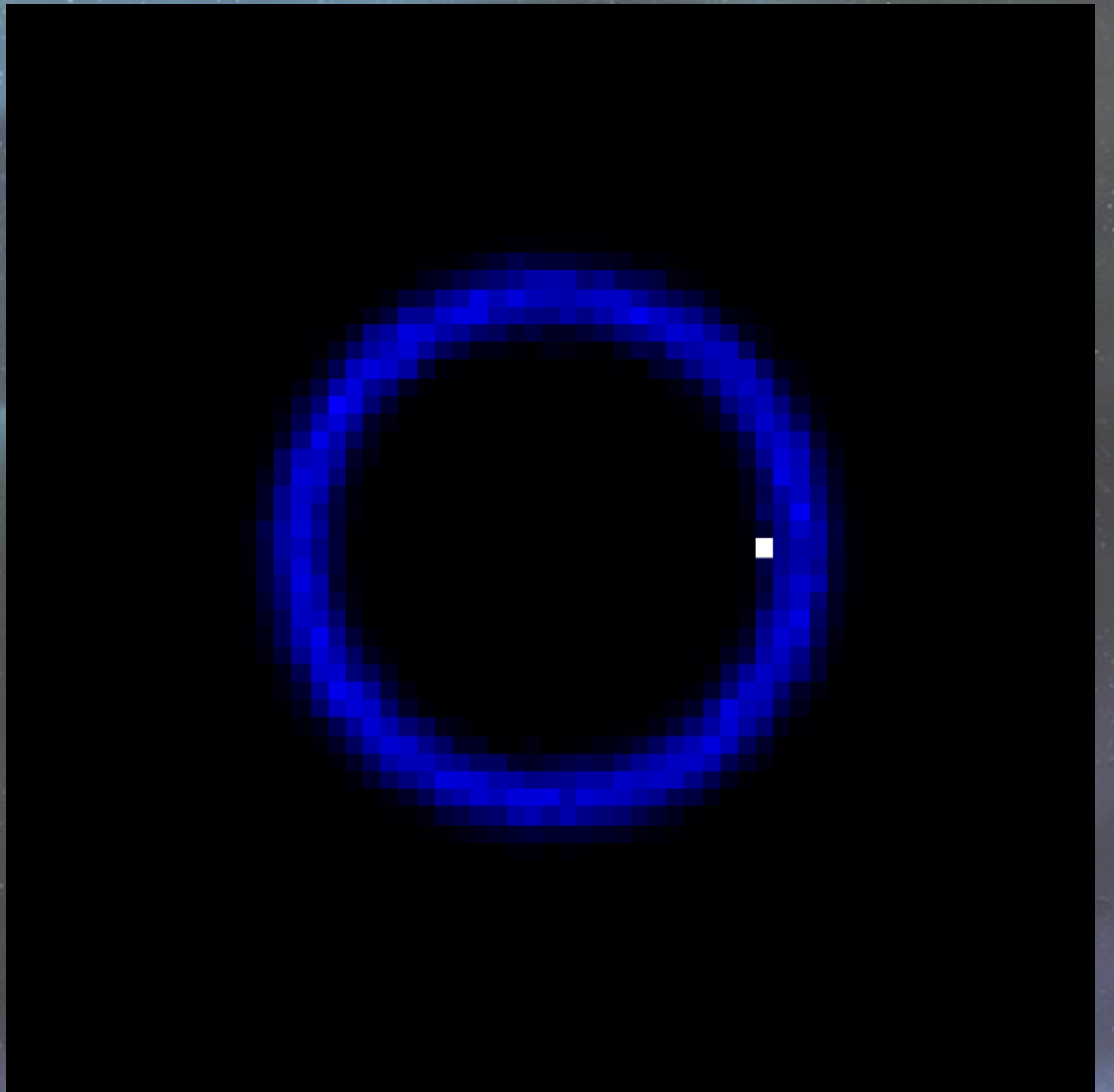


Anche et al., (2023)

V=5 star

$3 \times 10^{-9}$  Companion at 2.5 AU

5 Zodi disk at 3 AU

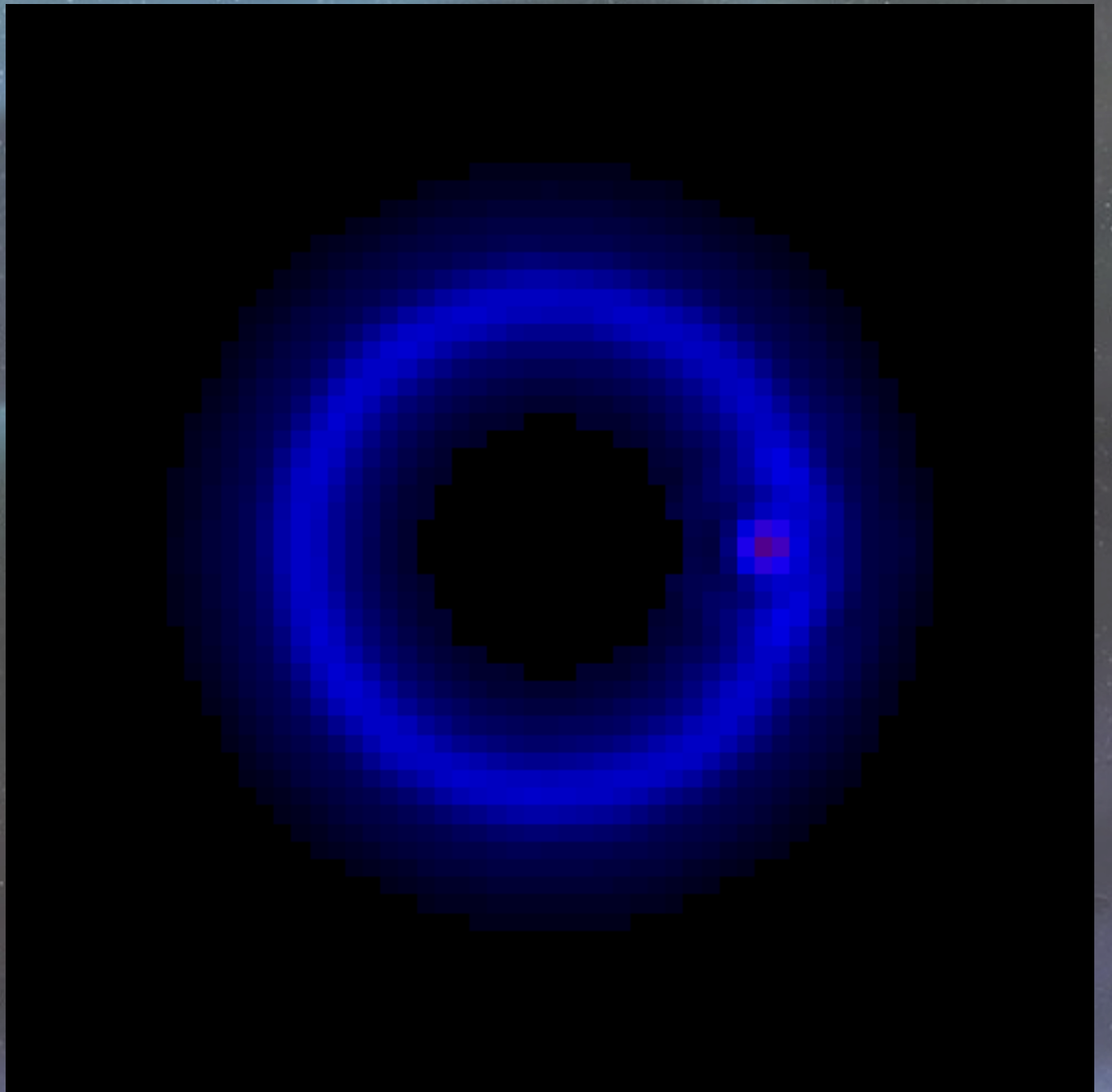


V=5 star

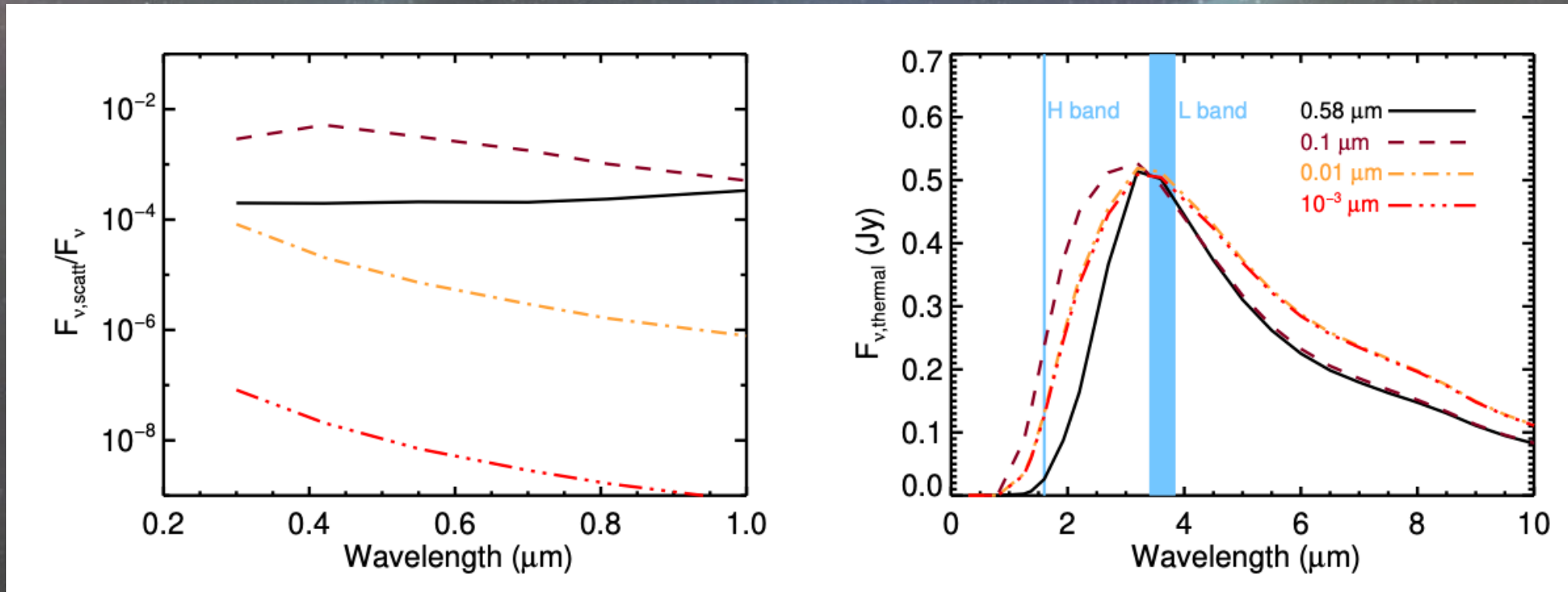
$3 \times 10^{-9}$  Companion at 2.5 AU

5 Zodi disk at 3 AU

CGI PSF



# Hot Dust implications for Direct Imaging



Using the preferred dust grain model and location from Kirschlager et al., 2020:

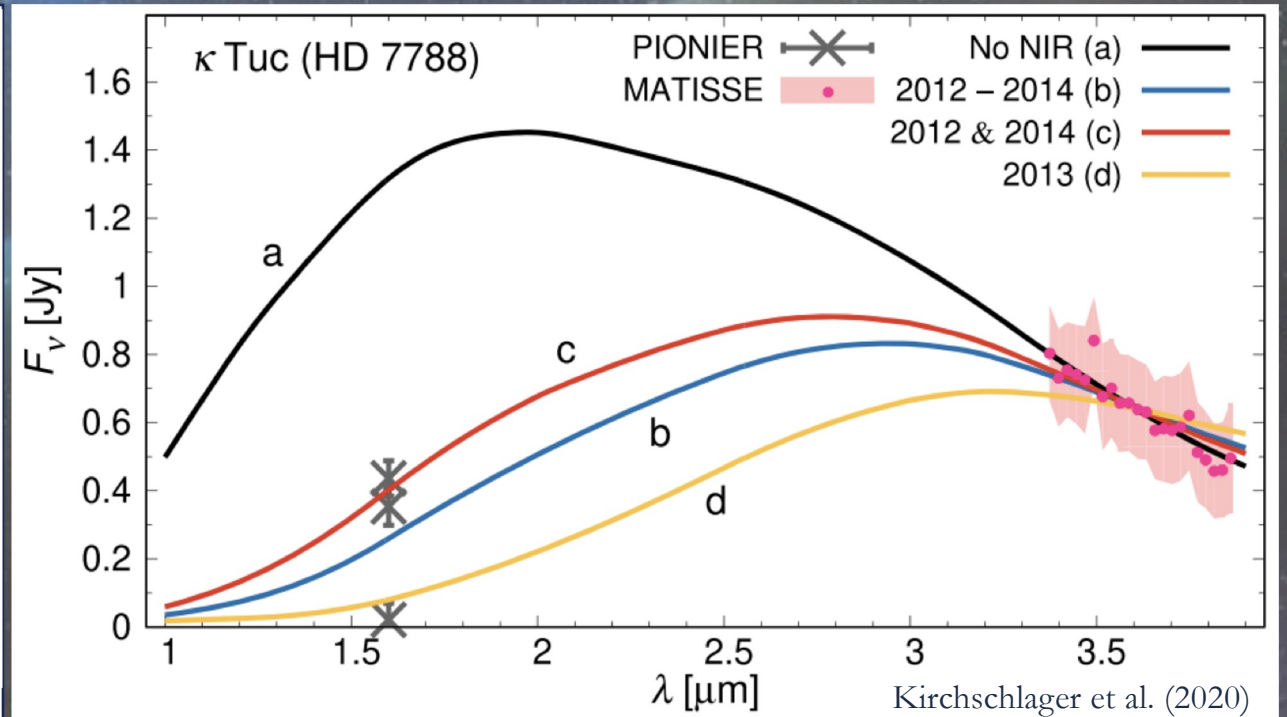
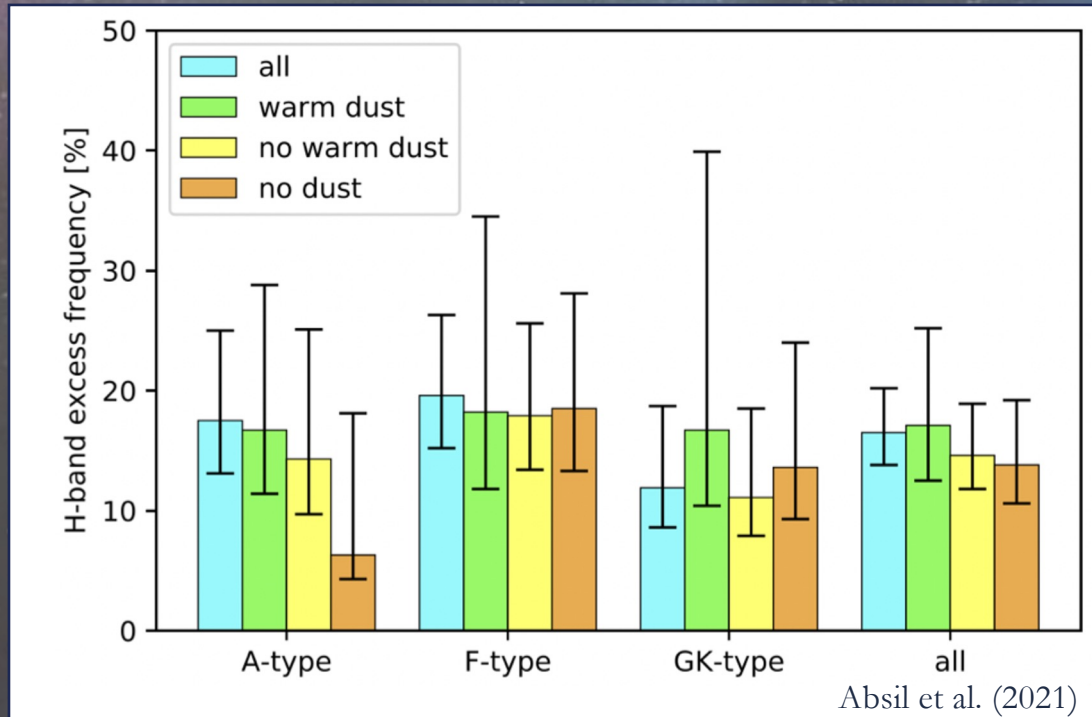
**$R = 0.3 \text{ au}$ ;  $r_{\text{dust}} = 10^{-3} - 0.58 \mu\text{m}$ ;**

Use MCFOST to predict integrated scattered light relative to the star at wavelengths of relevance to HWO

**Barely resolved hot dust at  $\sim \lambda/D$  for HWO with contrast as much as 0.1% of the star**



# Hot Dust Implications for Direct Imaging



Hot dust is detected around  $\sim 20\%$  of MS stars, repeatedly confirmed, it is real  
So far no good understanding of its origin, formation, properties

**Plausibly a significant risk to exo-Earth imaging from supply scenarios & coronagraph leakage**

# Summary

- Debris disks are the remnants of planet formation—they trace the planetary architectures of nearby stars, from rocky bodies to icy giants
- Their location, composition, and behavior under various forces tell us about the dust, their origins, and their evolution
- They are both the direct imager's trash, treasure, and unexpected surprise—they obscure and reveal planets in different ways