Phase magnification by two-axis countertwisting for
detection-noise robust interferometry

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Entanglement-enhanced atom interferometry has the potential of surpassing the standard quantum limit and eventually reaching the ultimate Heisenberg bound. The experimental progress is, however, hindered by various technical noise sources, including the noise in the detection of the output quantum state. The influence of detection noise can be largely overcome by exploiting echo schemes, where the entanglement-generating interaction is repeated after the interferometer sequence. Here, we propose an echo protocol that uses two-axis countertwisting as the main nonlinear interaction. We demonstrate that the scheme is robust to detection noise and its performance is superior compared to the already demonstrated one-axis twisting echo scheme. In particular, the sensitivity maintains the Heisenberg scaling in the limit of a large particle number. Finally, we show that the protocol can be implemented with spinor Bose-Einstein condensates. Our results thus outline a realistic approach to mitigate the detection-noise in quantum-enhanced interferometry.

I. INTRODUCTION

The fast progress in the field of atom interferometry is characterized by improving precision and accuracy, a transition to both large-scale and compact devices, and an increasing number of metrology and sensing applications [1–3]. State-of-the-art atom interferometers are linear two-mode devices that employ uncorrelated (or, at most, classically-correlated) particles. Their phase estimation uncertainty is bounded by the standard quantum limit (SQL), \( \Delta \theta_{\text{SQL}} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{\nu N}} \), where \( \nu \) is the number of repeated measurements and \( N \) the number of particles in each shot. Interferometers using ensembles of entangled atoms can surpass the SQL, up to the ultimate Heisenberg limit (HL), \( \Delta \theta_{\text{HL}} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{\nu N}} \) [4, 5].

Actual implementations of entanglement-enhanced interferometer schemes [5] have reached the HL with only few particles \( (N \lesssim 10 \text{ trapped ions}) \). Large gain in phase sensitivity (up to a factor 10 over the SQL [6, 7]) has been demonstrated with cold atoms and Bose-Einstein condensates employing \( N = 10^2-10^6 \text{ atoms} \) [5]. Yet, these experiments have neither reached the HL nor the Heisenberg scaling \( \Delta \theta \sim 1/N \) of phase uncertainty with the atom number. This is caused by difficulties in creating metrologically-useful entangled states of a large number of atoms as well as unavoidable technical noise, in many cases dominated by the noise in the final detection of the interferometer output state. In particular, it has been shown that—in typical atom detection scenarios—the finite measurement efficiencies impose a bound to the achievable phase sensitivity that scales as \( 1/\sqrt{N} \) for sufficiently large atom numbers, at best with a constant improvement factor over the SQL [8, 9].

Interestingly, the requirement of high detection efficiencies can be relaxed when using active detection schemes, where a nonlinear interaction between the probe particles is applied after the phase imprinting (also indicated as interaction-based readout). A signal amplification based on a nonlinear interaction has been first proposed in a seminal publication by Caves [10], where the displacement of a coherent state is amplified by degenerate parametric amplification. Along this line, an interferometric setup was proposed by Yurke et al. [11]—called a SU(1,1) interferometer—where a nonlinear interaction (such as optical parametric down-conversion) generates correlated pairs of particles in two side modes from a pump mode. After a phase shift acquired by the side modes relative to the pump, the SU(1,1) interferometer is closed by an inverted down-conversion. The phase shift can be inferred from the residual population of the side modes. SU(1,1) interferometers can reach a sensitivity at the HL with respect to the number of particles in the side modes after the first down-conversion [11] and a Heisenberg scaling of sensitivity with respect to the total number of particles [12]. Recently, it has been shown that a modified version (called “pumped-up” SU(1,1) interferometer [13]) where the three modes are further linearly coupled before and after phase imprinting, can reach a sub-SQL sensitivity with respect to the total number of particles [13]. The robustness of SU(1,1) interferometers with respect to detection noise has been emphasized [12–15]. SU(1,1) interferometry with Bose-Einstein condensates [16], photons [17, 18], and hybrid atom-light systems [19] has been recently demonstrated experimentally.

Interaction-based readout can also be used in the more standard two mode linear SU(2) interferometers [20–23] as successfully demonstrated experimentally with trapped ions prepared in a GHZ state [24] and with cold atoms prepared in a spin-squeezed state in an optical cavity [6]. Up to now, both the proposals [20–22] and the implementations [6, 24] in SU(2) interferometers rely on the one-axis twisting (OAT) interaction [25].

In this manuscript, we propose an echo protocol based on two-axis countertwisting (TACT) that realizes an interaction-based readout and outperforms OAT proposals in both, the spin-squeezing and the highly over-squeezed regime. The TACT echo benefits from a per-
collective spin operator
\[
\begin{pmatrix}
J_x \\
J_y \\
J_z
\end{pmatrix} = \frac{1}{2} \begin{pmatrix}
a^\dagger b + b^\dagger a \\
-i(a^\dagger b^\dagger - b a^\dagger) \\
a^\dagger a - b^\dagger b
\end{pmatrix}.
\]

Here, \(a^\dagger, b^\dagger\) (\(a, b\)) are the creation (annihilation) operators for the two modes. We also introduce \(J_\pm = J_x \pm iJ_y\). The TACT interaction is described by the Hamiltonian \([25]\)
\[
H_{\text{TACT}} = -\frac{\chi}{2\hbar} (J_+^2 - J_-^2) = -\chi (J_x J_y + J_y J_z),
\]
and should be compared to the more familiar OAT model (here along the \(x\) direction) \([25]\)
\[
H_{\text{OAT}} = \chi J_x^2.
\]
The sequence of transformations Eq. (4) can be visualized on the Bloch sphere as shown in Fig. 1 for the TACT (top row) and for the OAT (bottom row): (i) A spin-squeezed state is dynamically generated by \(e^{-it\cdot H_{\text{TACT}}}\) or \(e^{-it\cdot H_{\text{OAT}}}\). It should be noticed that while the Hamiltonian \(H_{\text{TACT}}\) creates a spin-squeezed state with reduced uncertainty along \(J_x\), \(H_{\text{OAT}}\) generates spin squeezing in the \(x-y\) plane at an angle that depends on time \([25]\). (ii) We apply an interferometric transformation described by the unitary \(e^{-i\theta J_y}\), where \(\theta\) is a phase shift. Notice that, to be maximally sensitive to the transformation \(e^{-i\theta J_y}\), the state generated by OAT must be first rotated in the Bloch sphere so to align the squeezed ellipse along the \(y\) axis. However, this alignment is generally not beneficial for the successive application of the OAT echo. The state created by the TACT protocol is already optimally aligned for a rotation around \(J_x\) and no additional transformation is required. (iii) The echo scheme now comprises a characteristic second interaction \(e^{\pm i\hbar r H_{\text{TACT}}}\) or \(e^{\pm i\hbar r H_{\text{OAT}}}\) (here, \(r = 1\)) in the two cases, respectively, which is inverse to the first one. In both cases, the echo interaction undoes the squeezing, returning (in the case \(\theta \approx 0\)) the state toward a CSS. In the TACT case, the relevant uncertainty along \(J_x\) is hereby increased, and the imprinted phase is magnified to a more substantial displacement from the north pole. This second interaction maintains the signal-to-noise ratio because both the signal (the phase) and the noise (the spin uncertainty) are simultaneously amplified. Compared to the OAT echo \([20]\) (see Fig. 1, bottom row), the TACT echo features an alignment of phase shift and squeezing direction.

II. TACT ECHO PROTOCOL

We consider an ensemble of atoms occupying only two modes \(|a\rangle\) and \(|b\rangle\). We assume that only states symmetric under particles exchange are available and introduce the perfect alignment of squeezing and phase shift, leading to an ideal signal-to-noise ratio (SNR), a higher optimal phase sensitivity, an improved noise robustness, and a broader versatility. For small magnification, the TACT echo realizes the simple single-mode linear amplifier described by Caves \([10]\). The optimal achievable phase sensitivity of the TACT echo is only a factor 20% below the ideal signal-to-noise ratio (SNR), a higher optimal phase sensitivity, an improved noise robustness, and a broader versatility.

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a^\dagger a - b^\dagger b
\end{pmatrix}.
\]
yielding an optimal and more clean phase magnification. The comparison between OAT and TACT scheme will be discussed in more details below. (iv, not visualized) The amplified phase shift is read out by a final detection of $J_z$.

It was shown that the metrological performance produced by TACT dynamics leads to large spin-squeezing [25–27], succeeding into a highly entangled state close to a twin-Fock state [28–30]. Figure 2 visualizes the action of the TACT echo protocol for the squeezing regime and also for the optimal—highly entangled—case. Both cases will be examined in the following. Note that the highly entangled state (i, bottom) cannot be detected by measuring first and second moments of the global spin, rendering an exploitation of the entanglement enhancement difficult. It is a specific advantage of echo schemes that they disentangle the state, returning a fairly classical state to detect. In this sense, the metrological performance of highly entangled (non-Gaussian) states becomes experimentally accessible [31].

### III. ONE-MODE APPROXIMATION

The description of the TACT echo can be studied under the assumption that the quantum state remains close to the north pole of the Bloch sphere during the protocol (see Fig. 1). This assumption is fulfilled for a large number of atoms $N \gg 1$, relatively small squeezing strength $t\chi N \lesssim 1$, and a small interferometric phase shift. In this case, we can replace the operators $a$ and $a^\dagger$ with the number $\sqrt{N}$ to obtain an effective one-mode description. The unitary evolution under the TACT Hamiltonian simplifies to the one-mode quadrature-squeezing operator and the interferometric rotation becomes the one-mode displacement:

$$e^{-i\mathcal{H}_{\text{TACT}}} \rightarrow e^{\frac{\pi}{2}(b^2-b^2)} \equiv S(\gamma) \quad (5)$$

$$e^{-i\phi J_y} \rightarrow e^{i\phi(b^1-b)} \equiv D(\phi) \quad (6)$$

Here real parameters for the squeezing strength $\gamma = t\chi N$ and the displacement $\phi = \theta \sqrt{N}/2$ arise from the prior two-mode description.

The midfringe position in the two-mode model is on the equator and chosen according to the observable $J_z$. In the one-mode description, the dynamics is confined onto the tangent surface to the Bloch sphere and spanned by the quadratures. Therefore, the displacement $\phi$ can be estimated from measurements of the $X = (b + b^\dagger)/2$ quadrature with a phase uncertainty

$$\langle \Delta \theta \rangle^2 = \frac{\Delta (b + b^\dagger)^2}{|\partial_\theta \langle b + b^\dagger \rangle|^2}. \quad (7)$$

This can be evaluated analytically for the one-mode equivalent of Eq. (4), which is $|\psi\rangle_{\text{out}} = S^{-1}(r\gamma)D(\phi)S(\gamma)|0\rangle$, where the initial coherent state pointing in the $J_z$ direction corresponds to all particles in the mode $a$ and thus the vacuum $|0\rangle$ of the mode $b$. Using textbook formulas (see Appendix for calculations within this section), we find the ideal phase variance to be

$$\langle \Delta \theta \rangle^2 = \frac{e^{-2\gamma}}{N}, \quad (8)$$

which does not depend on the echo strength and is only determined by the initial state entering the interferometer. For positive squeezing strengths $\gamma$, the phase uncertainty $\langle \Delta \theta \rangle^2$ is decreased below the SQL by a factor of $e^{-2\gamma}$.

The one-mode model allows for an analytical demonstration of the robustness against detection noise. This is implemented by convolving the respective distribution of outcomes with a normal distribution of width $\sigma$ [32]. Introducing the influence of detection noise to Eq. (7) is therefore simply accomplished by adding $\sigma^2$ to the nominator, since two convolved Gaussian functions yield a Gaussian function with summed up variances again. Hence, the noise-dependent phase variance evaluates to

$$\langle \tilde{\Delta} \theta \rangle^2 = (\Delta \theta)^2 + \frac{4\sigma^2}{N^2 M^2}. \quad (9)$$
Here, we defined the magnification factor $M = \langle J_x \rangle / \langle J_x \rangle^\prime$ as the ratio of the signal after and before (primed) the echo. Within the one-mode approximation it simplifies to

$$M = e^{\gamma r}.$$  

Equation (9) demonstrates, that the phase magnification strongly suppresses the influence of detection noise. The simple formula Eq. (10) shows that a stronger echo increases the signal magnification exponentially. We can of course not conclude that a large magnification cancels the noise influence completely as the depletion of mode $a$ is not captured by the one-mode model. Finally, the signal-to-noise ratio $\text{SNR} \approx \langle J_x \rangle / \Delta J_x$ is given by

$$\text{SNR} = 2\phi e^{\gamma r},$$

revealing the independence of the echo strength. Thus, the quality of the signal amplification does not decrease for stronger echo interaction.

Figure 3 compares the magnification process of both the OAT and TACT echo scheme in terms of the mentioned quantities. The TACT echo shows a clear advantage over the OAT scheme. First, the TACT echo’s performance grows exponentially with the interaction time and not just linearly as for the OAT scheme; see Figs. 3(a)-3(c). Furthermore, for our scheme, the signal-to-noise ratio is perfectly maintained during the magnification, see Fig. 3(d), thereby realizing a “phase-sensitive noiseless amplification” previously described in Ref. [10]. In the case of the OAT echo however, the quality of the signal amplification decreases for ratios deviating from the optimal $r \approx 1.1$. For small twisting strength or echo ratios the measured signal even vanishes completely, since the echo does not yet transfer the signal to the orthogonal readout direction. In principle, the results of the OAT scheme can be improved by additional rotations of the quantum state. We introduce optimizations with respect to rotations before the phase imprint, which optimally align the initial squeezing ellipse, and rotations before the final detection, which correspond to optimizing the readout direction. Both optimizations, alone or in combination, can lead to improved results for specific parameter regimes. However, the performance of the OAT echo never surpasses the TACT echo (see Appendix for more details).

Figure 3 also shows that the magnification and the signal-to-noise ratio are well captured by the single-mode approximation. For over-squeezed states, however, the single mode approximation breaks down and a full two mode analysis is required. This is presented in the following sections.

IV. TWO-MODE MODEL: THE SQUEEZING REGIME

We evaluate the interferometric performance in terms of the classical Fisher information (FI) [4, 5, 33] $F(\theta) = \sum_\mu \frac{1}{\partial \mu \partial (\langle \theta | \mu \rangle)^2}$, where $P(\mu | \theta) = \langle \mu | \rho_{\text{out}}(\theta) | \mu \rangle$ is the probability distribution of the projection over Dicke states $\{ | \mu \rangle \}$ with $\mu$ being the eigenvalues of $J_z$. The FI gives a lower bound on the interferometric phase sensitivity, the Cramér-Rao bound $\Delta \theta_{\text{CR}} = 1 / \sqrt{F(\theta)}$, for the specific measurement considered, and identifies the metrologically useful entanglement [34].

For intermediate squeezing strength, the quantum state remains Gaussian and the gain in sensitivity is well captured by the width of its distribution, typically expressed in terms of the spin-squeezing parameter [35] $\xi_R^2 = N (\Delta J_z)^2 / \langle J_z \rangle^2$ (here for the case of a mean spin direction along $J_z$ and an interferometer phase shift generated by $J_y$). In this regime it corresponds to the FI as $F = N / \xi_R^2$. We choose an initial squeezing of $10 \log_{10} (\xi_R^2) = -6 \text{dB}$ as exemplary value, also to allow for experimental resources for an echo ratio larger than one. Figure 4 shows the metrological gain $10 \log_{10} (F/N)$ as a function of the interferometric phase (top panels) and the detection noise (middle panels). Here the detection noise is modeled with respect to a measurement of $J_z$. In Fig. 4 (top), the detection noise is fixed to a level that is equivalent to the quantum noise of a CSS, $\sigma_{\text{CSS}} = \sqrt{N/2}$. Even for such a strong noise contribution, the metrological performance clearly surpasses the
SQL and reaches almost the ideal value of 6 dB improvement for the case of a strong echo of \( r = 3 \). In the middle graphs the phase is chosen to be around the optimum \( \theta \approx 0 \). The results demonstrate the robust entanglement-enhanced performance under the influence of detection noise. Both echo protocols allow for an estimation of the interferometer signal with sub-SQL precision for noise values well above the CSS noise level (indicated as gray vertical line). The proposed TACT echo allows gaining back most of the original sensitivity of the input state and shows better variability regarding the echo ratio, hence it surpasses the results of the OAT echo. The analytical one-mode results (dashed black lines) agree excellently with the numerical computation in the chosen parameter regime. Figure 4 (bottom panels) shows that the OAT scheme demands an optimization of the echo strength for a certain detection noise to gain optimal performance whereas for the TACT echo the larger is the echo ratio \( r \), the better; see Fig. 4(c). In comparison with Figs. 3(c) and 3(d), the graphs also illustrate the fact that the SNR reflects the ideal metrological gain, and the magnification factor corresponds to the robustness of the gain to detection noise (the larger \( \mathcal{M} \), the more robust).

V. OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE

We will now investigate the optimal performance of the TACT echo protocol. This is achieved for \( (t_X)_{\text{opt}} \approx \ln(2\pi N)/2N \) [29], beyond the spin-squeezing regime, as obtained from an analysis of the quantum Fisher information (see Appendix). The corresponding state is shown in Fig. 2, bottom row (i). It has a large overlap with a twin-Fock state [28], possesses an even higher phase sensitivity as such and thereby outperforms the sensitivity reachable by OAT dynamics on a comparable time scale. Figure 5(a) shows the achievable FI in this regime under the influence of detection noise. Without echo \( (r = 0) \), dashed-dotted lines), the performance already starts to decline at \( \sigma \approx 0.3 \) since an operation close to the Heisenberg limit typically requires single-atom resolving detection. This requirement is avoided by both the OAT [20] and the TACT echo protocol, maintaining
Heisenberg-limited sensitivity for detection noise levels far beyond what has been demonstrated experimentally in several groups. A specific advantage of the TACT echo scheme, the nonessential reversal of the twisting dynamics \((r \neq 1)\), holds even in this highly entangled regime. For vanishing detection noise, the TACT echo is independent of the echo ratio whereas the OAT echo has a sharp optimal performance at \(r = 1\); see Fig. 5(b). For non-vanishing detection noise (even for detection noise around the CSS noise level) the TACT echo still shows a fairly constant performance in a broad range of echo ratios, see Fig. 5(c).

VI. ASYMPTOTIC SCALING FOR A LARGE NUMBER OF ATOMS

It has been emphasized in the literature that, in the presence of a variety of single-particle (uncorrelated) decoherence sources, the quantum-enhancement cannot maintain the Heisenberg scaling asymptotically in the number of particles. In the limit \(N \to \infty\), the sensitivity scales with the square root of the particle number, eventually reaching only a constant factor beyond the SQL [8, 9]. Accordingly, our numerical results show that in the case without echo the Heisenberg scaling is lost quickly and SQL scaling is obtained for large \(N\). However, exploiting an interaction-based readout within our TACT echo scheme—as well as with the OAT echo—the Heisenberg scaling is preserved in the presence of a large detection noise and atom number (up to \(N \sim 10^4\)). Figure 6 shows the FI with an exemplary detection noise of \(\sigma(N) = \sqrt{N}/10\), which scales with the square root of the number of atoms (such as the photon shot noise in fluorescence detection). The apparent contradiction with the mentioned no-go results is explained by the fact that interaction-based detection cannot be modeled as a single-particle noisy channel and does not fall into the range of noisy interferometers analyzed in Refs. [8, 9].

Besides our findings, asymptotic scaling that surpasses the SQL was also reported for non-Markovian phase noise [36] and noise that is perpendicular to the phase imprint [37, 38]. Note that in the case of detection noise considered here, the noise is parallel to the parameter to be estimated.

While our results are obtained numerically and cannot be evaluated in the limit of infinite atom numbers, we argue that they correctly reflect the asymptotic behavior. Nevertheless, we would like to note that the asymptotic scaling of the sensitivity with the number of particles is typically not relevant in actual metrological experiments. Besides the noise that scales with the square root of the particle number, there are further technical noise components that are linear in the particle number and take over while increasing \(N\) (see for example Ref. [39]). These noise contributions eventually destroy both the Heisenberg and the SQL scaling, yielding an interferometric precision that is independent of the particle number.

FIG. 6. (Color online) FI as a function of the atom number for both echo protocols (solid lines) in the presence of a detection noise \(\sigma = \sqrt{N}/10\). The orange (light gray) and blue (dark gray) lines show the results of the TACT and the OAT echo respectively. The echo clearly retains the Heisenberg scaling. For comparison, the dashed lines show the resulting FI without echo and in presence of the same number-dependent detection noise. In this case, the Heisenberg limit is quickly lost and the sensitivity follows a scaling \(\sqrt{N}\), with an improvement over the SQL (gray area) given only by a constant factor for large \(N\).

VII. IMPLEMENTATION IN SPINOR BOSE-EINSTEIN CONDENSATES

Bose-Einstein condensates (BECs) with a spin degree of freedom—in our case spin \(F = 1\)—undergo spin-changing collisions, creating entangled atom pairs and many-particle entanglement of indistinguishable atoms [5, 40–42]. This type of entanglement generation has been demonstrated by several groups [5, 43–46]. In particular, states generated by spin-changing collisions have been applied for the demonstration of Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen entanglement [47], interaction-free measurements [48], interferometric applications [16, 44, 49], and—most recently—for the generation of spatially distributed entanglement [50–52]. We will now show that spin dynamics in atomic BECs allows for an effective realization of the TACT echo protocol in the spin-squeezing regime.

In the following we consider a BEC initially prepared in \(m_F = 0\). The evolution under spin changing collisions is described by a four-wave mixing Hamiltonian \(H_{\text{FWM}} = 2\lambda(a_0^1a_1^1a_1a_0 + a_1^1a_{-1}^1a_0a_0)\) [53, 54]. Additional spin-preserving collisions are described by the collisional shift \(H_{\text{CS}} = \lambda(2N_0 - 1)(\hat{N}_1 + \hat{N}_{-1})\). Here, the coupling strength \(\lambda\) is determined by the scattering lengths of allowed channels and by the spatial modes of the atoms. Furthermore, the term \(H_{\text{CZ}} = q(\hat{N}_1 + \hat{N}_{-1})\) includes the quadratic Zeeman shift \(q \propto B^2\) that depends on the external magnetic field strength \(B\). Alternatively, \(q\) can be experimentally tuned by coupling the Zeeman levels to a different hyperfine level by an adjustable microwave dressing field. By introducing a change of basis to the symmetric (\(S\)) and the antisymmetric (\(A\)) combinations.
of the $m_F = \pm 1$ states,
\[ a_s = \frac{a_{+1} + a_{-1}}{\sqrt{2}} \quad \text{and} \quad a_A = \frac{a_{+1} - a_{-1}}{\sqrt{2}}, \]
the overall Hamiltonian $H = H_{QZ} + H_{CS} + H_{FWM}$ becomes
\[ H = q(\hat{N}_S + \hat{N}_A) \]
\[ + \lambda(2\hat{N}_0 - 1)(\hat{N}_S + \hat{N}_A) \]
\[ + 2\lambda((J^2_{x,S} - J^2_{y,S}) - (J^2_{x,A} - J^2_{y,A})), \]
where $J_{x,S} = (a_0^\dagger a_S + a_S^\dagger a_0)/2$, $J_{y,S} = (a_0^\dagger a_S - a_S a_0^\dagger)/2i$, $J_{x,A} = (a_0^\dagger a_A + a_A^\dagger a_0)/2$ and $J_{y,A} = (a_0^\dagger a_A - a_A^\dagger a_0)/2i$. In the limit of a large number of atoms in $m_F = 0$, the evolution in the three modes can thus be described within two SU(2) systems $(0, A)$ and $(0, S)$, with the corresponding pseudo-spin operators $J_i,A$ and $J_i,S$ for $i = x,y,z$. The four-wave mixing part of the Hamiltonian realizes the TACT in the symmetric and the antisymmetric mode respectively. This description is valid for comparably short interaction times, where $N_0$ can be assumed constant and the Zeeman term Eq. (13) can be tuned to cancel the collisional shift Eq. (14). For long interaction times, depletion of the initial condensate and quantum fluctuations become relevant: the terms Eqs. (13) and (14) do not cancel perfectly and the evolution deviates from pure TACT dynamics. Within the two-mode system $(0, S)$, it is possible to realize a two-mode Ramsey-like interferometric protocol [49]: Beam splitters can be realized by resonant radio-frequency coupling, which does not couple to the antisymmetric mode $(A)$. Interferometric phase shifts according to $\exp(-i\theta J_{y,S})$ can be engineered for typical applications, such as the measurement of magnetic fields or, as demonstrated in Ref. [49], the measurement of time.

Viewed in the original basis $m_F = 0, \pm 1$, this implementation of the TACT echo is similar to the pumped-up SU(1,1) interferometer [13] where a linear coupling of the atoms in $m_F = 0$ to the side modes (realizing a “tritter”) happens before and after the interferometric phase imprint on the side modes. The linear coupling corresponds to the beam splitter between $m_F = 0$ and the symmetric mode and the phase on the side modes is equivalent to a rotation by $J^{(0,S)}_z$. Therefore, our phase imprint $\exp(-i\theta J_{y,S})$, combined with the spin dynamics in the preparation and in the detection stage, resembles the mentioned scheme.

Within the two-mode system $(0, S)$, the four-wave mixing Hamiltonian simplifies to the TACT Hamiltonian Eq. (2). The only difference is that the squeezing and anti-squeezing directions are rotated in the $x$-$y$ plane by $\pi/4$, which can be easily compensated by an additional phase shift after the interaction [this corresponds to optimizing the tritter parameters in the pumped-up SU(1,1) scheme]. The interferometer only couples to the antisymmetric mode $(A)$ by the four-wave mixing Hamiltonian. However, for moderate squeezing strengths, the number of atoms in the mode $(A)$ remains small. It influences the interferometer signal only as a small loss of contrast, as the atoms do not sense the relative phase shift. Regarding the output observable, it is difficult to detect the number of atoms in the modes $(S)$ and $(A)$ independently. Thus, we consider the inferior but more practical measurement of the total number of atoms in both modes $(S)$ and $(A)$. This total number $\hat{N}_S + \hat{N}_A = \hat{N}_{+1} + \hat{N}_{-1}$ approximates a direct measurement of $\hat{N}_S \approx \hat{N}_S + \hat{N}_A$, as an initial population of mode $(A)$ by the TACT interaction is mostly removed during the echo (regarding $r \approx 1$). Since the sign of the coupling strength $\lambda$ cannot be inverted, the state must be rotated by $\pi/2$ to achieve inverse squeezing during the echo. In the limit of strong squeezing, the terms Eqs. (13) and (14) do not cancel perfectly, and the echo does not constitute a perfect time reversal. However, in the case of initial compensation, i.e. $q = -\lambda(2N - 1)$, the dynamics resembles a clean TACT echo up to relatively large squeezing values.

To investigate the applicability of the TACT echo in spinor BECs, we have performed numerical simulations of the full three-mode evolution. Figure 7 shows the re-
alistic performance of the echo implemented with spin-changing collisions in a spinor BEC (purple lines). The results include the effects of loss to the antisymmetric mode, the effect of the terms Eqs. (13) and (14), and the measurement of $N_S + N_A$ discussed above. Figure 7 also quantifies the relative strength of these unwanted contributions, which have been obtained by considering only the corresponding parts of the spin dynamics Hamiltonian. The green lines show the FI obtained when $N_S$ and $N_A$ are measured separately (see Appendix for details). The gray line only takes into account the effect of the antisymmetric mode being populated, that is time evolution by Eq. (15) only. Hence, the implementation by spin dynamics is particularly hampered by the effect of the additional terms Eqs. (13) and (14) in the Hamiltonian. Here, the ideal FI is not fully independent of the echo, therefore we show results for $r = 0$ (dashed-dotted lines) and $r = 1$ (solid lines). In the presented case of $N = 10^3$ atoms, spin dynamics perfectly reproduces the TACT echo for up to 12.5 dB of quantum-enhancement. Note that the optimal gain over the SQL will not remain constant for larger particle numbers, but is expected to scale with the number of employed atoms (see Fig. 8 in Appendix), allowing for even stronger squeezing at typical atom numbers in the $10^4$ range. Figure 7 (b) further shows that the echo implemented via spin dynamics features the same robustness against detection noise as the clean TACT scheme. The interaction-based readout based on this echo protocol allows to retain the initial quantum-enhancement with a detection at CSS noise level.

VIII. CONCLUSION

In summary, we have demonstrated an interaction-based readout interferometric scheme that exploits TACT dynamics and largely overcomes the limitations imposed by detection noise. The TACT echo protocol provides superior performances with respect to the OAT echo scheme in both, the spin squeezing and the highly over-squeezed regime. In particular, both echo protocols allow for a Heisenberg scaling of the interferometric sensitivity in the limit of large particle numbers and with number-dependent detection noise present. There exist several possibilities for implementing the TACT Hamiltonian in realistic physical systems, including a recent proposal for atom-light interaction in a cavity [55]. We have studied here the realization of the TACT echo protocol using spin dynamics in spinor BECs and highlighted the analogy to pumped-up SU(1,1) interferometry. In the future, we aim at the experimental demonstration of the TACT echo in a microwave clock.

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Appendix A: One-mode calculations

We derive the one-mode formulation of the two-mode phase variance from the method of moments formula. Including the detection-noise model as explained in the main text, the noisy phase variance reads

$$\langle \Delta \phi \rangle^2 = \frac{(\Delta J_x)^2 + \sigma^2}{|\partial_\phi \langle J_x \rangle|^2},$$

(A1)

with $\langle \Delta J_x \rangle^2 = \langle J_x^2 \rangle - \langle J_x \rangle^2$. Replacing

$$\langle J_x \rangle = \frac{1}{2} \langle a^\dagger b + ab^\dagger \rangle \to \frac{\sqrt{N}}{2} \langle b^\dagger + b \rangle,$$

(A2)

the one-mode approximation of the above formula reads

$$\langle \Delta \phi \rangle^2 = \frac{\langle (b^\dagger)^2 + b^2 + 2b^\dagger b + 1 \rangle - \langle b^\dagger + b \rangle^2}{|\partial_\phi \langle b^\dagger + b \rangle|^2} \quad + \frac{4\sigma^2}{N |\partial_\phi \langle b^\dagger + b \rangle|^2}.$$  

(A3)

Relevant states within the one-mode approximation are the state before the echo $|\phi\rangle = D(\phi)S(\gamma)|0\rangle$ and the output state after the echo $|\psi\rangle_{\text{out}} = S^{-1}(r\gamma)D(\phi)S(\gamma)|0\rangle$, with the displacement and the squeezing operator defined as in the main text. Applying textbook properties of these operators (see, for example, Ref. [56]), we evaluate the following expectation values:

$$\langle b^\dagger \rangle = \langle 0 |S^\dagger D^\dagger b^\dagger DS|0\rangle$$

$$= \langle 0 |S^\dagger (b^\dagger + \phi)S|0\rangle = \phi,$$

$$\langle b^\dagger \rangle = \langle 0 |S(\gamma)^\dagger D^\dagger S(r\gamma)^{-1}b^\dagger S(r\gamma)^{-1}DS(\gamma)|0\rangle$$

$$= \langle 0 |S(\gamma)^\dagger ((b^\dagger + \phi) \cosh(r\gamma)$$

$$+ (b + \phi) \sinh(r\gamma)) S(\gamma)|0\rangle$$

$$= \phi e^{r\gamma}.$$  

The expectation values $\langle b' \rangle = \phi$ and $\langle b \rangle = \phi e^{r\gamma}$ are calculated analogously. With this the magnification factor becomes

$$M_{\text{TACT}} = \frac{\langle J_x \rangle}{\langle J_x \rangle' = e^{r\gamma}.}$$  

(A4)
Introducing the following shorthand notation
\[ S_1 = S(\gamma), \quad \mu_1 = \cosh(\gamma), \quad \nu_1 = \sinh(\gamma) \quad (A5) \]
\[ S_2 = S(r\gamma), \quad \mu_2 = \cosh(r\gamma), \quad \nu_2 = \sinh(r\gamma) \quad (A6) \]

we evaluate the relevant expectation values for \( |\psi\rangle_{\text{out}} \) as follows.

\[ \langle b^\dagger b \rangle = \langle 0 | S_1^\dagger D^{-1} S_2 b^\dagger b S_1^\dagger D S_1 | 0 \rangle \]
\[ = \langle 0 | ((b^\dagger \mu_1 - b \nu_1 + \phi) \mu_2 + (b \mu_1 - b^\dagger \nu_1 + \phi) \nu_2)((b \mu_1 - b^\dagger \nu_1 + \phi) \mu_2 + (b^\dagger \mu_1 - b \nu_1 + \phi) \nu_2) | 0 \rangle \]
\[ = (\mu_1 \nu_2 - \nu_1 \mu_2)^2 + \phi^2 (\mu_2 + \nu_2)^2 \]

\[ \langle (b^\dagger)^2 \rangle = \langle 0 | S_1^\dagger D S_2 b^\dagger S_2^\dagger S_2 b S_2^\dagger D S_1 | 0 \rangle \]
\[ = \langle 0 | [ (b^\dagger \mu_1 - b \nu_1 + \phi) \mu_2 + (b \mu_1 - b^\dagger \nu_1 + \phi) \nu_2]^2 | 0 \rangle \]
\[ = (\phi^2 - \mu_1 \nu_1)(\mu_2^2 + \nu_2^2) + (\mu_1^2 + \nu_1^2 + 2 \phi^2) \mu_2 \nu_2 \]

The remaining expectation value is equal to the above calculated \( \langle b^2 \rangle = \langle (b^\dagger)^2 \rangle \). For the denominator of the phase variance we find \( |\langle b | b^\dagger \rangle|^2 = N \exp(2r\gamma) \), determining the noise dependent term of Eq. (A3). The ideal phase variance evaluates to:

\[ (\Delta \theta)^2 = \frac{2(\phi^2 - \mu_1 \nu_1)(\mu_2^2 + \nu_2^2) + 2(\mu_1^2 + \nu_1^2 + 2 \phi^2) \mu_2 \nu_2 + 2(\mu_1 \nu_2 - \nu_1 \mu_2)^2 + 2 \phi^2 (\mu_2 + \nu_2)^2 + 1 - 4 \phi^2 e^{2r\gamma}}{N e^{2r\gamma}} \]
\[ = \frac{\phi^2 e^{2r(1-r)}}{N e^{2r\gamma}} \]
\[ = \frac{e^{2r(1-r)}}{N e^{2r\gamma}} \]
\[ = \frac{e^{-2r}}{N}. \]

**Appendix B: The optimal parameters**

The parameters for the generation of an optimally entangled state by TACT can be obtained for arbitrary particle numbers employing the scaling behavior reported in Ref. [29]. Figure 8 shows the quantum Fisher information (QFI) as a function of the scaled evolution time. The maximum QFI corresponds to the optimal value for the TACT echo and exceeds the performance reached by the twin-Fock state (TF) which is also the value of the characteristic plateau the OAT dynamics reaches [20].

**Appendix C: Optimization of the OAT echo**

The OAT echo shows two main imperfections. First, it does not employ the initial entanglement completely since the squeezing ellipse is not optimally aligned. Second, the ideal readout direction is not fixed but dependent on the echo strength. We extend the OAT echo scheme by two additional rotations of the quantum state, one before the phase imprint to align the squeezing ellipse and another one before the final detection to optimize the readout. The readout direction can either be optimized with respect to the SNR (proportional to the ideal metro-
Dependence on the echo ratio

For comparison, the results of the clean OAT echo and the TACT echo are shown again (solid lines). Computations are carried out for \( N = 10^3 \) particles and \( \theta = 0.001 \). (a,b) Dependence on the interaction strength, showing the range of 0-10 dB squeezing for both schemes. Here, the echo ratio is set to \( r = 1.5 \). (c,d) Dependence on the echo ratio \( r \) with initial squeezing of \(-10 \text{ dB}\).

The following figures show the two most promising optimization scenarios, that is the initial alignment of the squeezing to the phase imprint. For comparison, we also plot the results of the clean OAT scheme and the TACT echo with initial alignment of the squeezing (right panels), both with initial squeezing of \(-6 \text{ dB}\) and a particle number of \( N = 10^3 \). Solid colored lines show numerical results for several echo ratios \( r \). (a,c) Noise dependence of the gain. The gray vertical lines indicate the CSS noise level. The phase is set to an optimal small value. (b,d) Dependence on the echo ratio for both optimization scenarios with vanishing detection noise (dashed line) and an exemplary noise of \( \sigma = 10 \) (solid line).

The performance of the OAT scheme in general, and never surpass the results of the TACT echo scheme.

The following figures show the two most promising optimization scenarios, that is the initial alignment of the squeezing to the phase imprint. For comparison, we also plot the results of the clean OAT scheme and the TACT echo again. The optimization of the readout direction with respect to the SNR is maximized. Dashed-dotted lines depict the case of an optimal alignment of the squeezed state before the phase imprint. For comparison, the results of the clean OAT echo and the TACT echo are shown again (solid lines). Computations are carried out for \( N = 10^3 \) particles and \( \theta = 0.001 \). (a,b) Dependence on the interaction strength, showing the range of 0-10 dB squeezing for both schemes. Here, the echo ratio is set to \( r = 1.5 \).

(c) Dependence on the echo ratio \( r \) with initial squeezing of \(-10 \text{ dB}\).

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(c) Dependence on the echo ratio \( r \) with initial squeezing of \(-10 \text{ dB}\).

The following figures show the two most promising optimization scenarios, that is the initial alignment of the squeezing to the phase imprint. For comparison, we also plot the results of the clean OAT scheme and the TACT echo again. The optimization of the readout direction with respect to the SNR is maximized. Dashed-dotted lines depict the case of an optimal alignment of the squeezed state before the phase imprint. For comparison, the results of the clean OAT echo and the TACT echo are shown again (solid lines). Computations are carried out for \( N = 10^3 \) particles and \( \theta = 0.001 \). (a,b) Dependence on the interaction strength, showing the range of 0-10 dB squeezing for both schemes. Here, the echo ratio is set to \( r = 1.5 \).

(c) Dependence on the echo ratio \( r \) with initial squeezing of \(-10 \text{ dB}\).
for $N_A \approx 0$. Introducing the computational basis

$$|i; k⟩ = |N − (i + k), i, k⟩,$$  \hspace{1cm} (D1)

with $i, k = 0, 1, ..., N$ and $i + k \leq N$, the spectral decompositions of the effective observables reads

$$J_{23} = \sum_{i,k} N \frac{2(i + k)}{2} |i; k⟩⟨i; k|.$$  \hspace{1cm} (D2)

The incapability of separately determining the particle number in modes $S$ and $(A)$ manifests in degenerate eigenvalues for $J_{23}$. The full distribution $P_{ik} = |⟨i; k|\psi⟩|^2$ cannot be obtained by this observable. We obtain an appropriate, “cropped” distribution by $P_l = \sum_{i,k=0}^l P_{ik}$ in $i + k = l$. In this way, it only contains measurable information according to $J_{23}$. The Fisher information based on this distribution describes the actual interferometric sensitivity more realistically.

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