

Star Formation in our Extreme Galactic Center: Results from the CMZoom Survey



Cara Battersby

University of Connecticut

@battersbot

#TracingTheFlow

Central Molecular Zone

100 pc



24 μm (Carey+ 2009.), 8 μm and 4.5 μm (Benjamin+20003)

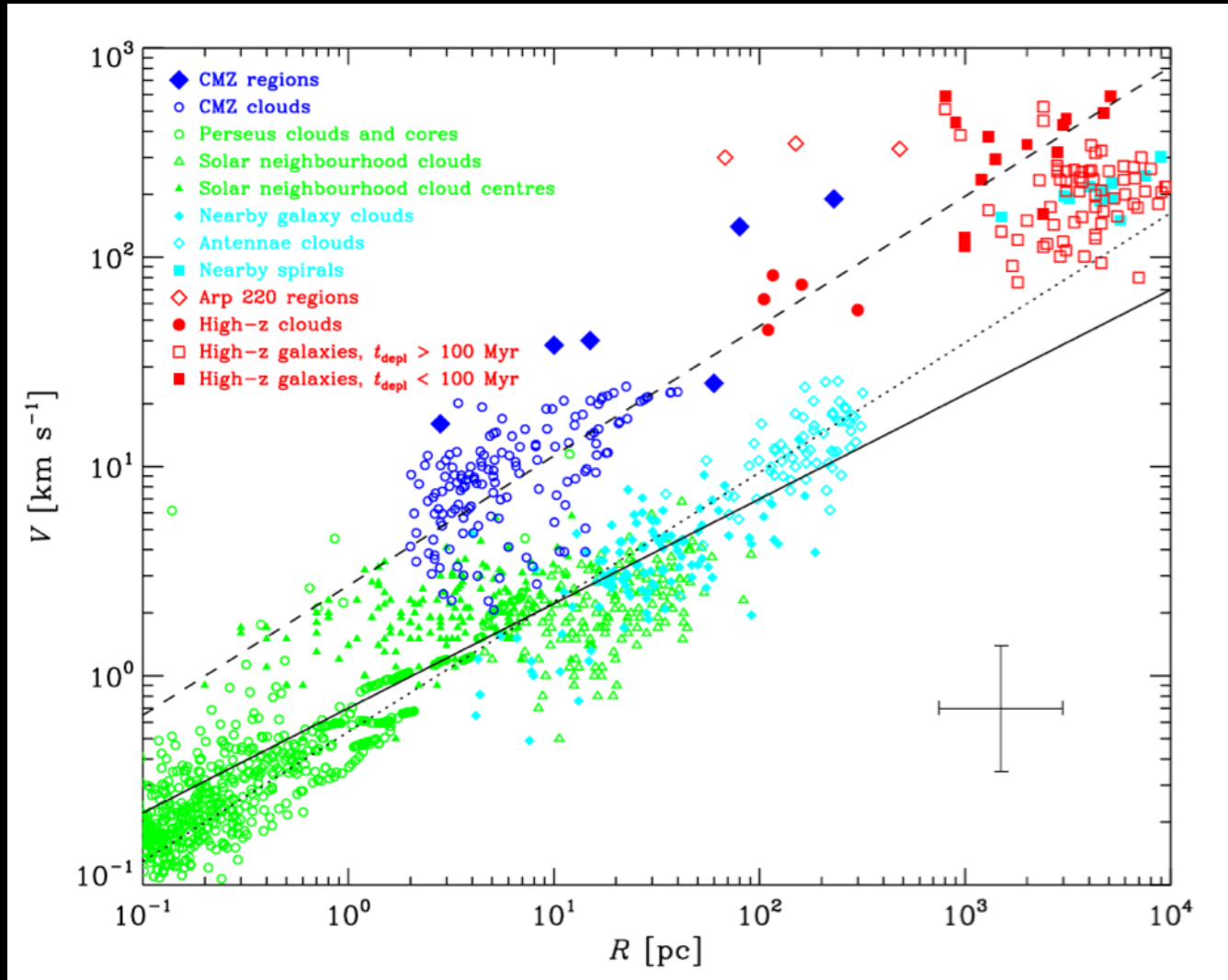
Central Molecular Zone



100 pc

$N(\text{H}_2)$ (Battersby+ in prep.), 70 μm (Hi-GAL, Molinari+2010,2011), 8 μm (GLIMPSE, Benjamin+20003)

The Central Molecular Zone: A window into the distant universe

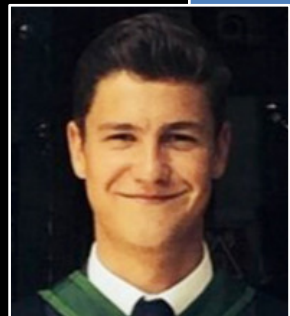


Star Formation Rates of the CMZ

Tracer
24 μm IR luminosity
70 μm IR luminosity
Total IR luminosity
YSO counting
free-free emission

About **0.06 - 0.10 M_{\odot} /year**
for a wide variety of methods and tracers
— not underestimating SFR based on one method

- ^a Approximately $|\ell| < 1^{\circ}$ and $|b| < 0.5^{\circ}$
- ^b Contaminated by main-sequence stars (see Koepferl+2015)



Ash Barnes
Liverpool PhD! student
ITA Postdoc

Star Formation Rates of the CMZ

Tracer

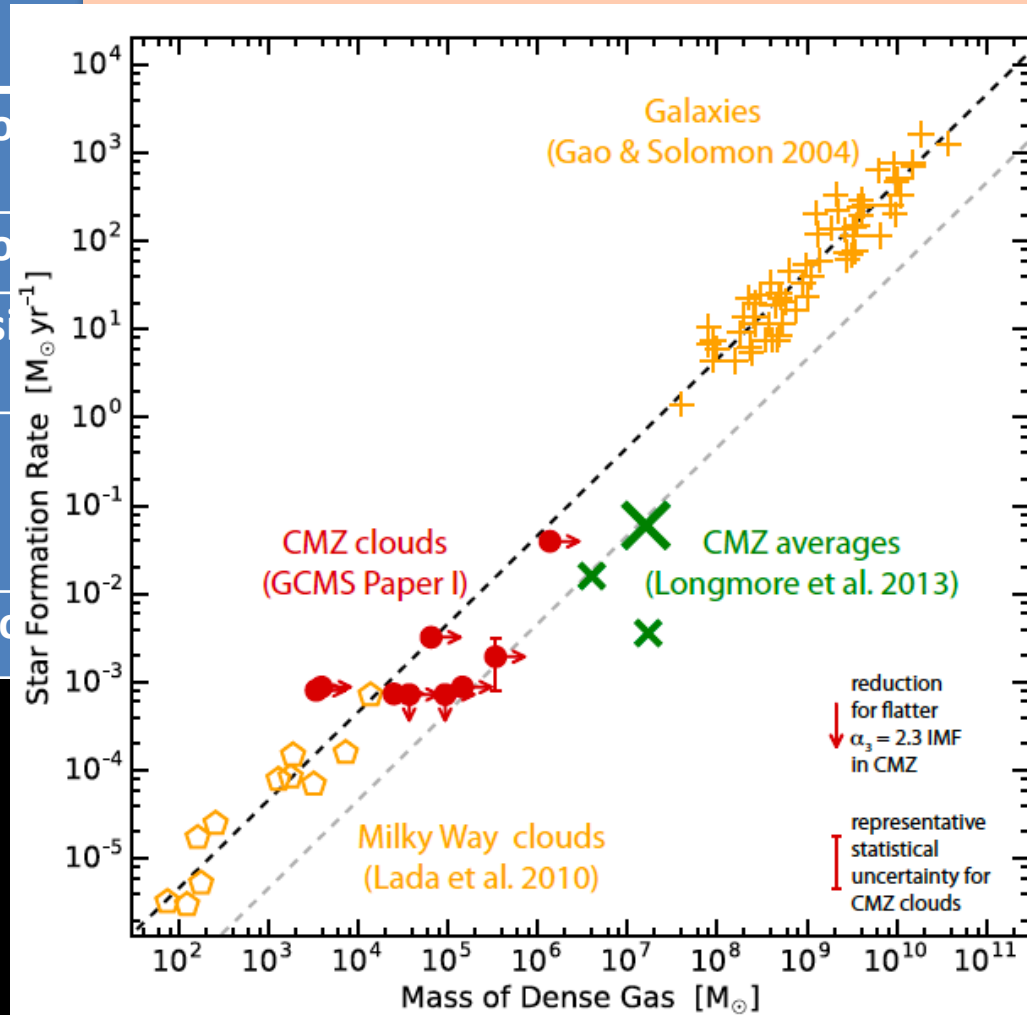
24 μm IR luminosity

70 μm IR luminosity

Total IR luminosity

YSO counting

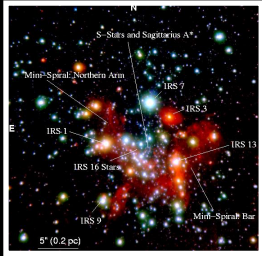
free-free emission



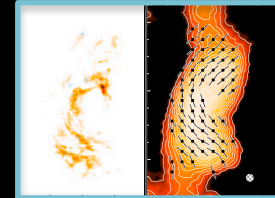
Kauffmann et al. 2016

near
and
based

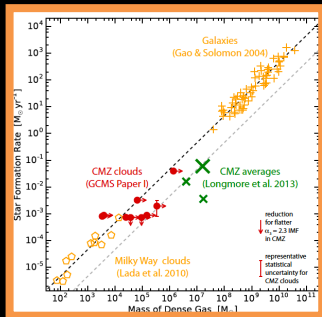
Star Formation in the CMZ



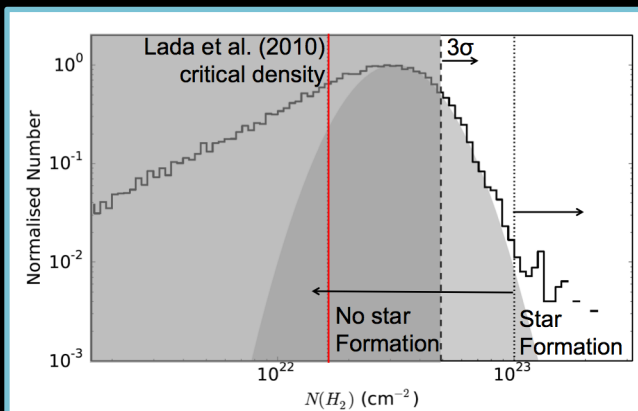
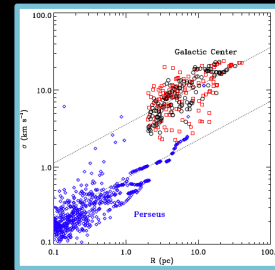
There are many extreme stars and clusters in the CMZ



CMZ gas is hot, dense, chemically complex, turbulent, with strong B fields, and the ISRF and CRIR are high → any of these may affect SF



The CMZ is currently underproducing stars by ~10



There is NO universal density threshold for Star Formation — but maybe an environmentally dependent one

Figures: ESO/VLT of Young Nuclear Cluster, Brick: Rathborne et al. 2014, Pillai et al. 2015, Dense gas relation: Kauffmann et al. 2016, size-linewidth: Shetty et al. 2012, CMZoom SF threshold: CMZoom in prep.

SMA Legacy Survey of the Central Molecular Zone

- Large primary beam + wide bandwidth + long wavelength + high angular resolution → detect early star formation across a large area
- First survey of the CMZ ever to be able to do so

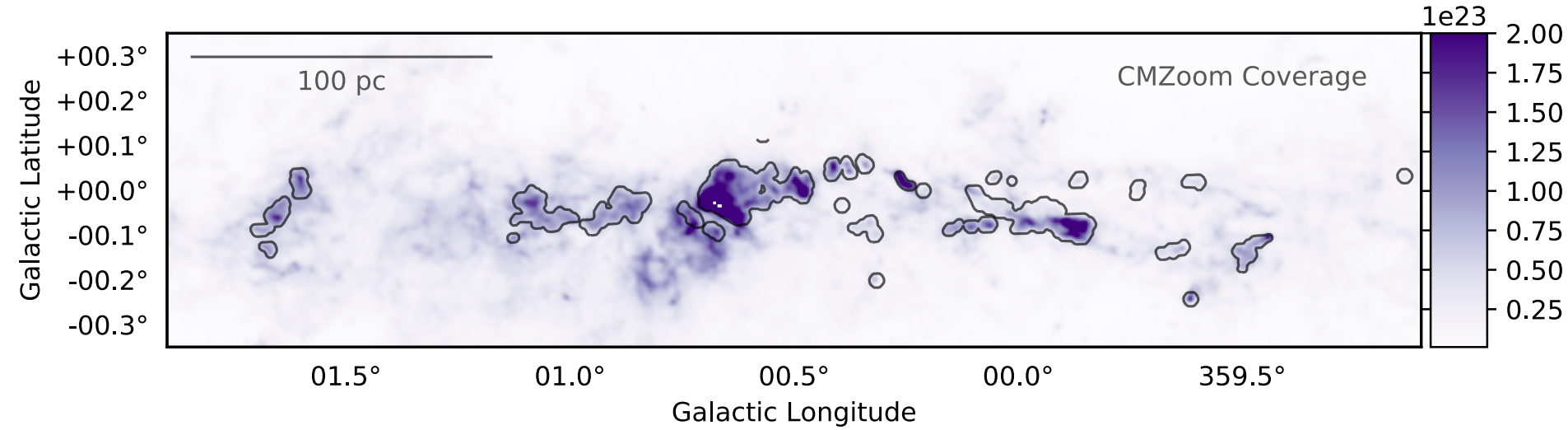
SMA Legacy Survey of the Central Molecular Zone



CMZom

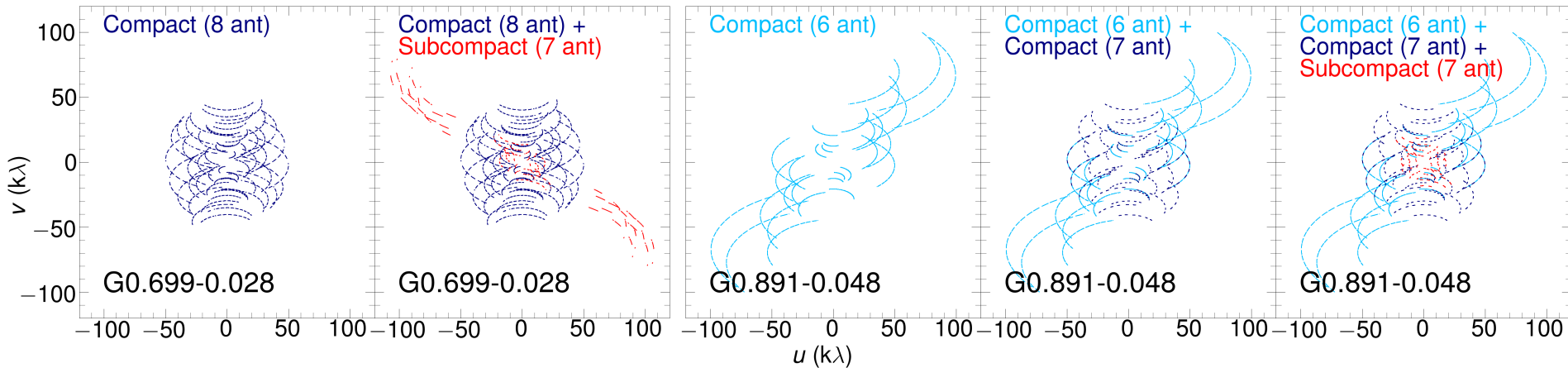
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CMZoom



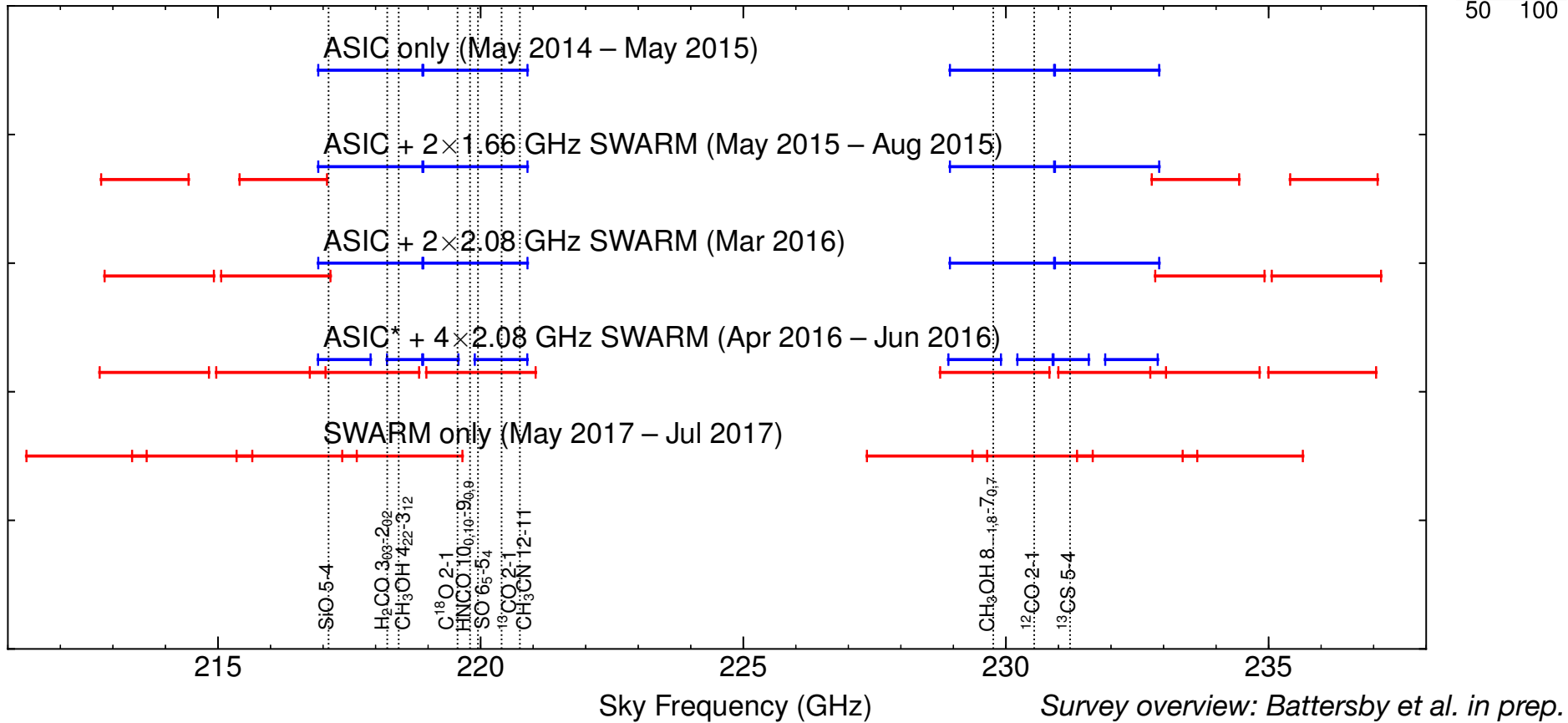
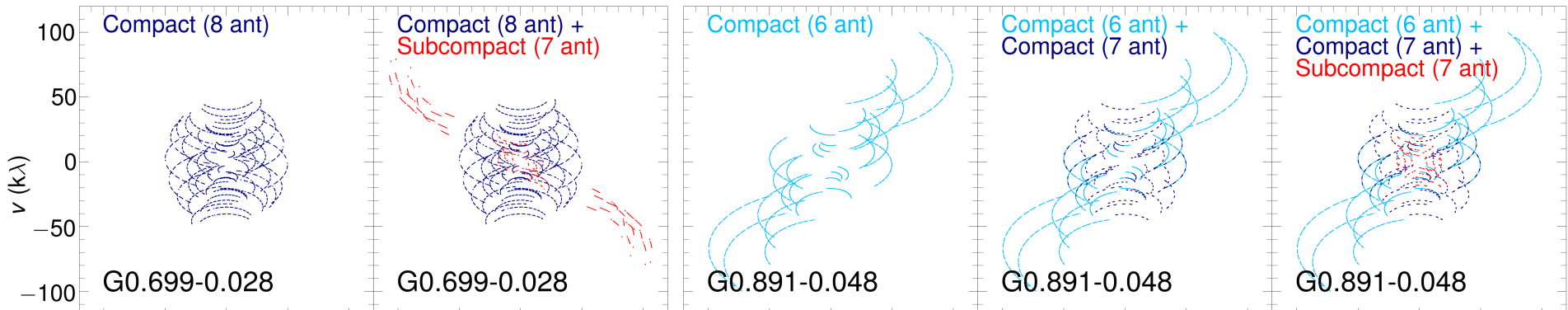
- ★ 230 GHz (1.3 mm)
- ★ 240 arcmin² (above $N(\text{H}_2) = 10^{23} \text{ cm}^{-2}$ or $3 \times 10^{22} \text{ cm}^{-2}$)
- ★ 4'' (0.2 pc) resolution, $\Delta v \sim 1.1 \text{ km/s}$
- ★ dust continuum + spectral lines (H_2CO , ^{12}CO , ^{13}CO , C^{18}O , SiO , CH_3OH , CH_3CN , etc.): 8+ GHz bandwidth
- ★ 3 mJy RMS continuum, 0.4 K
- ★ 550 hours (50 subcompact, 450 compact/custom) over 4 yrs
- ★ Complement with single-dish (APEX, CSO) observations

CMZoom

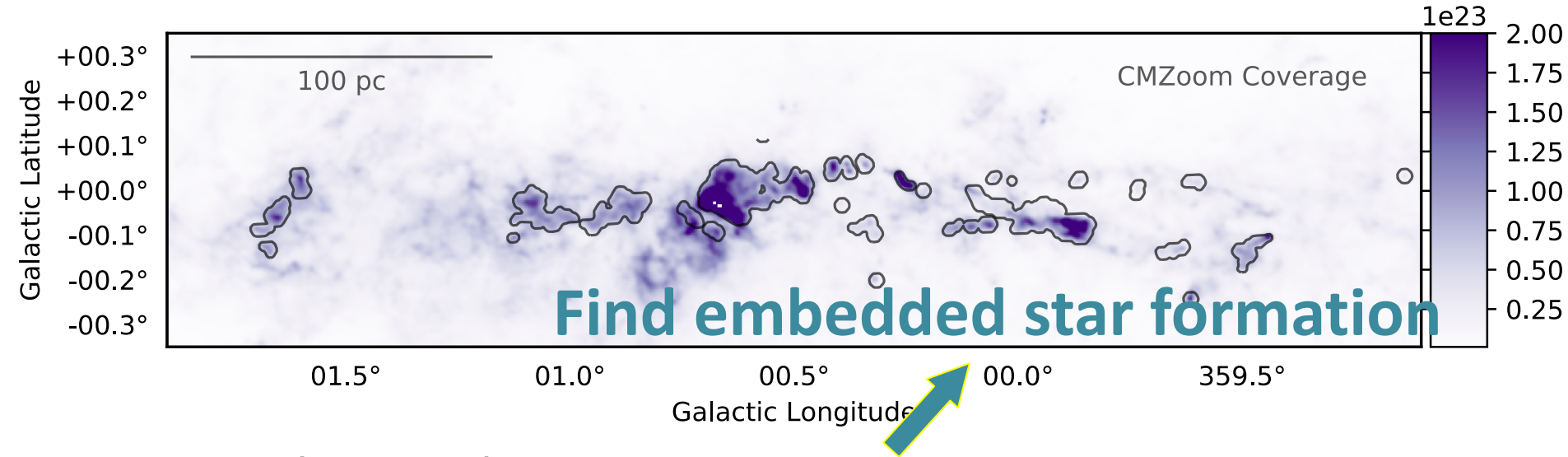


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CMZoom



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CMZoom



Team:

CfA: [Cara Battersby](#), [Eric Keto](#), Qizhou Zhang, Xing 'Walker' Lu (NAOJ), Mark Graham (Oxford), Nimesh Patel, Volker Tolls, Dennis Lee, Jimmy Castaño, Liz Gehret, Irene Vargas-Salzar, Perry Hatchfield, Daniel Callanan, Elizabeth Gutierrez

Bonn: Jens Kauffmann, Thushara Pillai

Liverpool: Steve Longmore, [Daniel Walker \(CfA\)](#), Jonny Henshaw

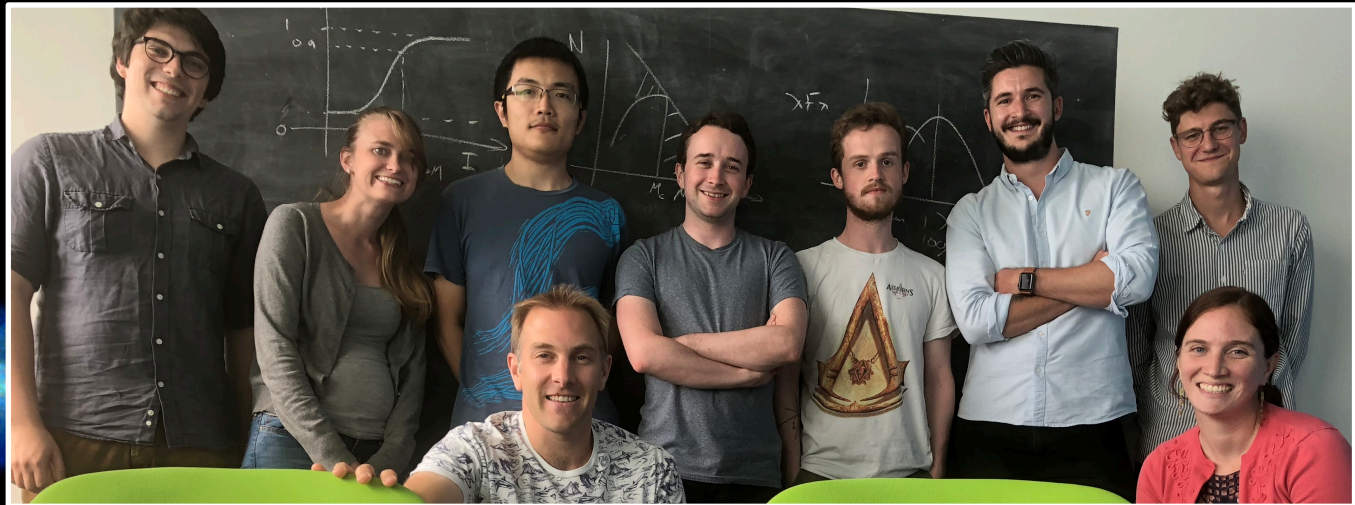
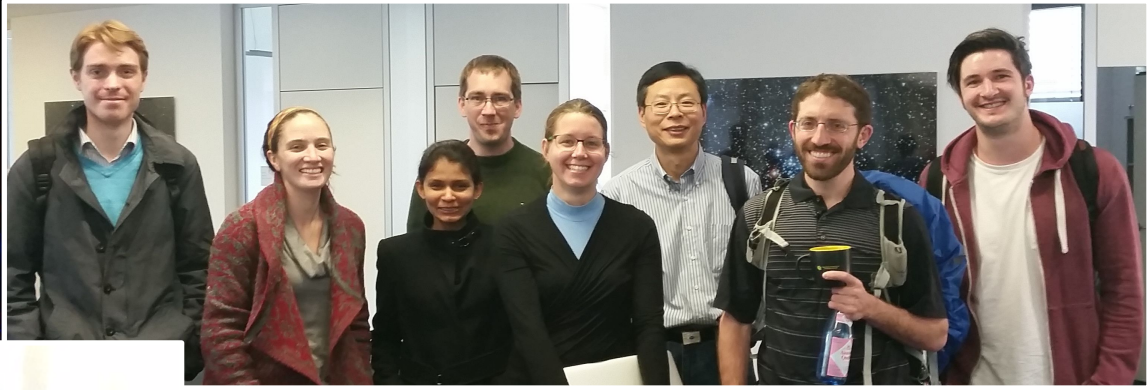
University of Colorado, Boulder: John Bally

Heidelberg: Diederik Kruijssen, [Ash Barnes](#) NRAO: Betsy Mills, Natalie

Butterfield ESO: Adam Ginsburg, Katharina Immer, Leeds: Katharine Johnston

Peking University: Luis C. Ho, Perth: Andrew Walsh

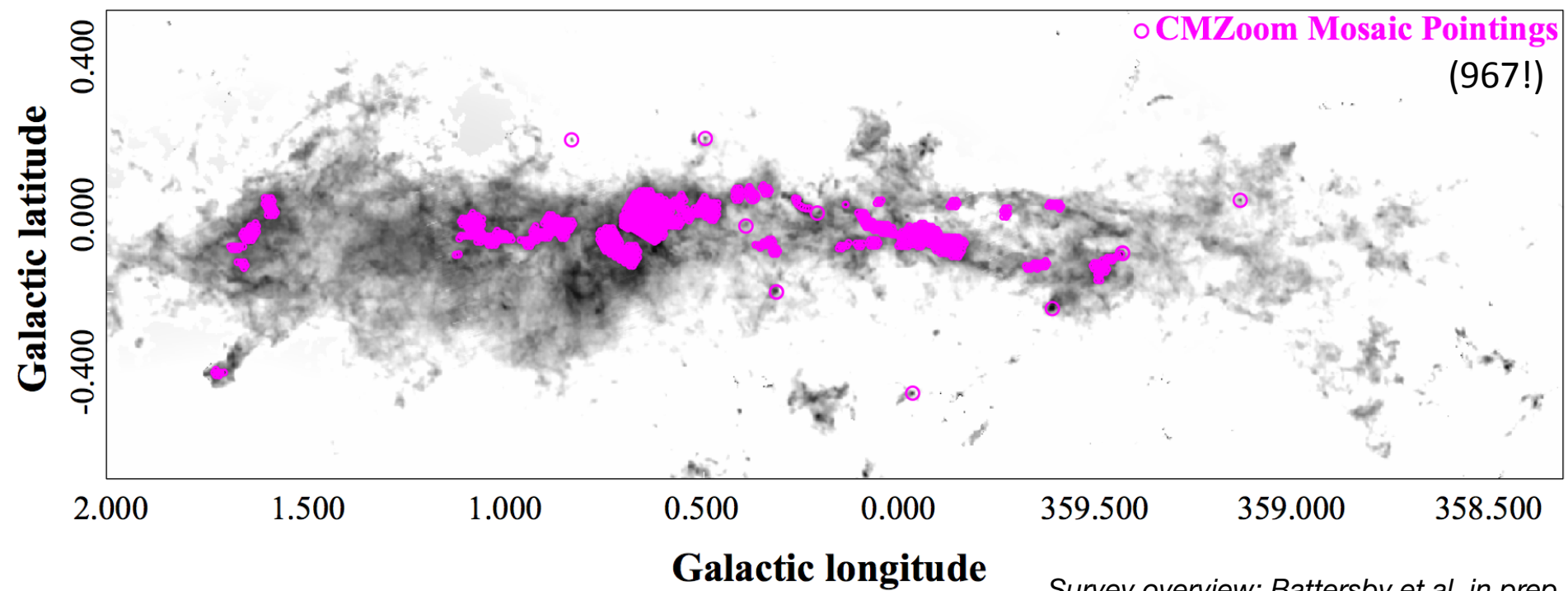
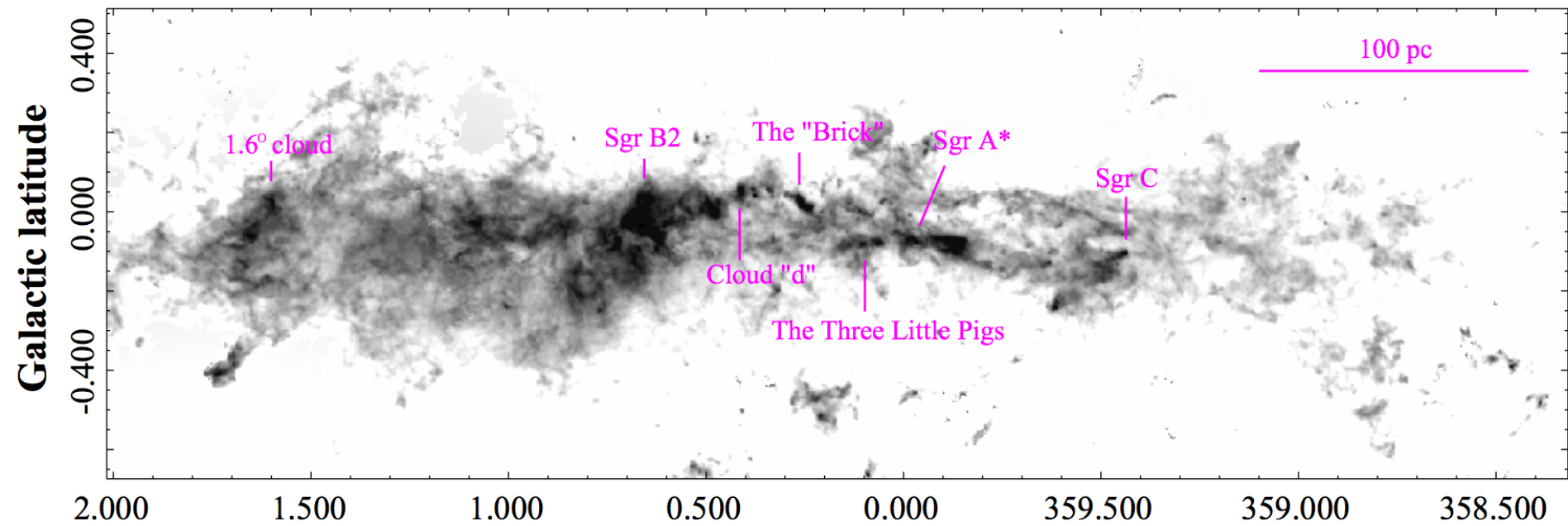
CMZoom Team



Next Generation CMZoomers



The Milky Way Laboratory at UConn
Battersby Research Group Fall 2017



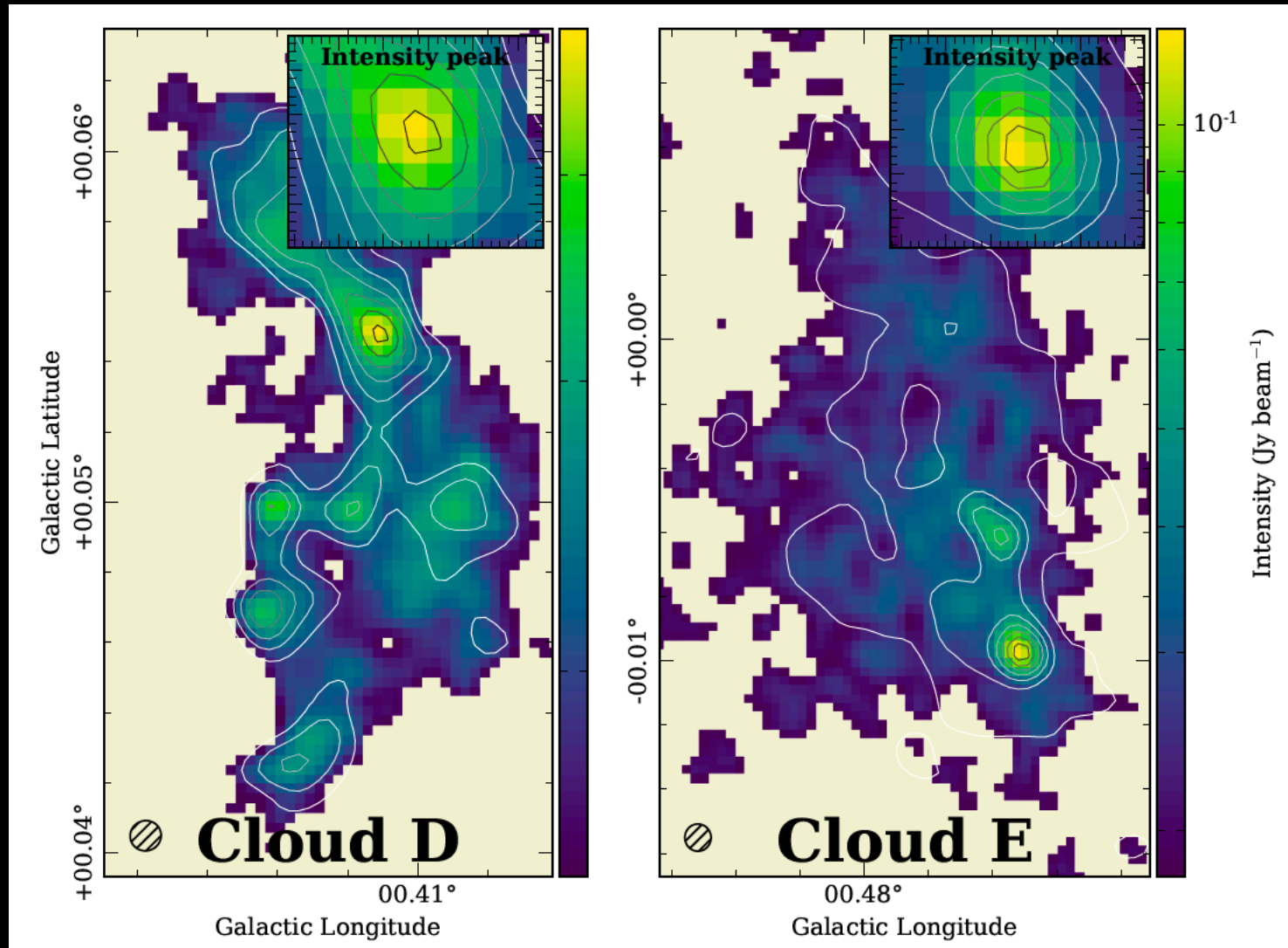
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Pilot1*	5/21/2013	5	subcompact		5/30/2016 ^b	7	compact-5
Pilot2*	8/23/2013	5	subcompact	27	5/23/2015	7	compact-2
Pilot3*	7/24/2013	6	compact		6/1/2016 ^c	7	compact-5
	8/3/2013	5	compact	28	5/24/2015	7	compact-2
	8/9/2013	5	compact		6/1/2016 ^c	7	compact-5
Pilot4*	7/25/2013	6	compact	29	5/26/2015	7	compact-2
Pilot5*	8/1/2013	6	compact		6/4/2016 ^f	7	compact-5
	8/2/2013	6	compact	30	6/02/2015	7	compact-2
Pilot6*	3/10/2014	7	subcompact		6/4/2016 ^f	7	compact-5
	3/21/2014	7	subcompact	31	3/25/2016	8	compact-4
1	5/25/2014	7	compact-1	32	7/10/2015	6	compact-3
2	5/24/2014	7	compact-1		3/16/2016	7	compact-4
3	5/30/2014	7	compact-1	33	7/22/2015	6	compact-3
4	6/02/2014	7	compact-1		3/29/2016	8	compact-4
5	6/04/2014	7	compact-1	34	6/05/2015	6	subcompact
6	6/07/2014	8	compact-1	35	6/07/2015	7	subcompact
7	6/10/2014	8	compact-1	36	6/06/2015	7	subcompact
8	6/13/2014	8	compact-1	37	6/09/2015	7	subcompact
9	6/14/2014	8	compact-1	38	6/10/2015	7	subcompact
10	6/15/2014	7	compact-1	39	6/13/2015	7	subcompact
	6/20/2014	7	compact-1	40	6/15/2015	7	subcompact
11	6/16/2014	7	compact-1	41	6/17/2015	6	subcompact
12	6/22/2014	8	compact-1	42	6/18/2015	7	subcompact
	7/15/2017 ^a	8	compact-6	43	6/22/2015	7	subcompact
13	6/24/2014	8	compact-1	44	5/31/2017	7	subcompact
14	6/27/2014	8	compact-1	45	7/23/2015	6	compact-3
	5/30/2016 ^b	7	compact-5		3/28/2016	8	compact-4
15	7/09/2014	8	compact-1	46	7/27/2015	6	compact-3
16	7/10/2014	8	compact-1		4/30/2016	7	compact-5
	4/14/2015	7	compact-2	47	7/28/2015	6	compact-3
17	4/16/2015	7	compact-2		5/01/2016	7	compact-5
	5/3/2016 ^b	7	compact-5	48	5/07/2016	7	compact-5
	7/15/2017 ^a	8	compact-6	49	5/02/2016	7	compact-5
18	5/09/2015	6	compact-2	50	5/08/2016	7	compact-5
	5/3/2016 ^b	7	compact-5	51	5/10/2016	6	compact-5
19	5/10/2015	6	compact-2	52	5/14/2016	7	compact-5
	5/4/2016 ^c	7	compact-5		5/17/2016	7	compact-5
	7/31/2017 ^d	8	compact-6	53	5/28/2016	7	compact-5
20	5/11/2015	6	compact-2	54	5/29/2016	7	compact-5
	5/4/2016 ^c	7	compact-5	55	5/21/2016	7	compact-5
	7/31/2017 ^d	8	compact-6	56	5/22/2016	7	compact-5
21	7/25/2014	7	subcompact	57	5/23/2016	7	compact-5
22	7/27/2014	7	subcompact	58	6/5/2016	7	compact-5
23	7/28/2014	7	subcompact	59	6/07/2016	7	compact-5
24	7/29/2014	7	subcompact	60	6/11/2016	7	compact-5
25	8/04/2014	7	subcompact	61	6/17/2016	8	compact-5

CMZOOM TEAM

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Track Number	Observation Date	# of Antennas	Array Config.	Track Number	Observation Date	# of Antennas	Array Config.	Region Name and Location	Colloquial Name	Track Numbers	# of Pointings
KJ2012*	6/09/2012	7	compact	26	5/22/2015	7	compact-2	G0.326-0.085	(far-side candidate)	1, 21	20
Pilot1*	5/21/2013	5	subcompact		5/30/2016 ^b	7	compact-5	G0.340+0.055	Dust Ridge: Cloud b	2, 21	9
Pilot2*	8/23/2013	5	subcompact	27	5/23/2015	7	compact-2	G0.380+0.050	Dust Ridge: Cloud c	2, 21	9
Pilot3*	7/24/2013	6	compact		6/1/2016 ^e	7	compact-5	G0.412+0.052	Dust Ridge: Cloud d	3, 21	13
	8/3/2013	5	compact	28	5/24/2015	7	compact-2	G0.489+0.010	Dust Ridge: Clouds c/f or Sgr B1-off	3, 4, 5, 21, 22	44
	8/9/2013	5	compact		6/1/2016 ^e	7	compact-5	-	Dust Ridge: Clouds c/f or Sgr B1-off	Pilot2, Pilot5	6
Pilot4*	7/25/2013	6	compact	29	5/26/2015	7	compact-2	G359.734+0.002	(far-side candidate)	6, 22	8
Pilot5*	8/1/2013	6	compact		6/4/2016 ^f	7	compact-5	G359.611+0.018	(far-side candidate)	6, 22	10
	8/2/2013	6	compact	30	6/02/2015	7	compact-2	G0.699-0.028 ^a	SgrB2	7, 8, 9	74
Pilot6*	3/10/2014	7	subcompact		6/4/2016 ^f	7	compact-5	G1.602+0.018	1.6° cloud	10, 23	21
	3/21/2014	7	subcompact	31	3/25/2016	8	compact-4	G1.651-0.050	1.6° cloud	11, 23	24
1	5/25/2014	7	compact-1	32	7/10/2015	6	compact-3	G1.737-0.406	1.1° cloud	12, 23	7
2	5/24/2014	7	compact-1		3/16/2016	7	compact-4	G359.615-0.243	(isolated massive SF candidate)	12, 23	7
3	5/30/2014	7	compact-1	33	7/22/2015	6	compact-3	G0.212-0.001	(isolated massive SF candidate)	12, 23	7
4	6/02/2014	7	compact-1		3/29/2016	8	compact-4	G0.316-0.201	(isolated massive SF candidate)	13, 24	7
5	6/04/2014	7	compact-1	34	6/05/2015	6	subcompact	G0.376+0.040	(isolated massive SF candidate)	13, 24	7
6	6/07/2014	8	compact-1	35	6/07/2015	7	subcompact	G0.393-0.034	(isolated massive SF candidate)	13, 24	7
7	6/10/2014	8	compact-1	36	6/06/2015	7	subcompact	G0.068-0.075	Three Little Pigs: Stone Cloud	14, 24	10
8	6/13/2014	8	compact-1	37	6/09/2015	7	subcompact	G0.106-0.082	Three Little Pigs: Sticks Cloud	14, 24	5
9	6/14/2014	8	compact-1	38	6/10/2015	7	subcompact	G0.145-0.086	Three Little Pigs: Straw Cloud	14, 24	6
10	6/15/2014	7	compact-1	39	6/13/2015	7	subcompact	G1.085-0.027	1.1° cloud	15, 16, 24, 37	34
	6/20/2014	7	compact-1	40	6/15/2015	7	subcompact	G0.891-0.048	1.1° cloud	17, 18, 19, 20, 34, 35	82
11	6/16/2014	7	compact-1	41	6/17/2015	6	subcompact	G359.863-0.069	20 km s ⁻¹ cloud	26, 38	18
12	6/22/2014	8	compact-1	42	6/18/2015	7	subcompact	G359.889-0.093	20 km s ⁻¹ cloud	27, 28, 36	49
	7/15/2017 ^a	8	compact-6	43	6/22/2015	7	subcompact	-	20 km s ⁻¹ Cloud	Pilot1, Pilot3	8
13	6/24/2014	8	compact-1	44	5/31/2017	7	subcompact	G0.001-0.058	50 km s ⁻¹ Cloud	29, 35	24
14	6/27/2014	8	compact-1	45	7/23/2015	6	compact-3	-	50 km s ⁻¹ Cloud	Pilot2, Pilot4	4
	5/30/2016 ^b	7	compact-5		3/28/2016	8	compact-4	G359.865+0.022	(far-side candidate)	30, 37	8
15	7/09/2014	8	compact-1	46	7/27/2015	6	compact-3	G359.648-0.133	(bridge from SgrC to 20kms cloud)	30, 38	16
16	7/10/2014	8	compact-1		4/30/2016	7	compact-5	G359.484-0.132	SgrC	31, 32, 38	28
	4/14/2015	7	compact-2	47	7/28/2015	6	compact-3	-	SgrC	Pilot1, Pilot4	3
17	4/16/2015	7	compact-2		5/01/2016	7	compact-5	G0.253+0.016	Brick	KJ2012, Pilot6	6
	5/3/2016 ^b	7	compact-5	48	5/07/2016	7	compact-5	G0.070-0.035	(h2co bridge from sgra to dust ridge)	32, 33, 37	39
	7/15/2017 ^a	8	compact-6	49	5/02/2016	7	compact-5	G0.619+0.012	SgrB2 NW	39, 40, 41, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52	175
18	5/09/2015	6	compact-2	50	5/08/2016	7	compact-5	G0.014+0.021	Arches e1	43, 52	1
	5/3/2016 ^b	7	compact-5	51	5/10/2016	6	compact-5	G0.054+0.027	Arches w1	43, 57	4
19	5/10/2015	6	compact-2	52	5/14/2016	7	compact-5	G1.68-0.09	1.6° cloud	41, 53	8
	5/4/2016 ^c	7	compact-5		5/17/2016	7	compact-5	G1.67-0.13	1.6° cloud	41, 53	6
	7/31/2017 ^d	8	compact-6	53	5/28/2016	7	compact-5	G1.038-0.074	1.1° cloud	42, 53, 54, 55	46
20	5/11/2015	6	compact-2	54	5/29/2016	7	compact-5	G359.948-0.052	Circumnuclear Disk	42, 43, 55, 56, 57	40
	5/4/2016 ^c	7	compact-5	55	5/21/2016	7	compact-5	G0.714-0.100	SgrB2 extended	43, 44, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61	94
	7/31/2017 ^d	8	compact-6	56	5/22/2016	7	compact-5				
21	7/25/2014	7	subcompact	57	5/23/2016	7	compact-5				
22	7/27/2014	7	subcompact	58	6/5/2016	7	compact-5				
23	7/28/2014	7	subcompact	59	6/07/2016	7	compact-5				
24	7/29/2014	7	subcompact	60	6/11/2016	7	compact-5				
25	8/04/2014	7	subcompact	61	6/17/2016	8	compact-5				

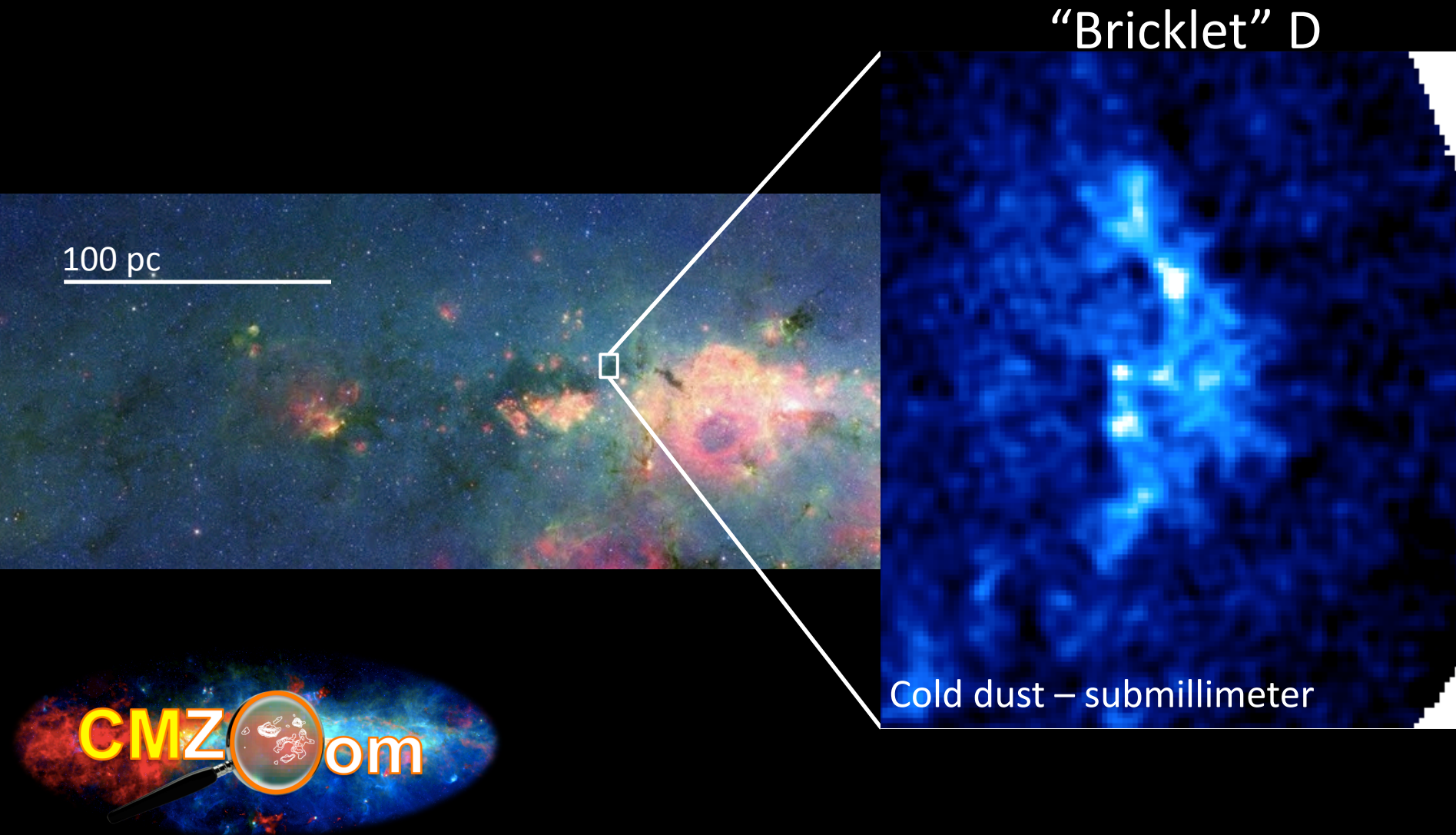
CMZoom



Pointing comparison -
SMA color scale, smoothed ALMA data as contours

Survey overview: Battersby et al. in prep.

Central Molecular Zone

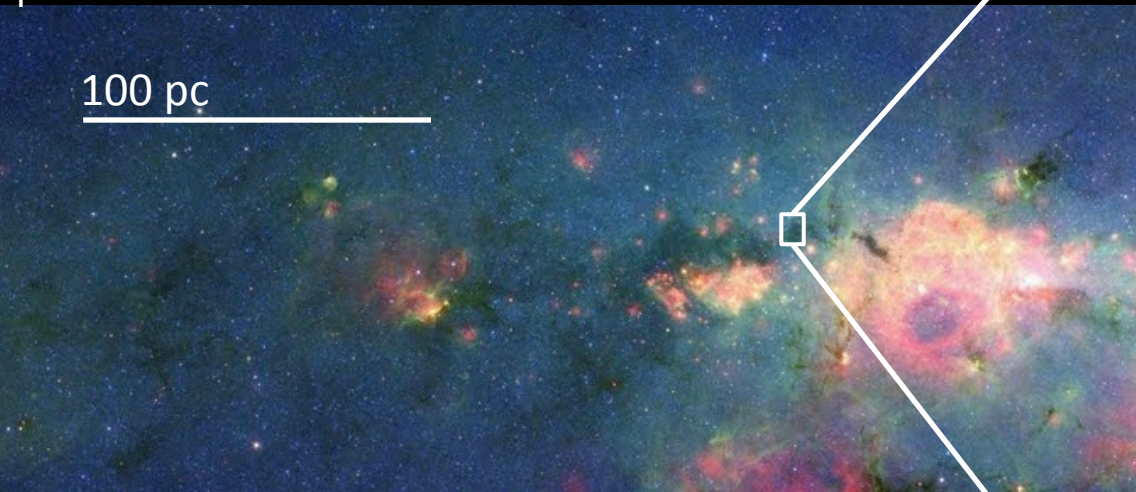


Central Molecular Zone

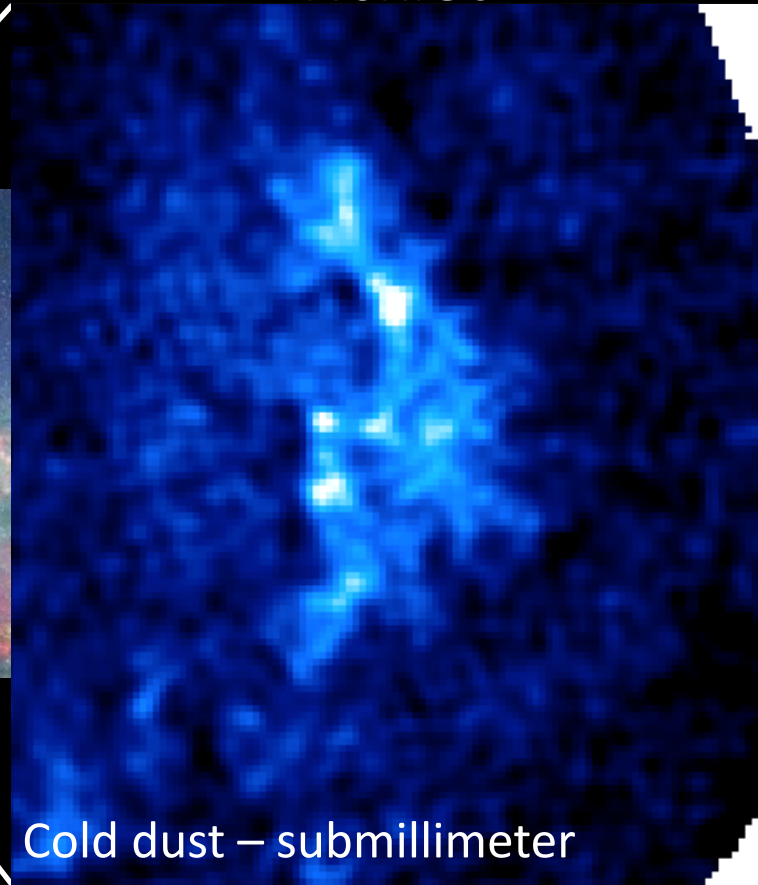


Dan Walker
postdoc at NAOJ Chile

100 pc



“Bricklet” D



Cold dust – submillimeter

CMZom



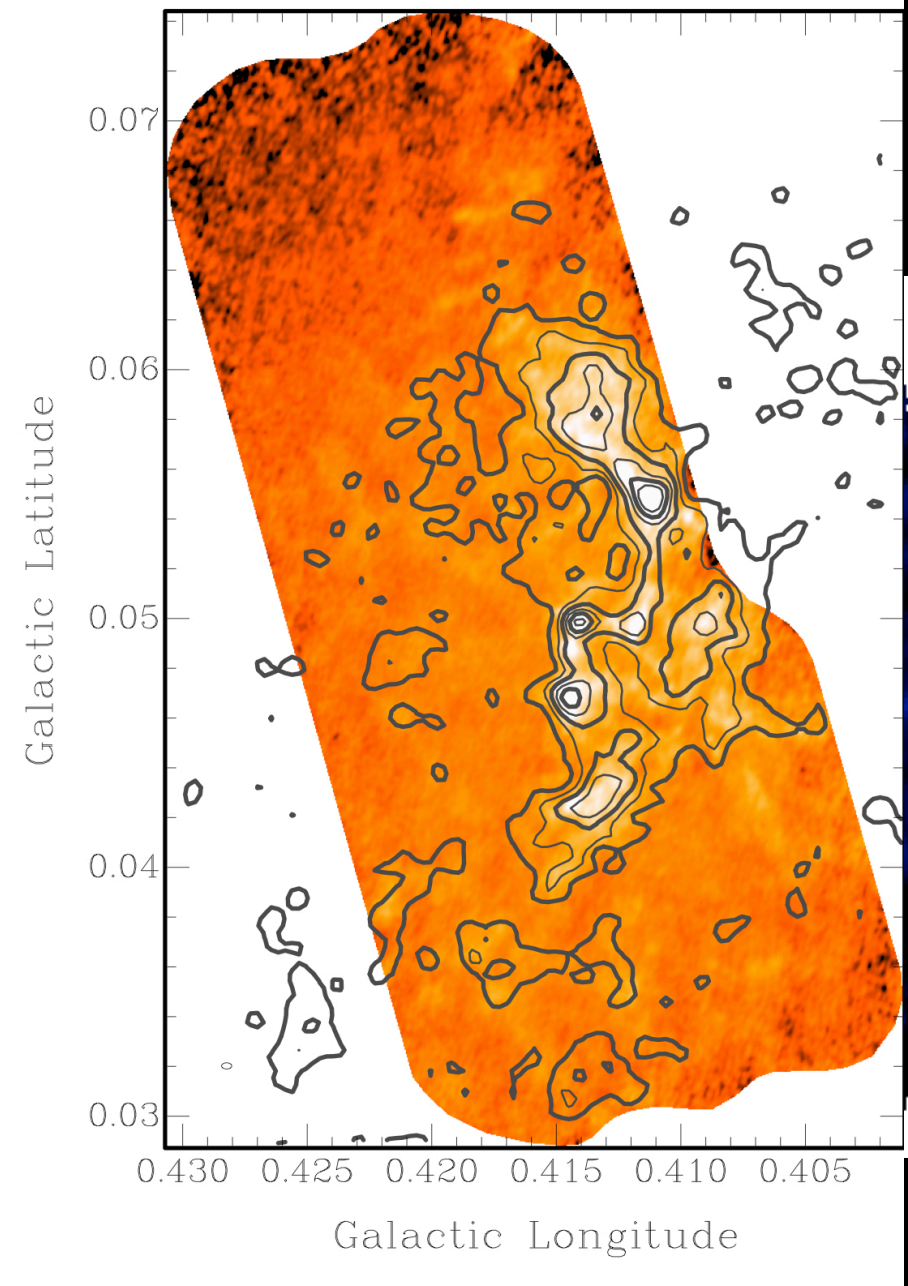
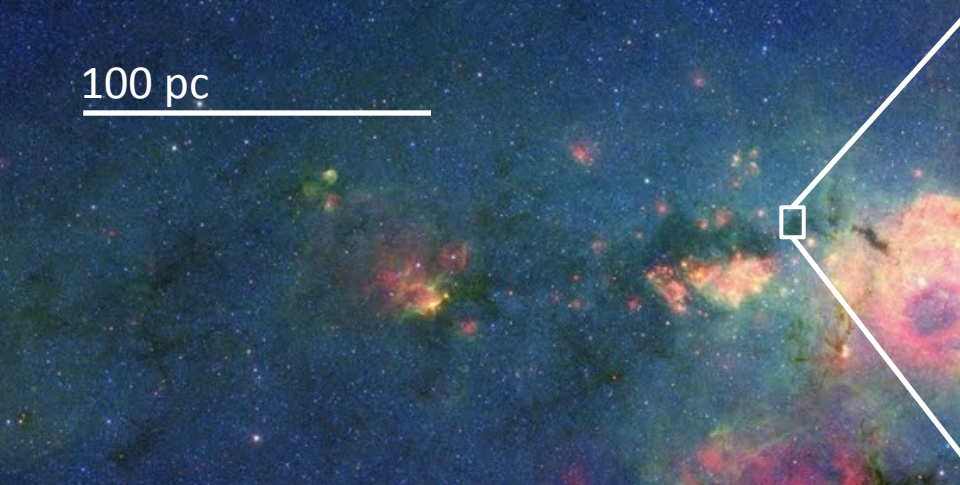
Central Molecular Zone

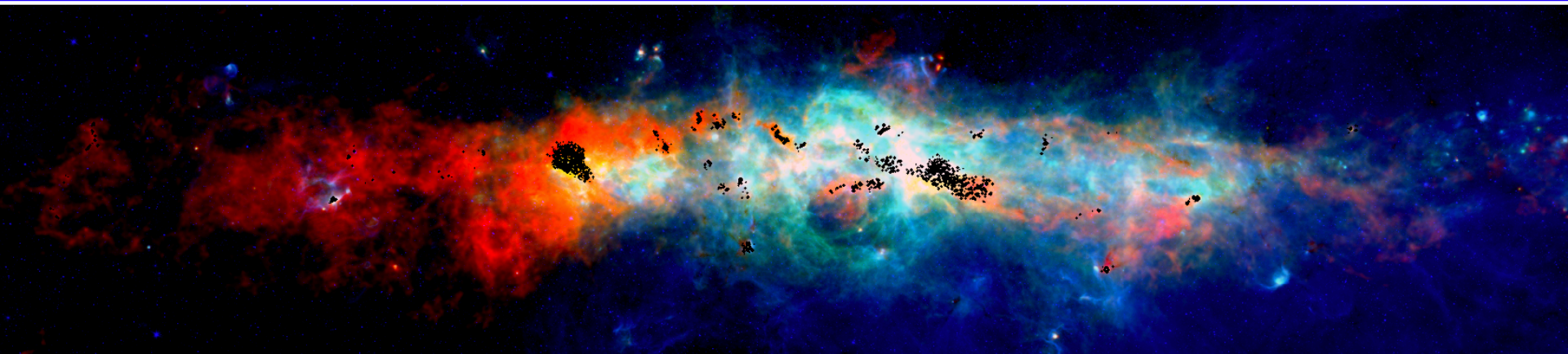
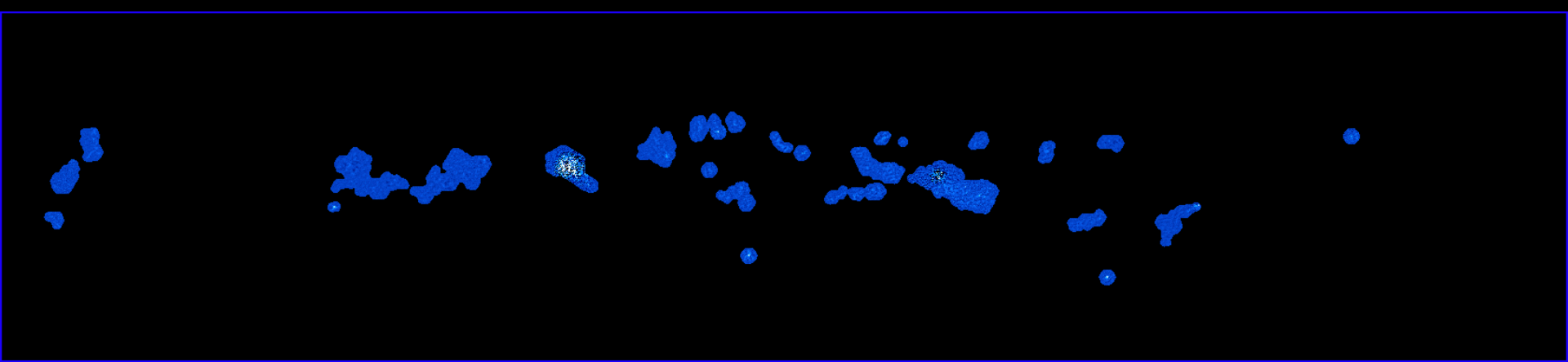


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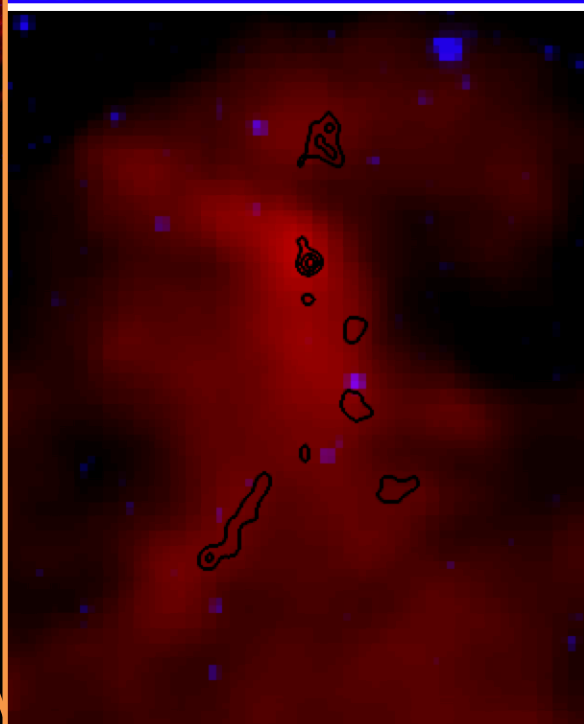
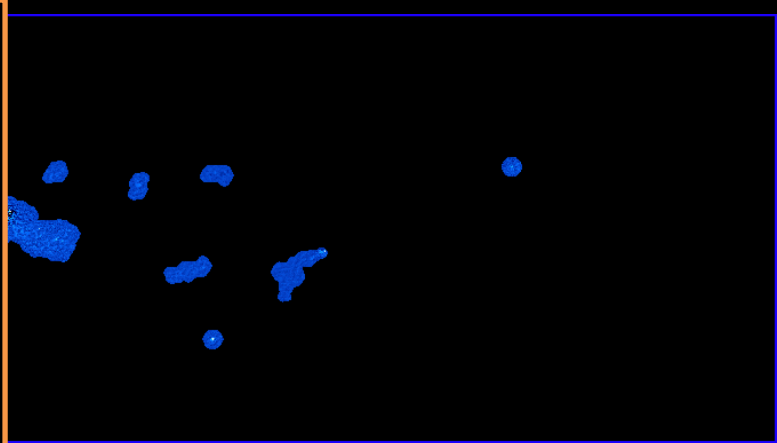
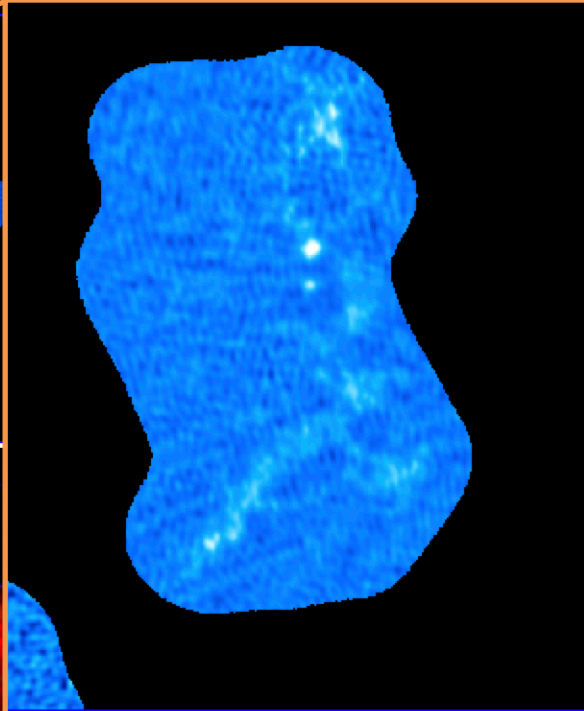
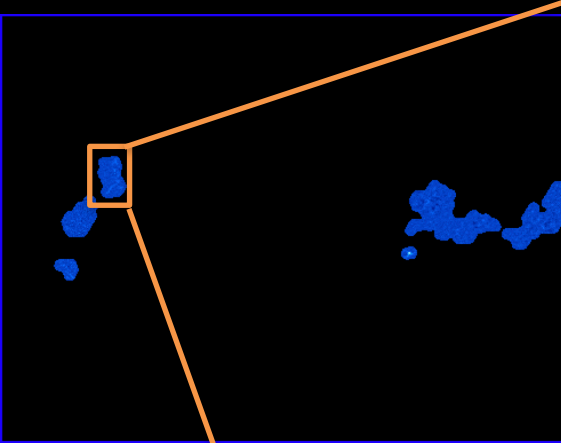


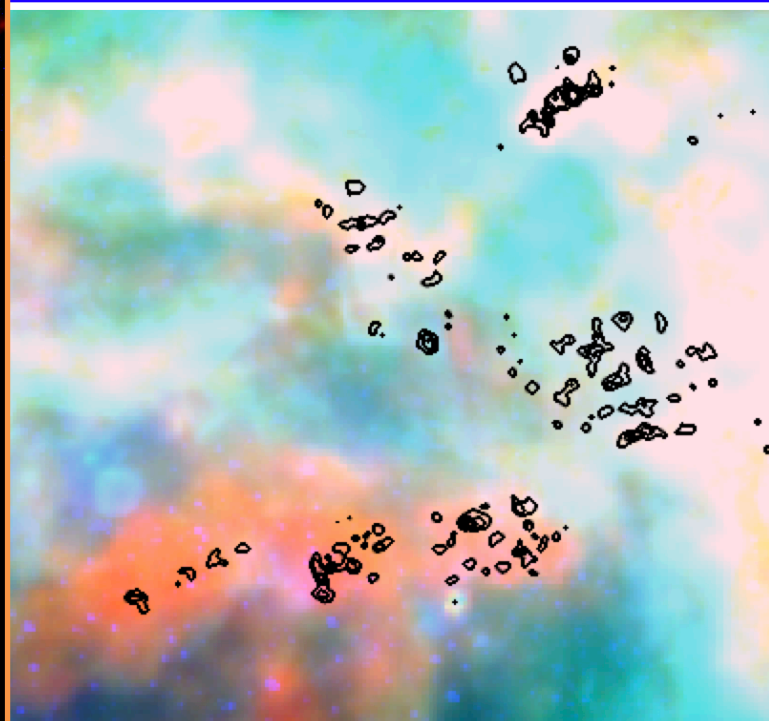
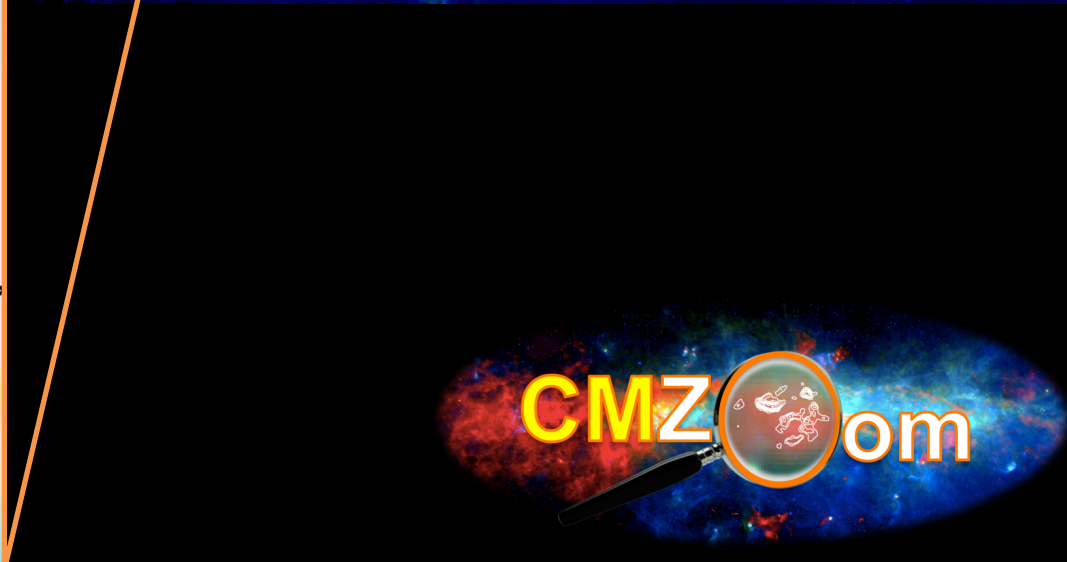
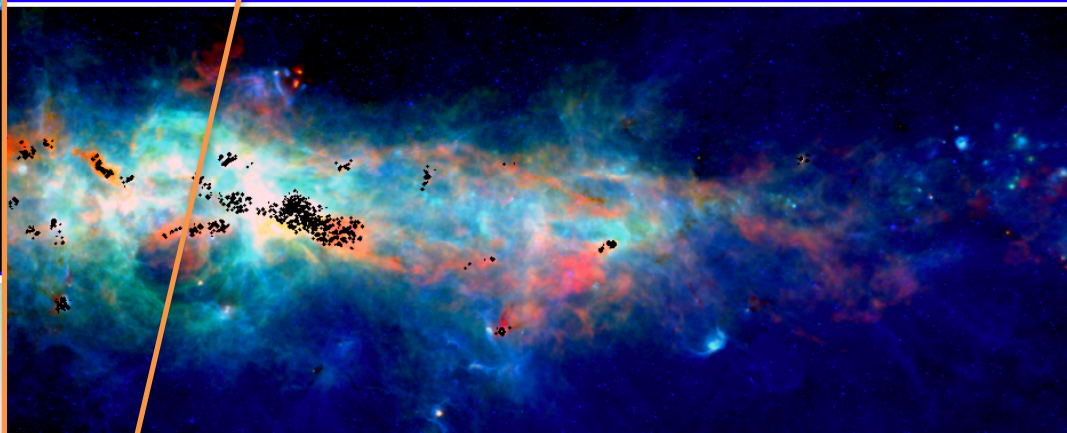
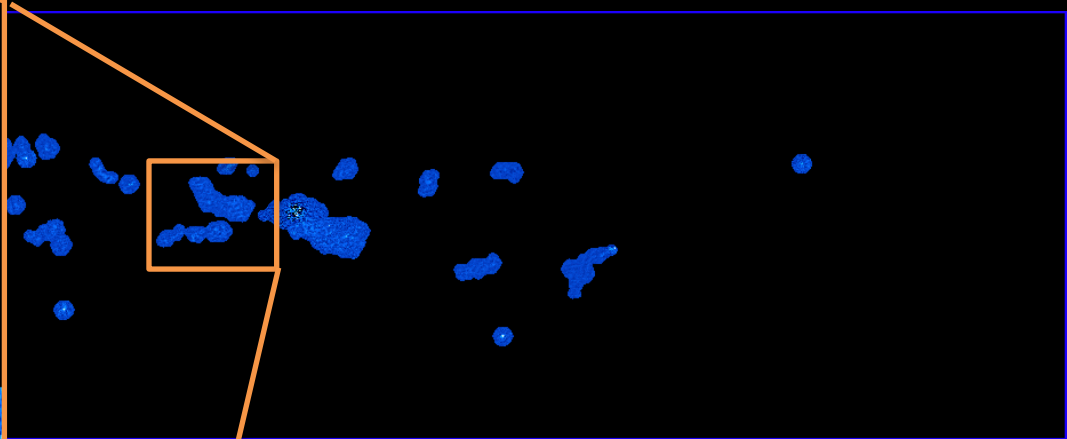
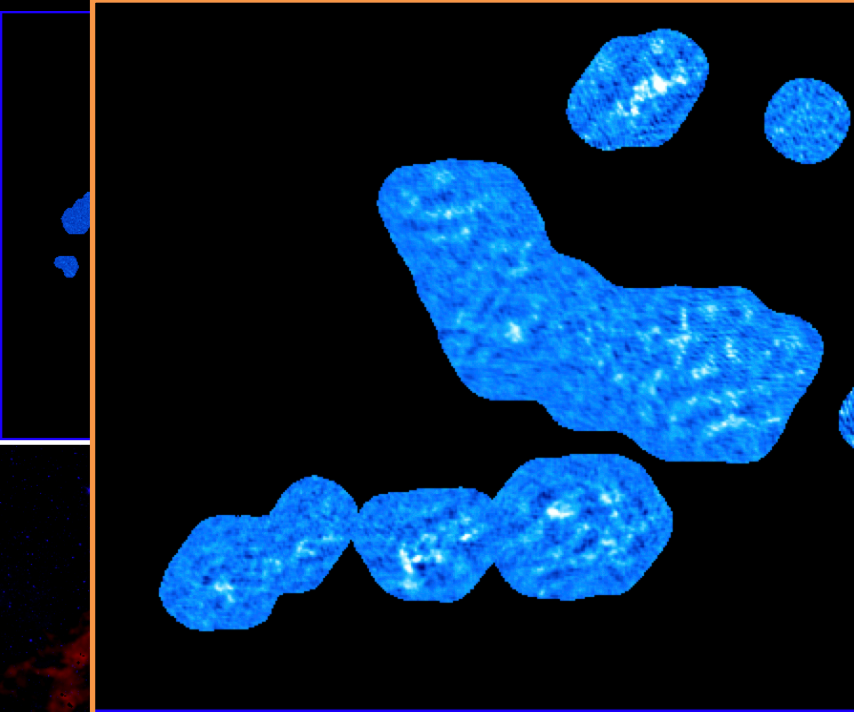
Ash Barnes
postdoc at ITA

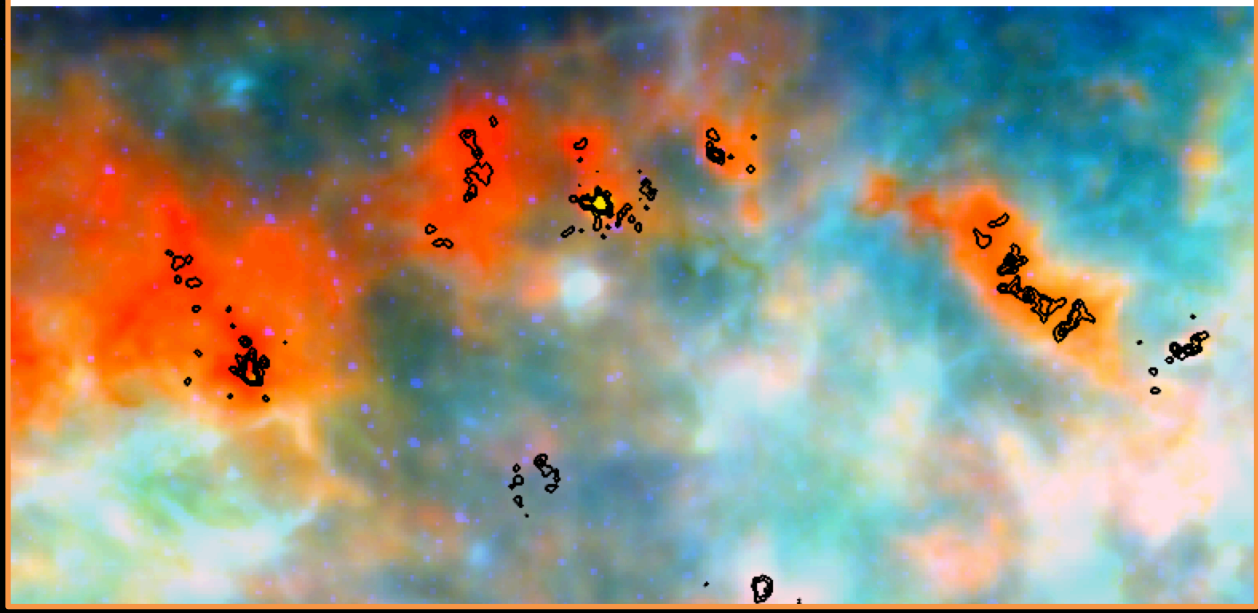
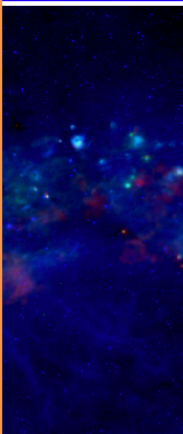
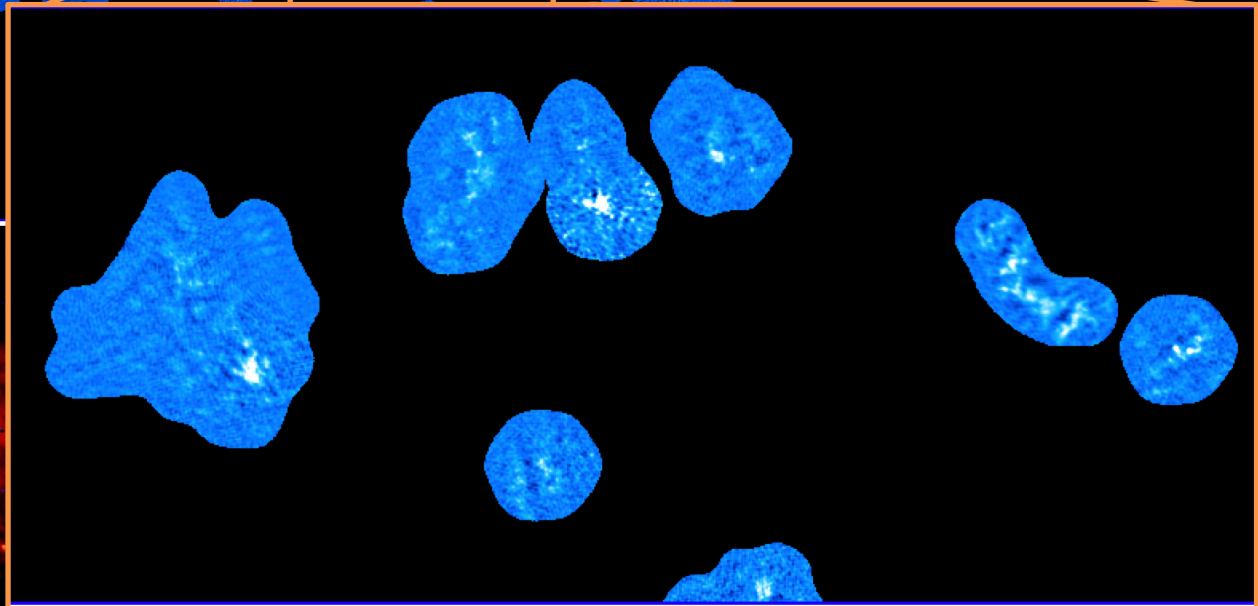
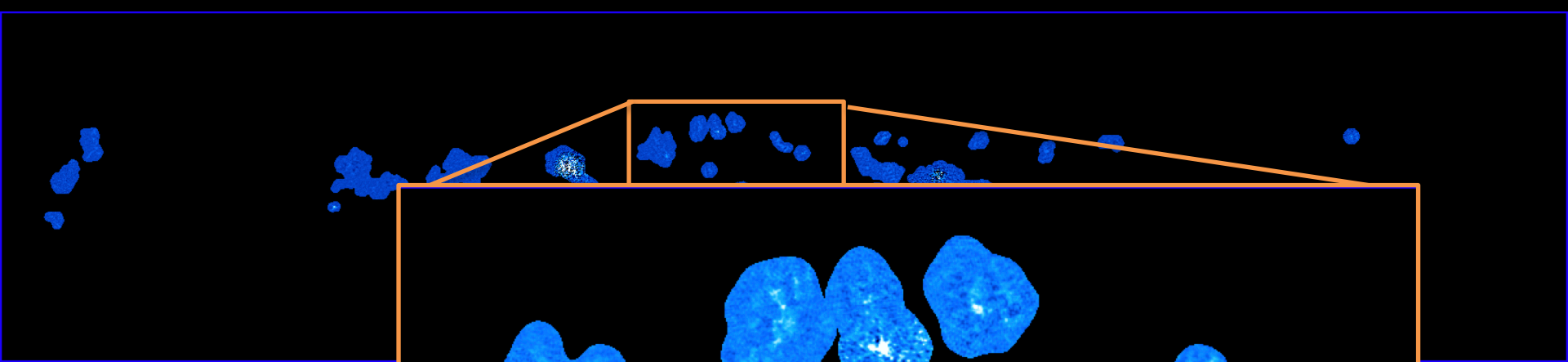


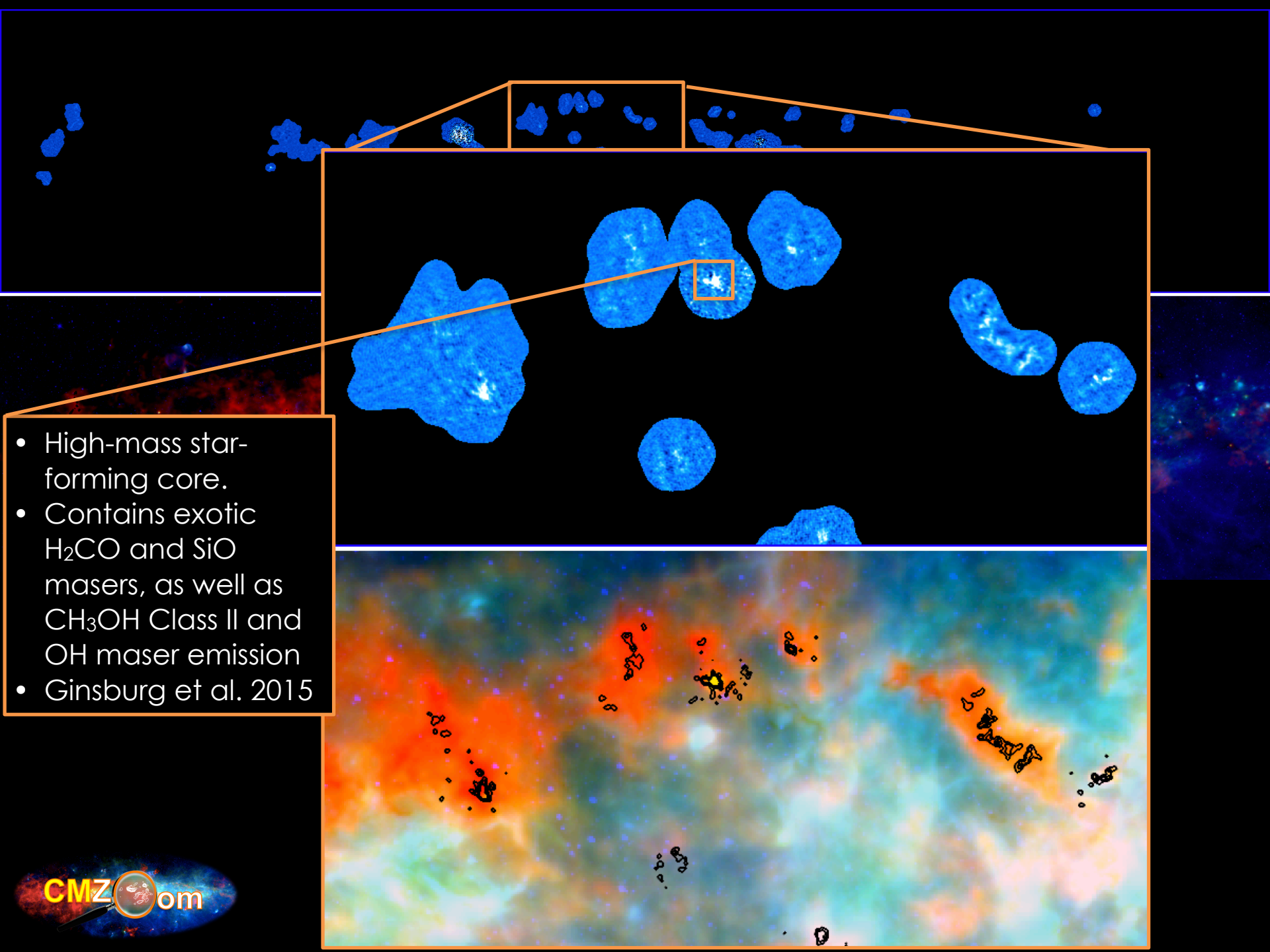


$N(\text{H}_2)$ from HiGAL Battersby+, in prep., $70\ \mu\text{m}$ from HiGAL, Molinari+ 2011, $8\ \mu\text{m}$ from GLIMPSE (Benjamin+ 2003)



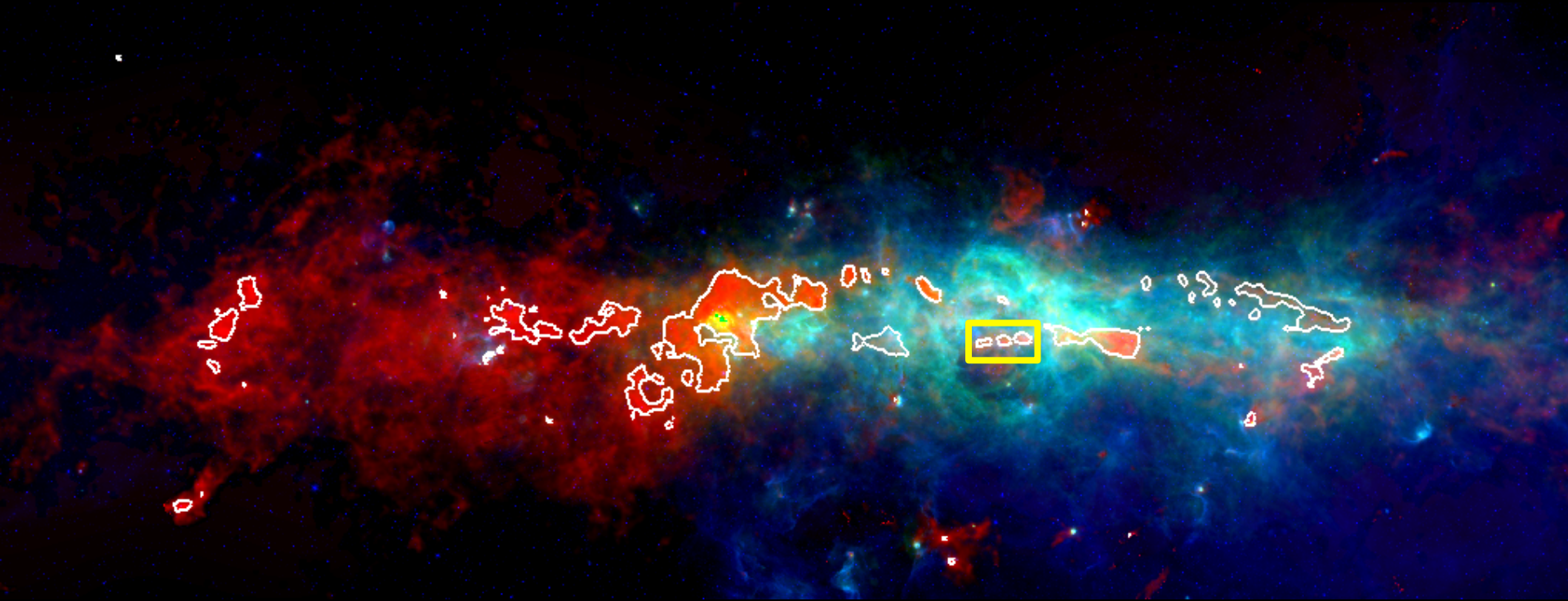




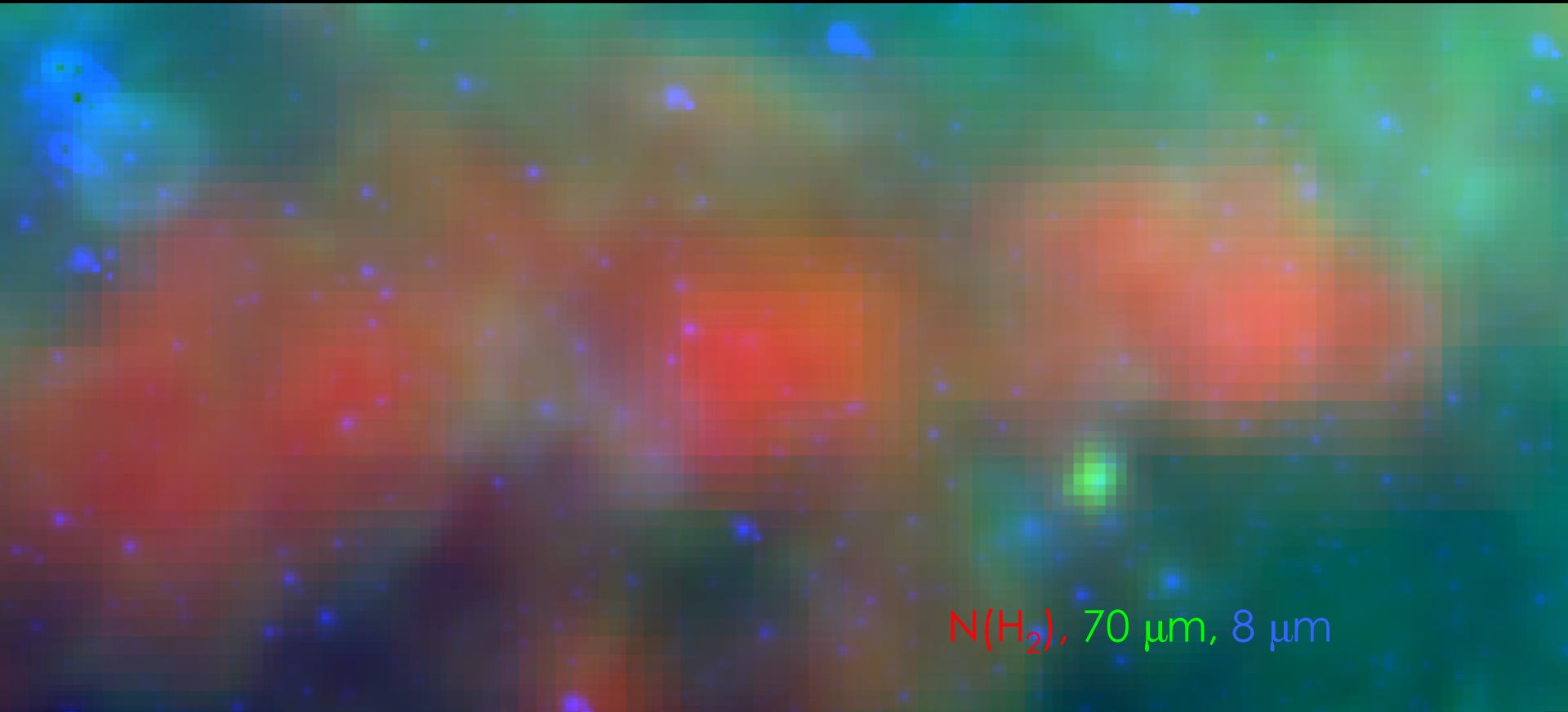


- High-mass star-forming core.
- Contains exotic H_2CO and SiO masers, as well as CH_3OH Class II and OH maser emission
- Ginsburg et al. 2015

Star Formation in the CMZ



Why is the SFR low in the CMZ?



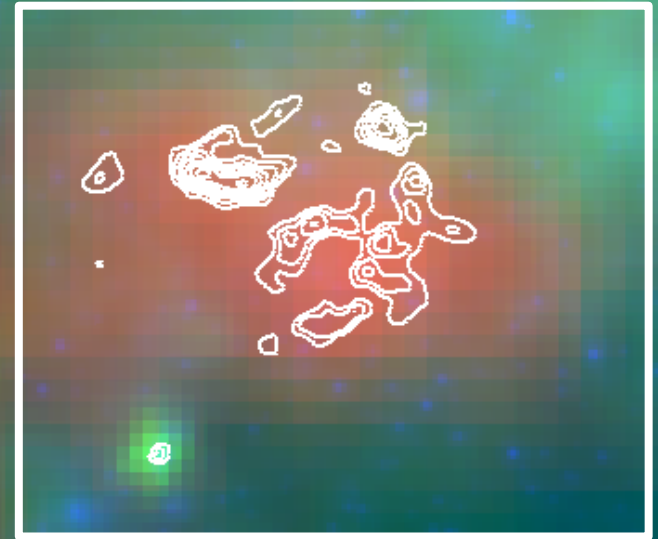
Why is the SFR low in the CMZ?



$N(\text{H}_2)$, 70 μm , 8 μm
SMA 1.3 mm continuum



Why is the SFR low in the CMZ?

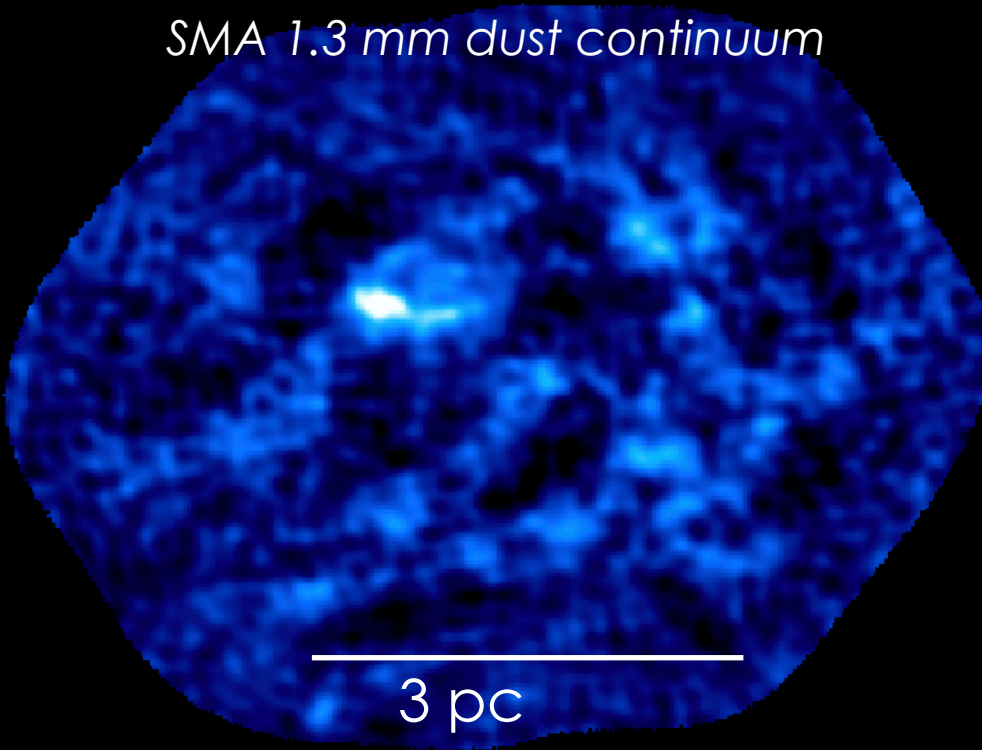


$N(\text{H}_2)$, 70 μm , 8 μm
SMA 1.3 mm continuum



Why is the SFR low in the CMZ?

SMA 1.3 mm dust continuum



Is it star forming?

- ✓ Dense gas
- ✓ Shocked, highly excited gas
- ☐ Virial ratio < 2
- ☐ Power-law tail in N-PDF
- ☐ Outflow, localized hot-core chemistry, masers, UCHII regions...

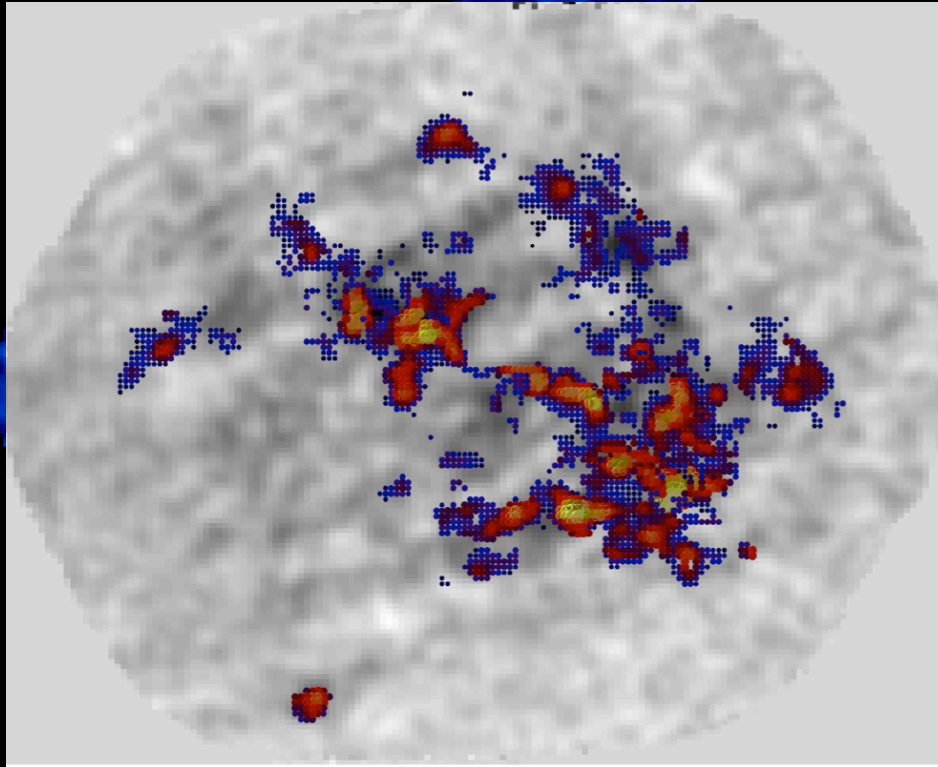


Why is the SFR low in the CMZ?

Is it star forming?

✓ Dense gas

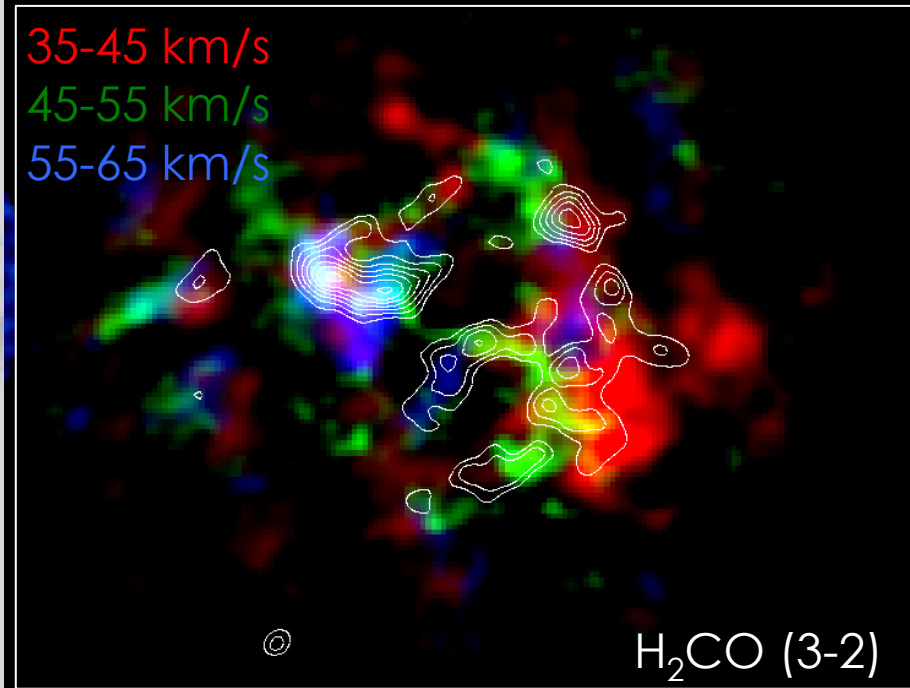
✓ Shocked, highly excited



35-45 km/s

45-55 km/s

55-65 km/s

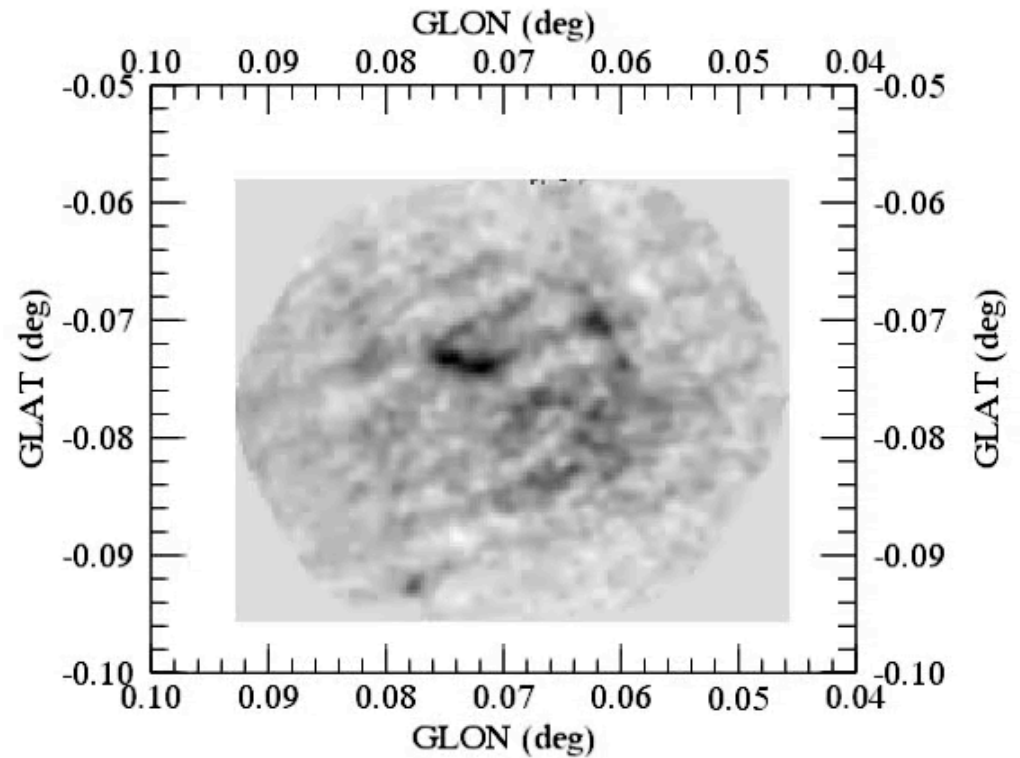
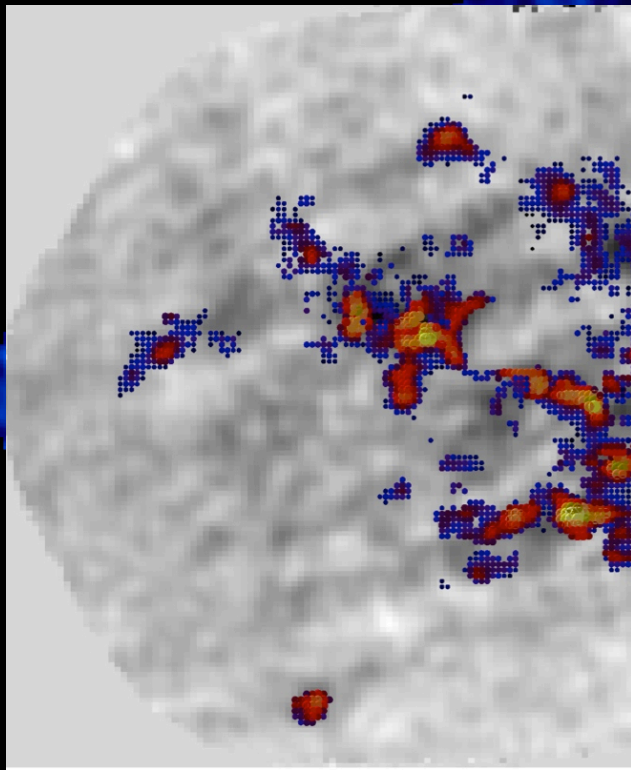


H₂CO (3-2)



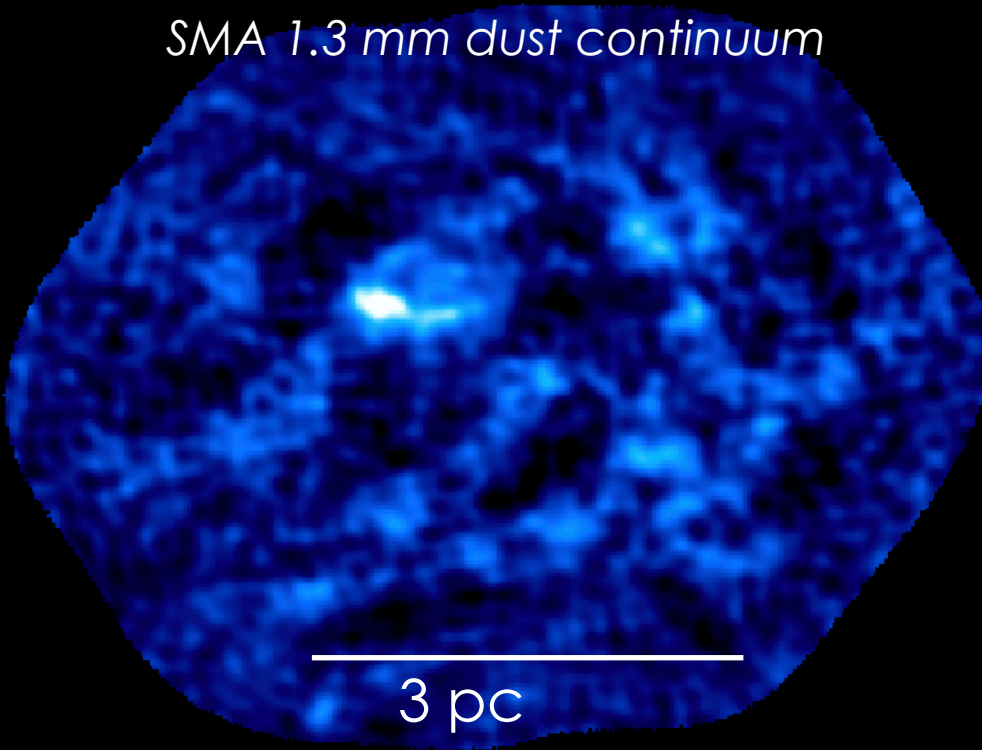
SCOUSE line fitting
Jonny Henshaw, MPIA

Why is the SFR low in the CMZ?



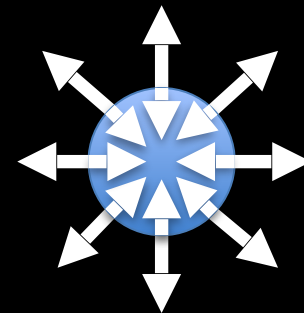
Why is the SFR low in the CMZ?

SMA 1.3 mm dust continuum



Is it star forming?

- ✓ Dense gas
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- Power-law tail in N-PDF
- Outflow, localized hot-core chemistry, masers, UCHII regions...

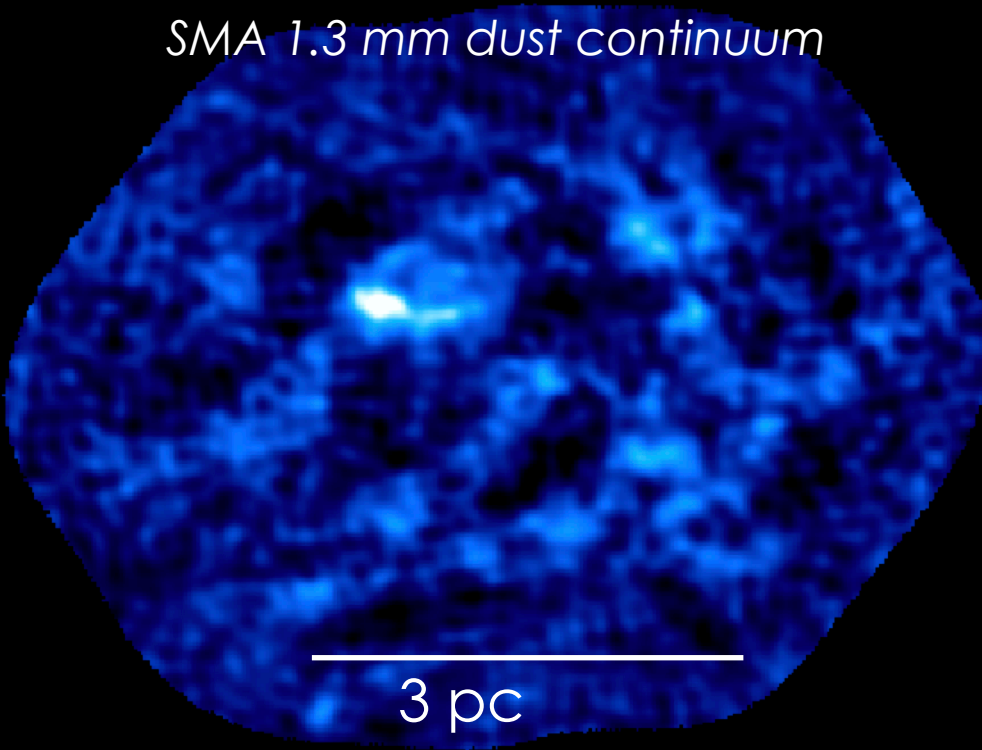


Gravity vs. pressure
(thermal and
turbulence)



Why is the SFR low in the CMZ?

SMA 1.3 mm dust continuum



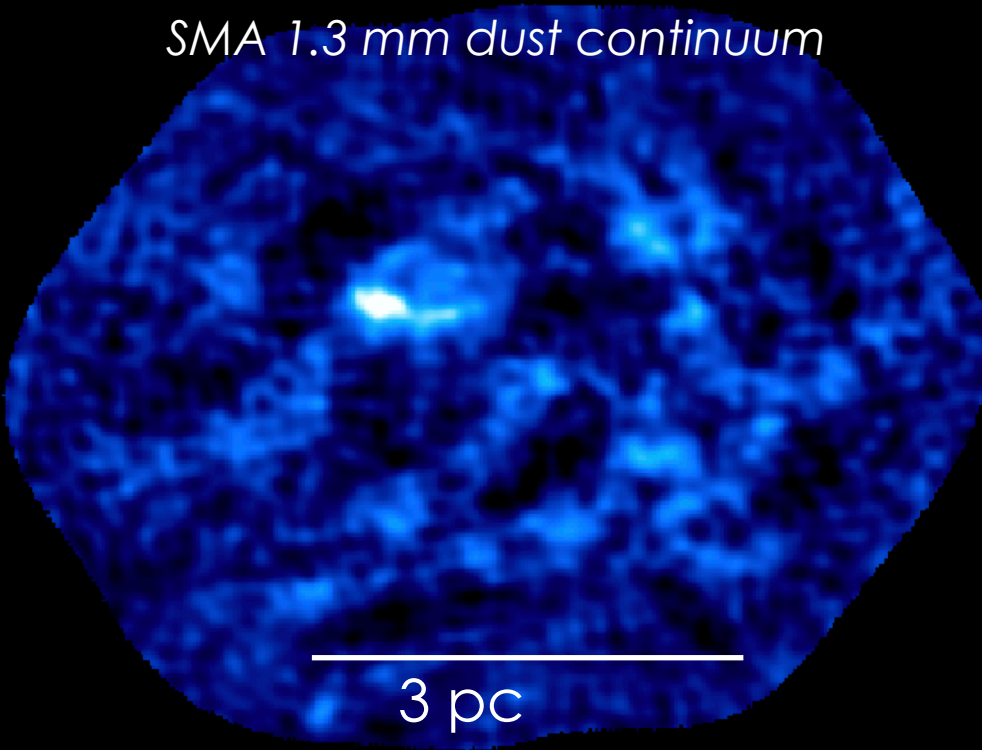
Is it star forming?

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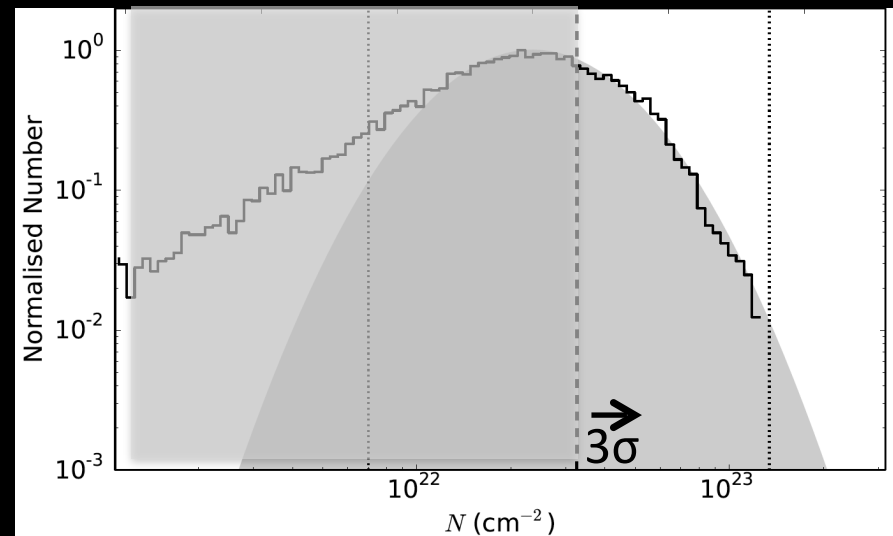
Why is the SFR low in the CMZ?

SMA 1.3 mm dust continuum



Is it star forming?

- ✓ Dense gas
- ✓ Shocked, highly excited gas
- ☒ Virial ratio < 2
- ☒ Power-law tail in N-PDF
- ☒ Outflow, localized hot-core chemistry, masers, UCHII regions...



Why is the SFR low in the CMZ?

SMA 1.3 mm dust continuum

High levels of turbulence¹
(and maybe more) are
preventing star formation

3 pc

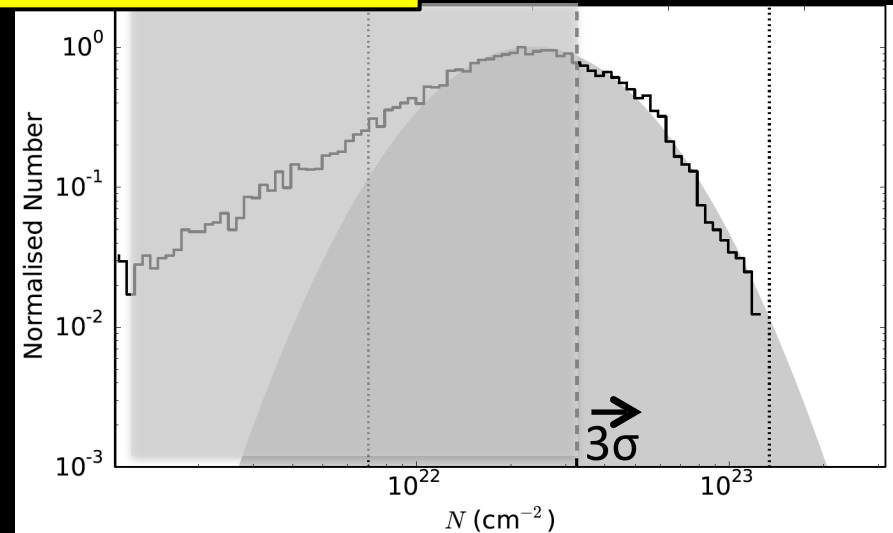
Is it star forming?

✓ Dense gas

✓ Shocked, highly excited
gas

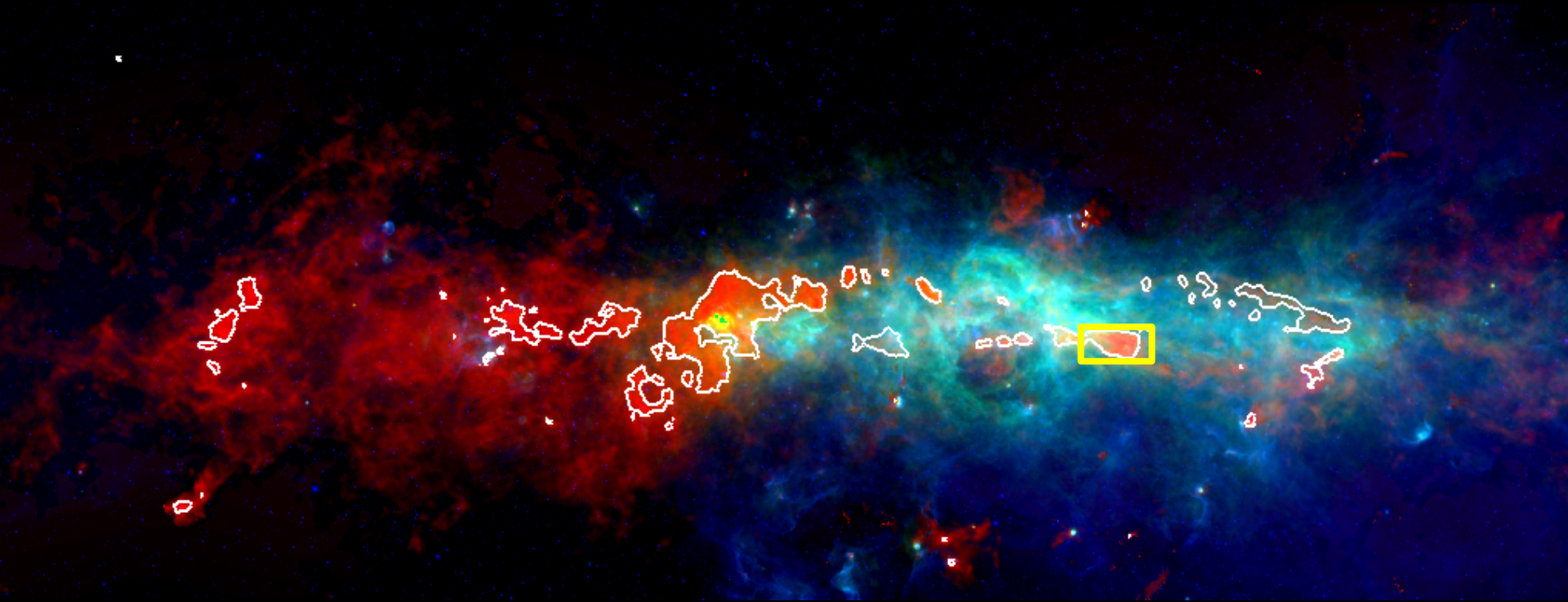
☑ Virial ratio < 2

low tail in N-PDF
localized hot-
chemistry, masers,
regions...

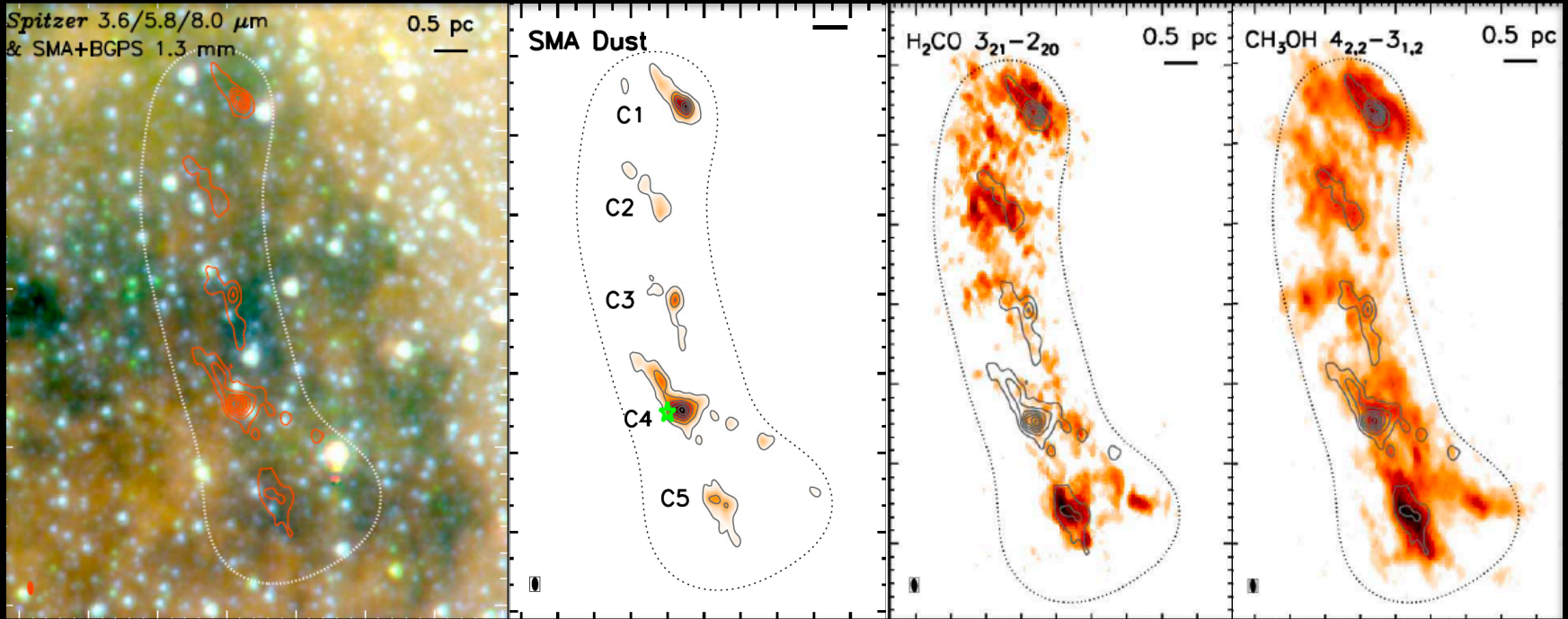


¹This also heats the gas!
Ginsburg et al. 2016

Star Formation in the CMZ



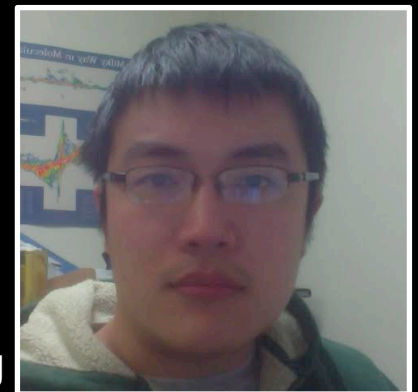
Uncovering Hidden Star Formation



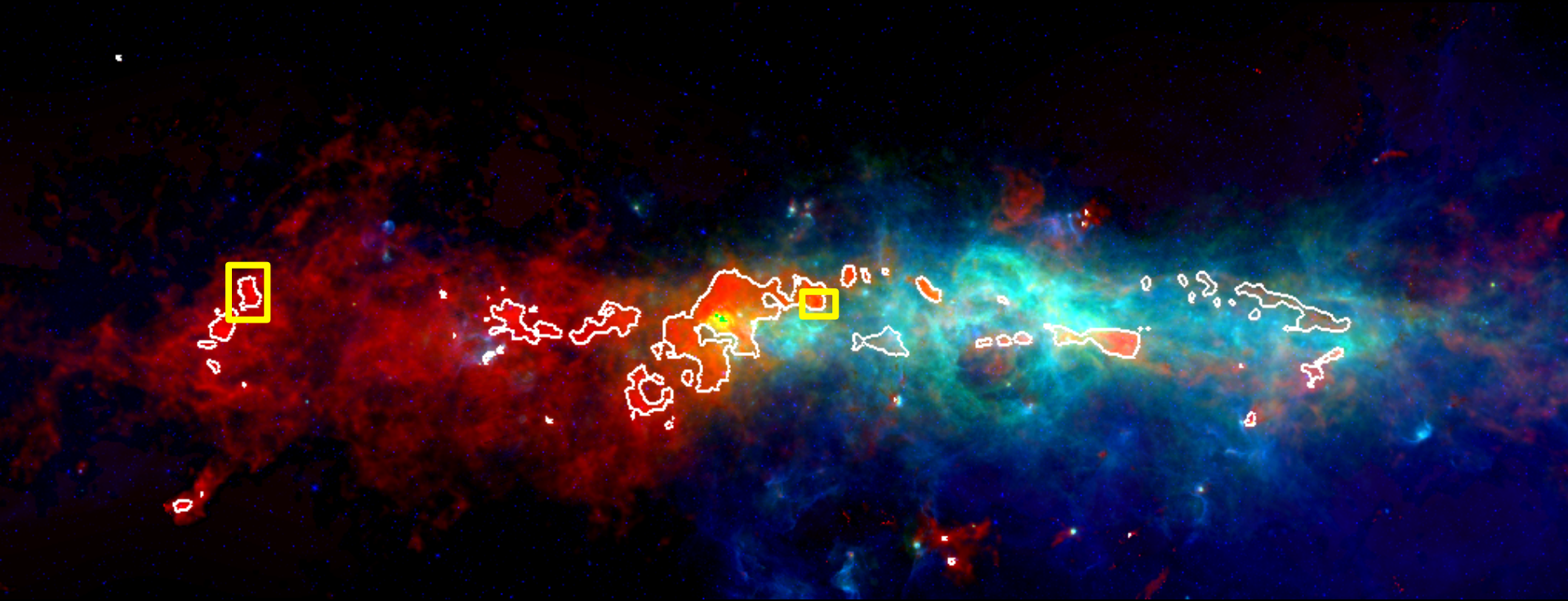
Lu et al 2015, 2017



Xing "Walker" Lu
Postdoc at NAOJ



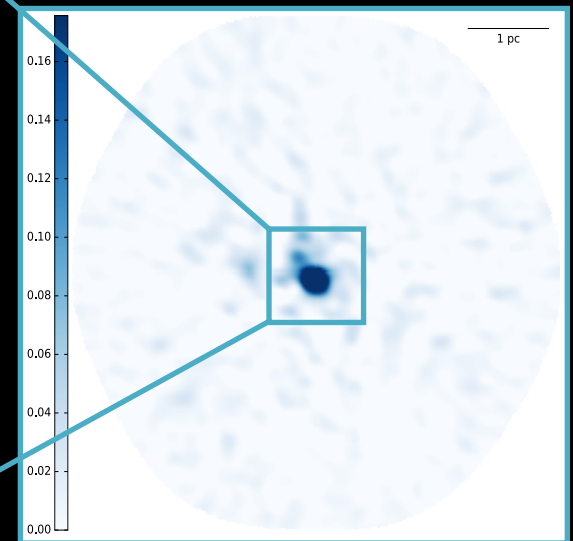
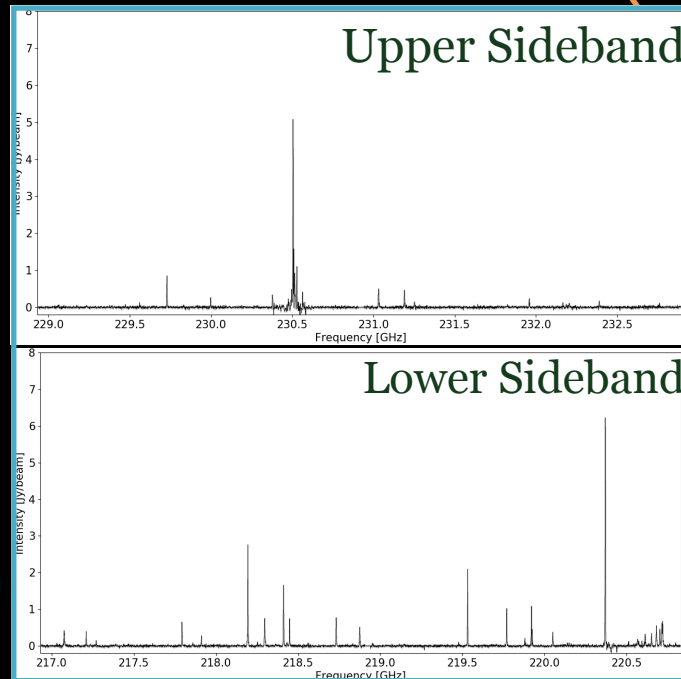
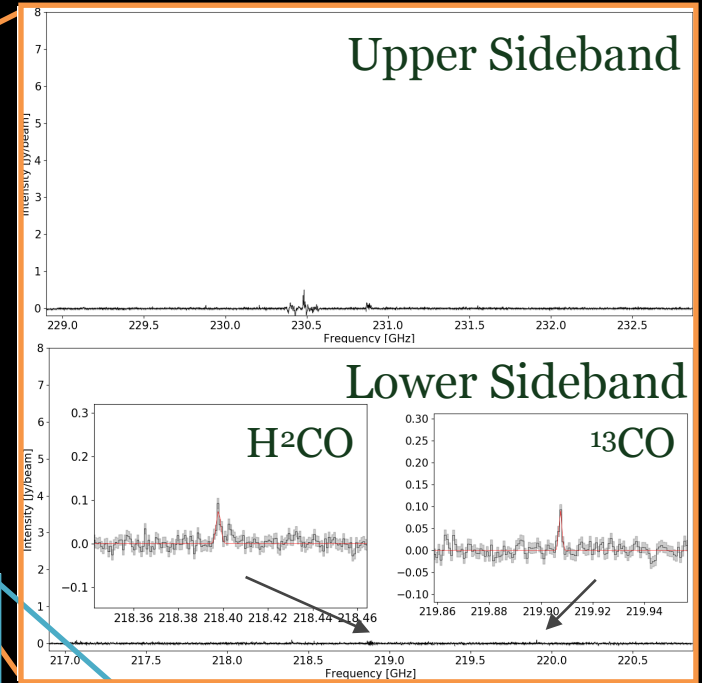
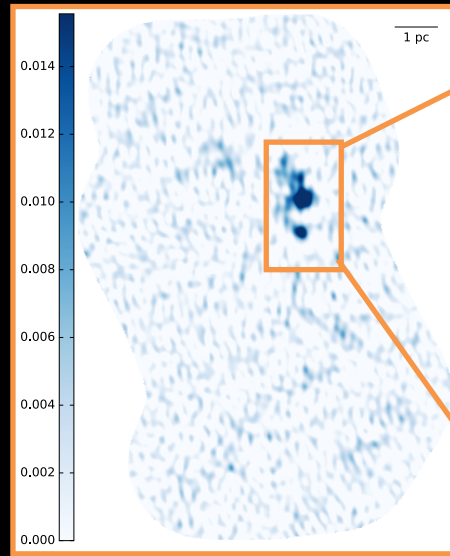
Star Formation in the CMZ



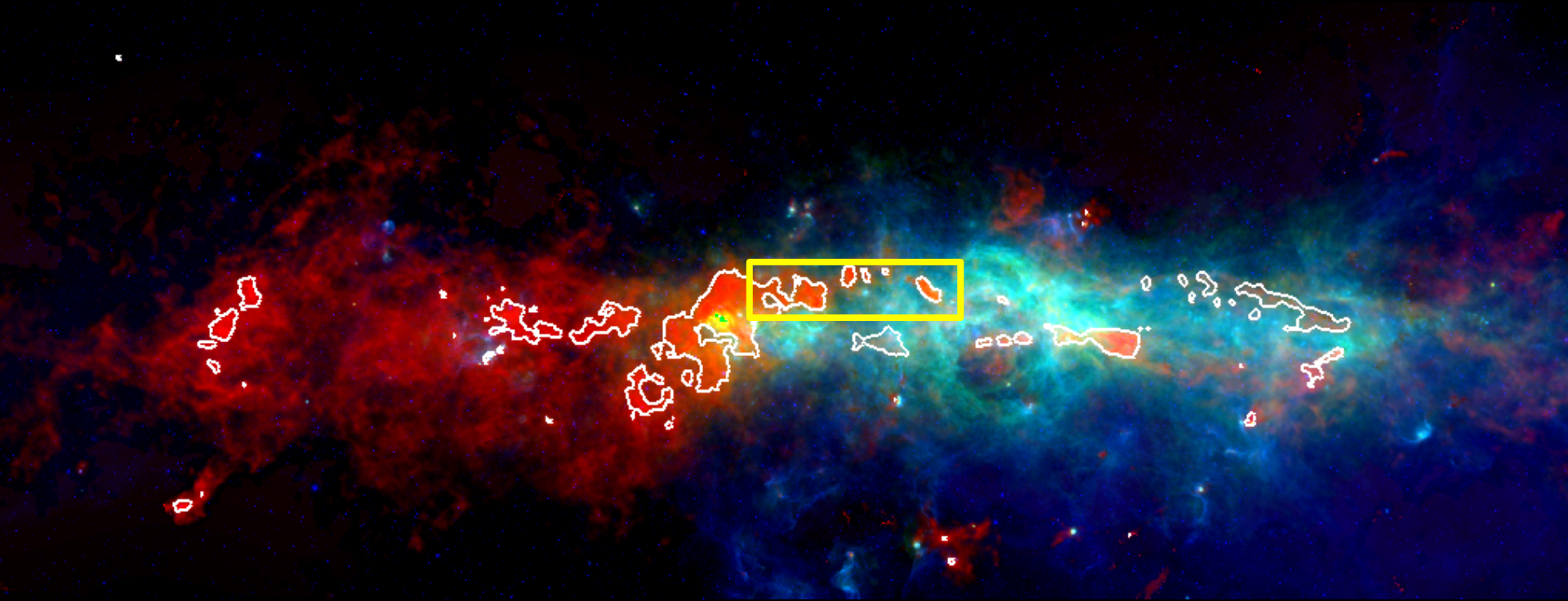
Chemistry in the CMZ



Daniel Callanan
PhD student at
Liverpool/CfA



Star Formation in the CMZ

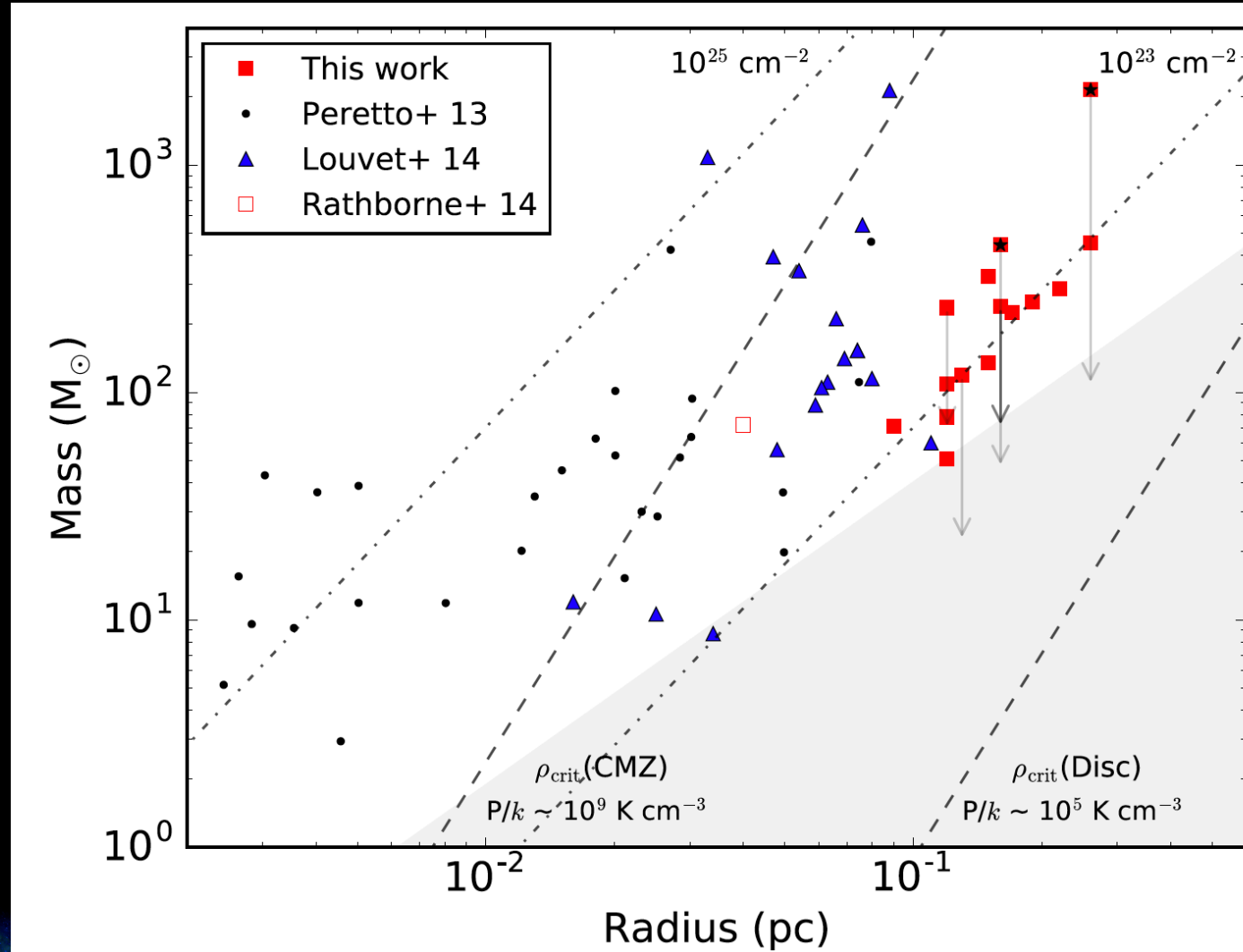


Detailed Study of Core Properties



Dan Walker
postdoc at NAOJ Chile

core gas
temperatures
of about
50-200 K



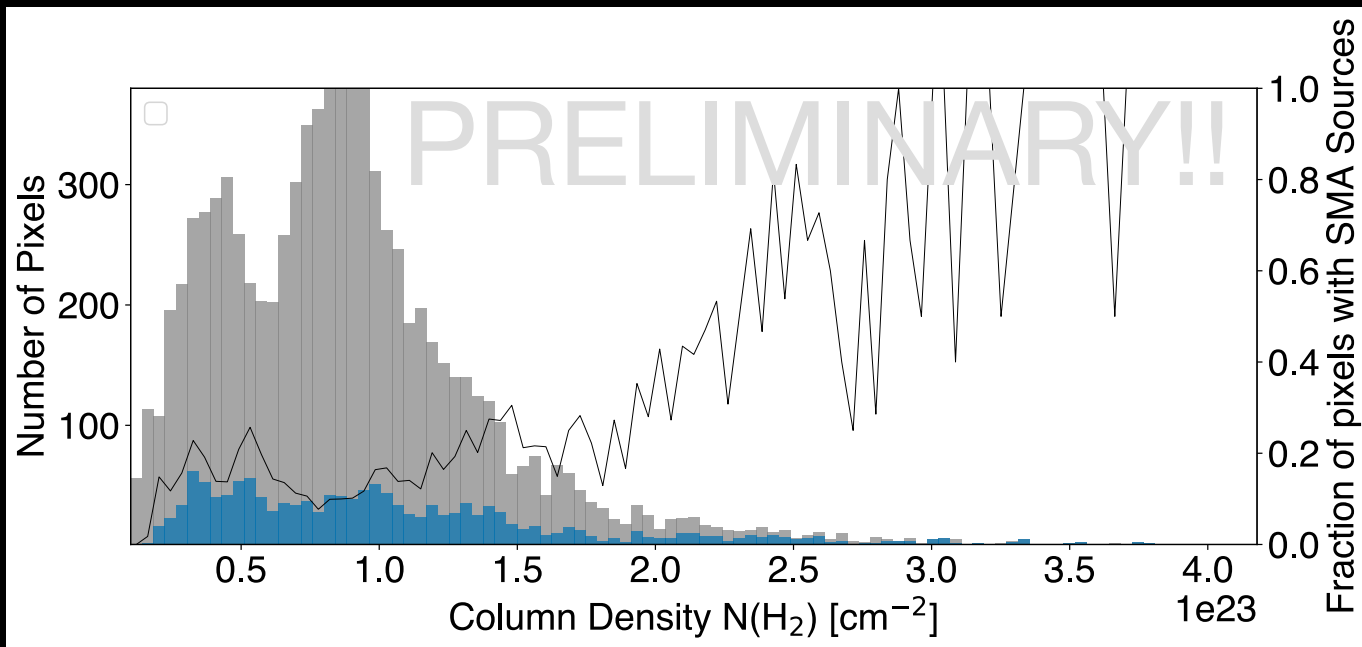
Catalog and Simulated Observations



Perry Hatchfield
PhD student at
UConn



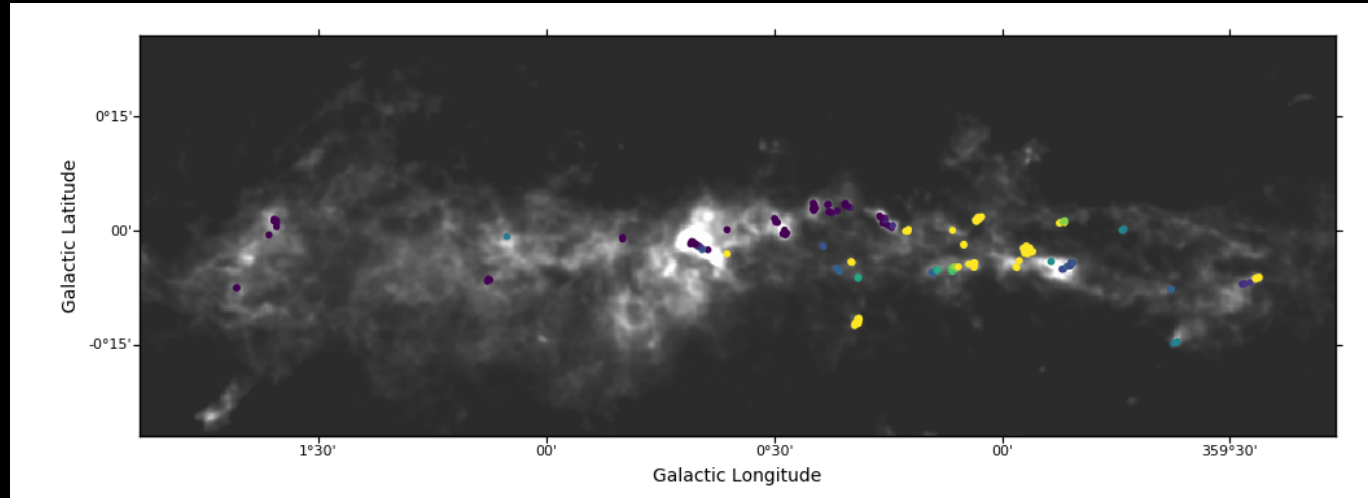
CMZoom Core
Catalog:
Hatchfield et
al. in prep



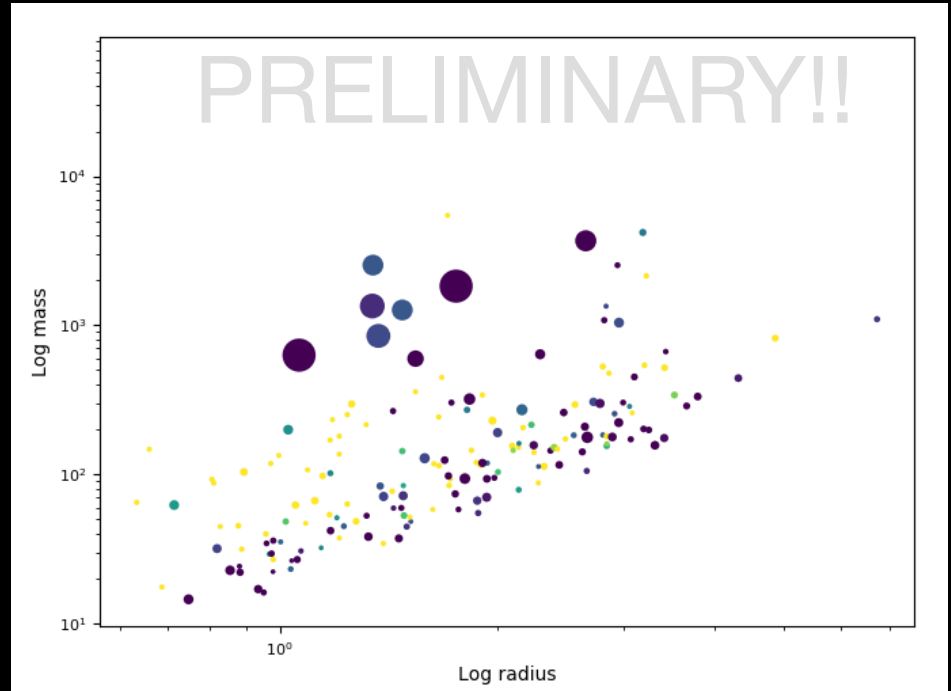
Catalog and Simulated Observations



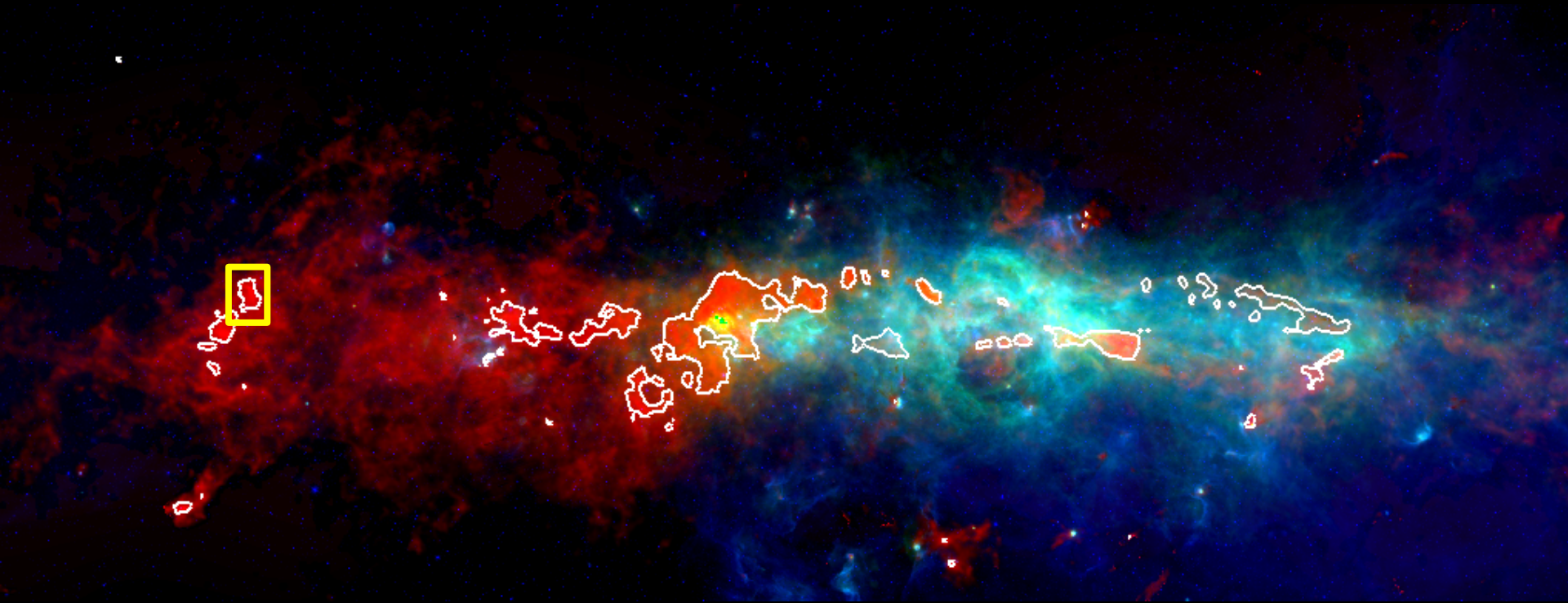
Perry Hatchfield
PhD student at
UConn



CMZoom Core
Catalog:
Hatchfield et
al. in prep

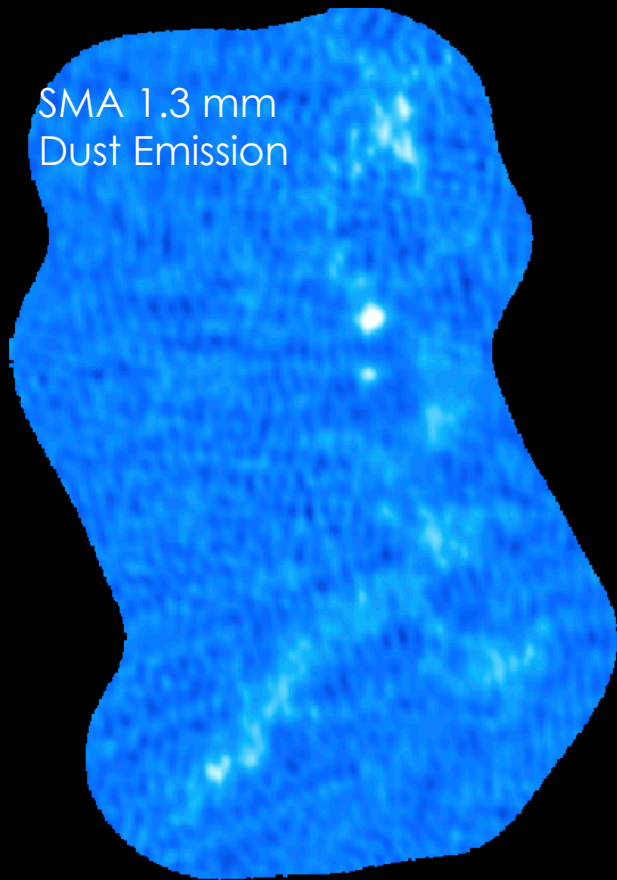


Star Formation in the CMZ



Why is the SFR so low in the CMZ?

SMA 1.3 mm
Dust Emission



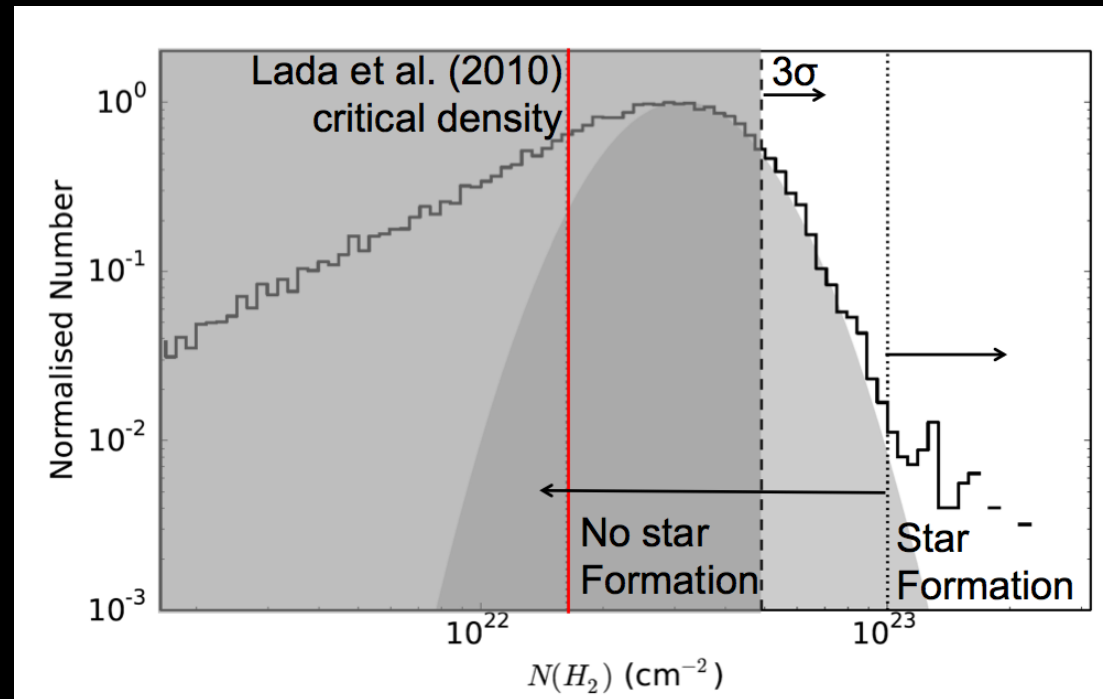
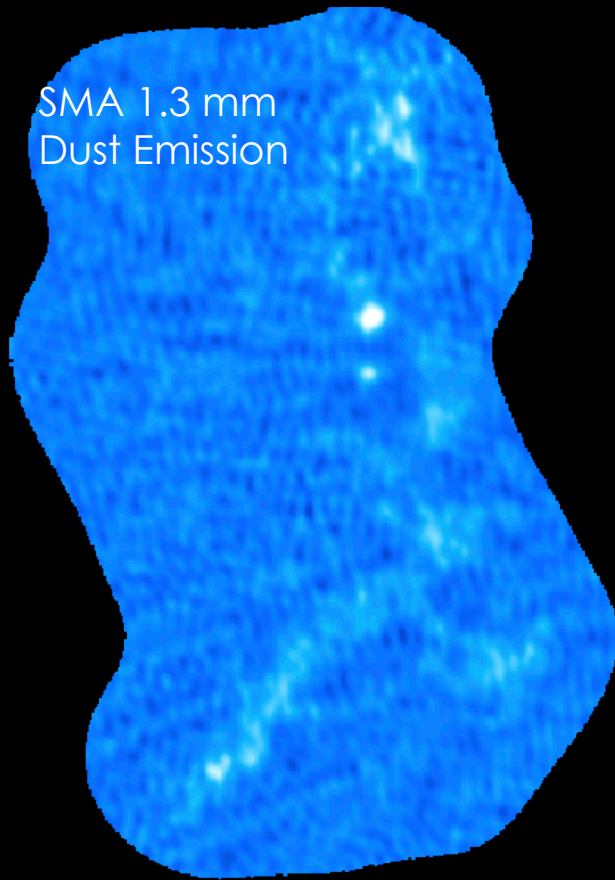
Low-level isolated
star formation

Is it star forming?

- ✓ Dense gas
- ✓ Shocked, highly excited gas
- ✓ Virial ratio < 2
- ✓ Power-law tail in N-PDF
- ✓ Outflow or localized hot-core chemistry



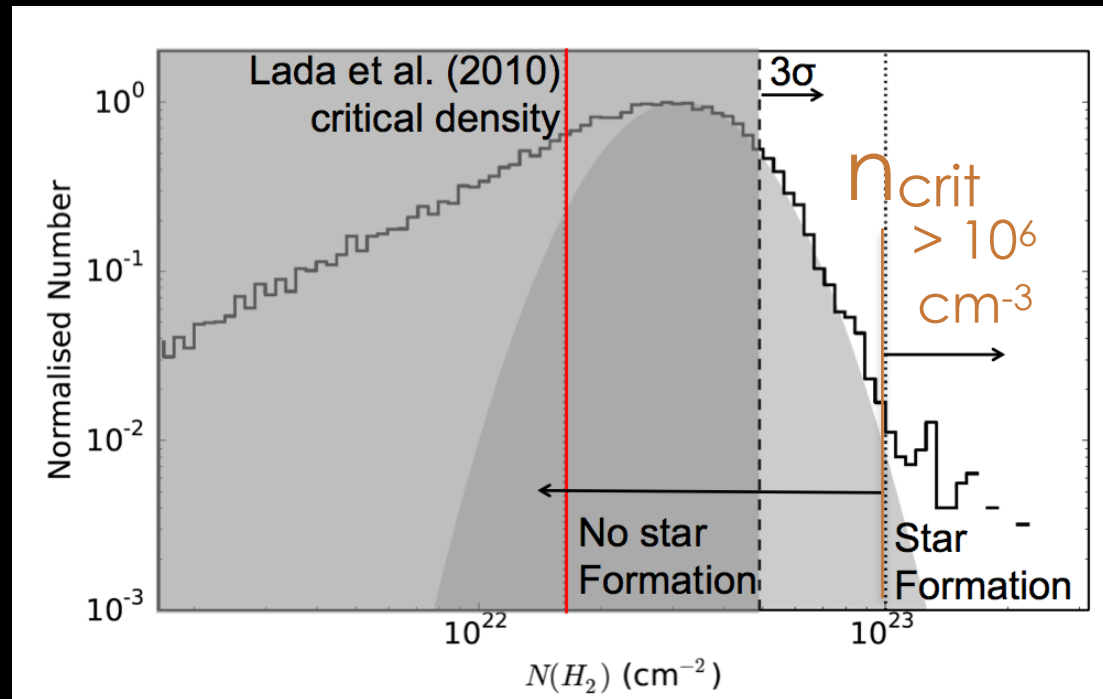
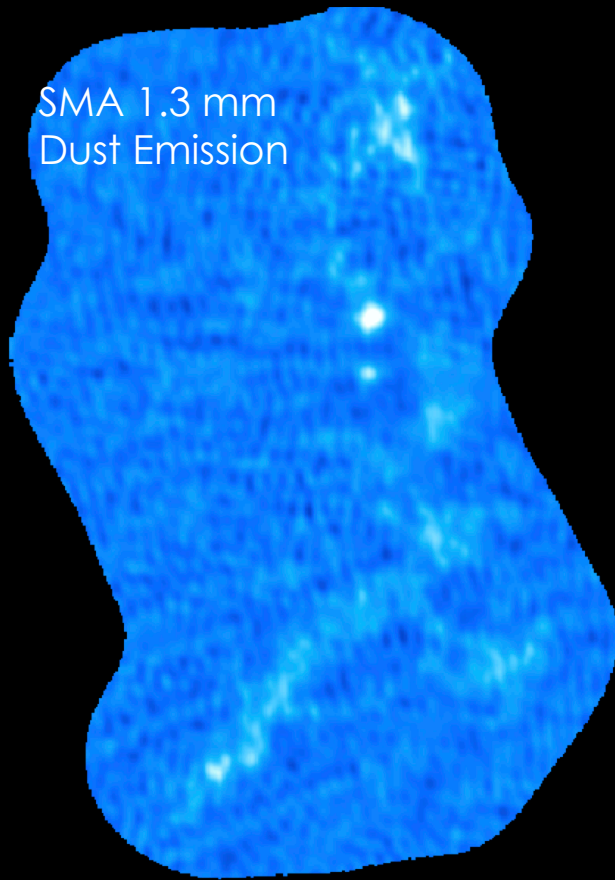
Why is the SFR so low in the CMZ?



Low-level isolated
star formation



Why is the SFR so low in the CMZ?

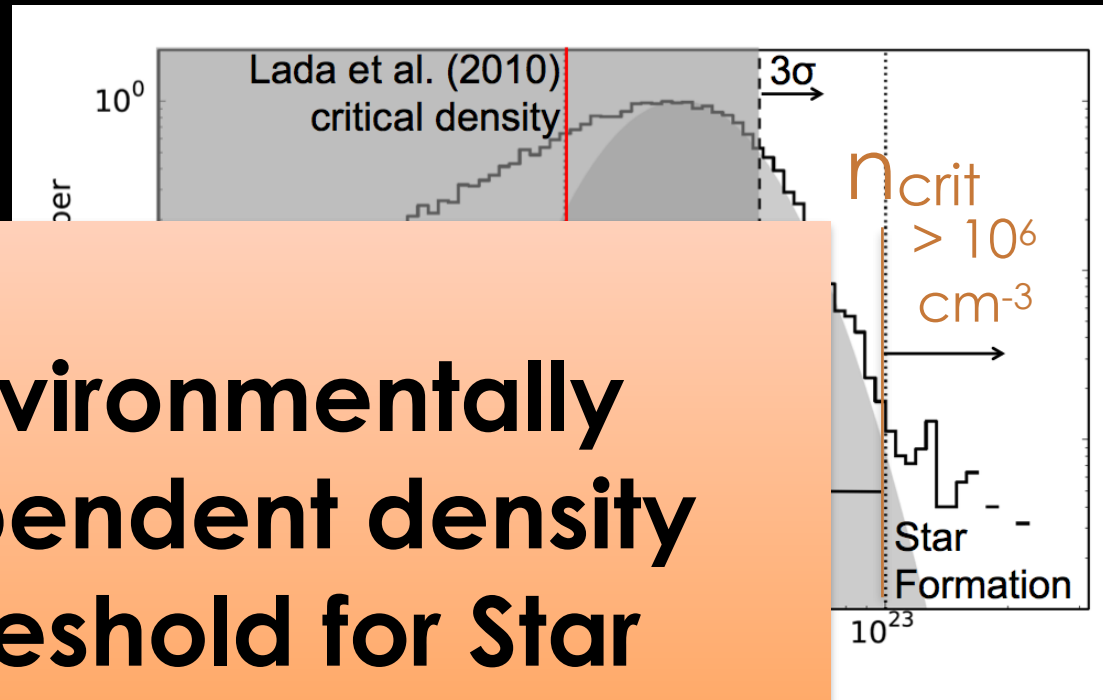
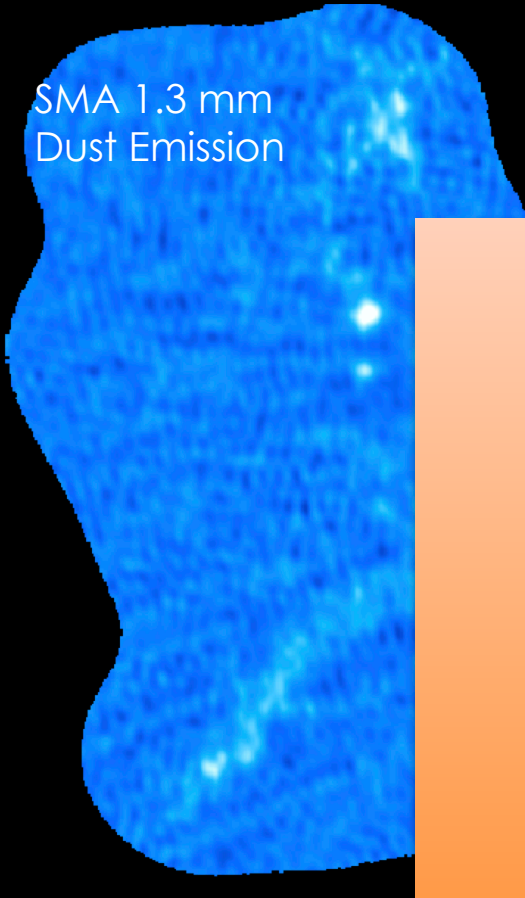


Low-level isolated
star formation



Why is the SFR so low in the CMZ?

SMA 1.3 mm
Dust Emission



**Environmentally
Dependent density
threshold for Star
Formation?**

Low-level isolated
star formation

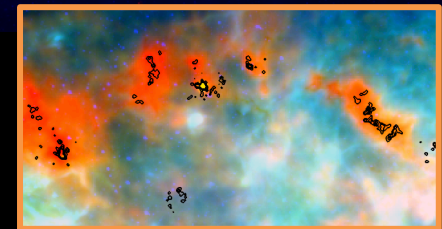
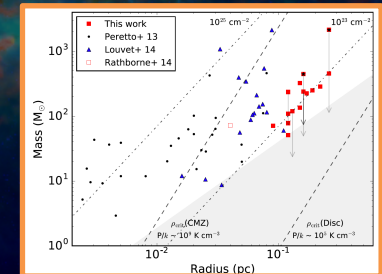
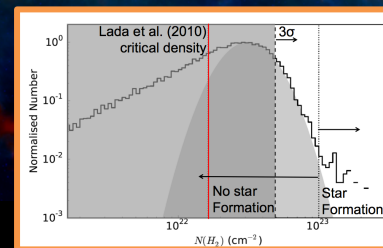
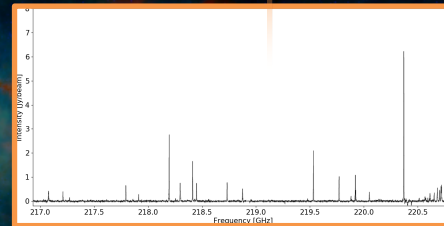
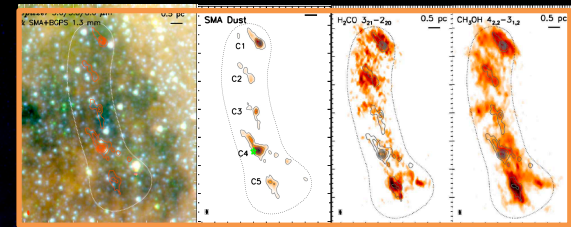


Star Formation in our Extreme Galactic Center: Results from the CMZoom Survey



New survey, *CMZoom*, mapped all the highest column density gas in inner 500 pc and:

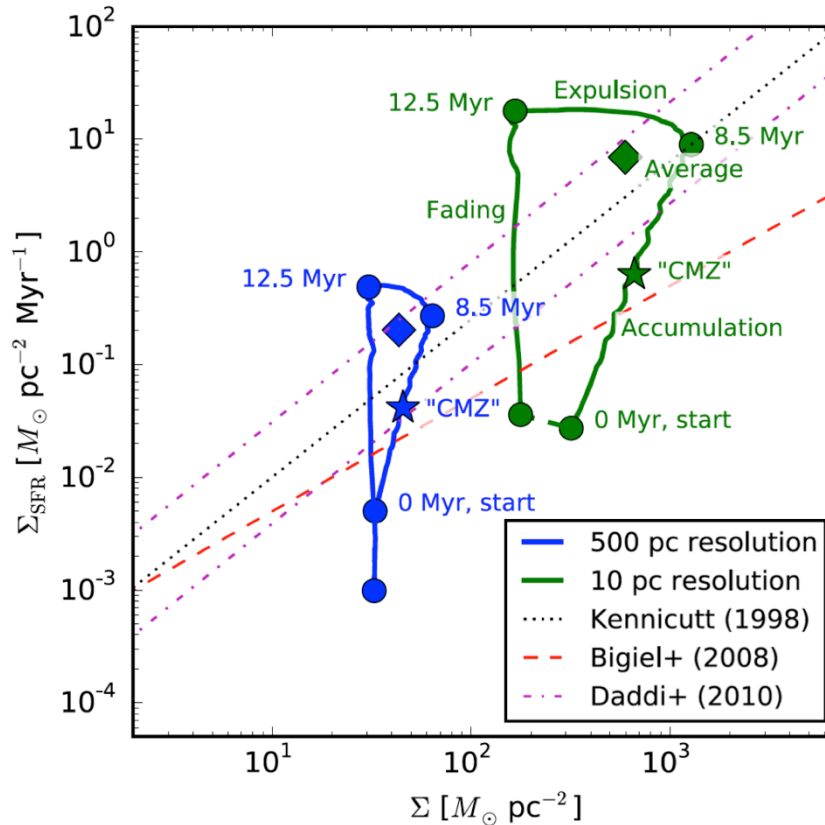
- * Uncovered hidden star formation
- * CMZ cores demonstrate very different excitation/chemistry
- * CMZ cores are on the same mass-radius relation as disk cores
- * High levels of turbulence seem capable of inhibiting SF in the CMZ
- * Meaning that SFR should depend on environment



Extra Slides

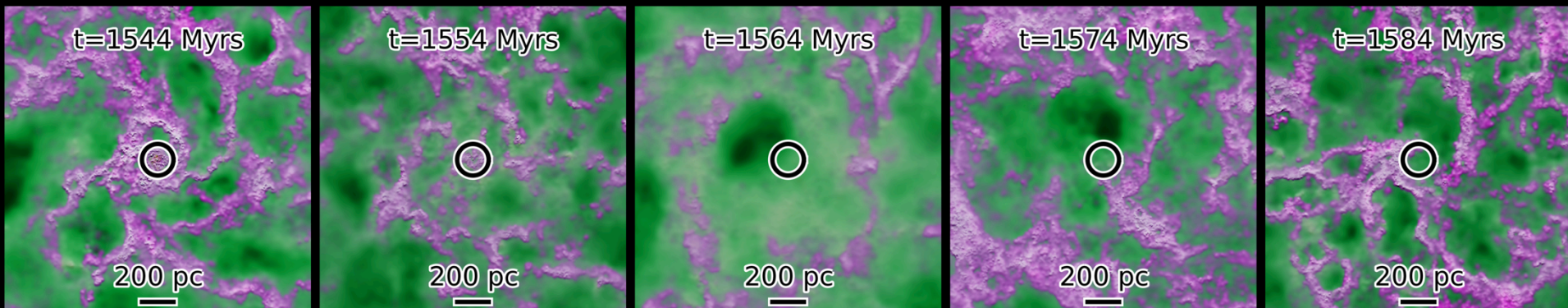


Why is the SFR low in the CMZ?

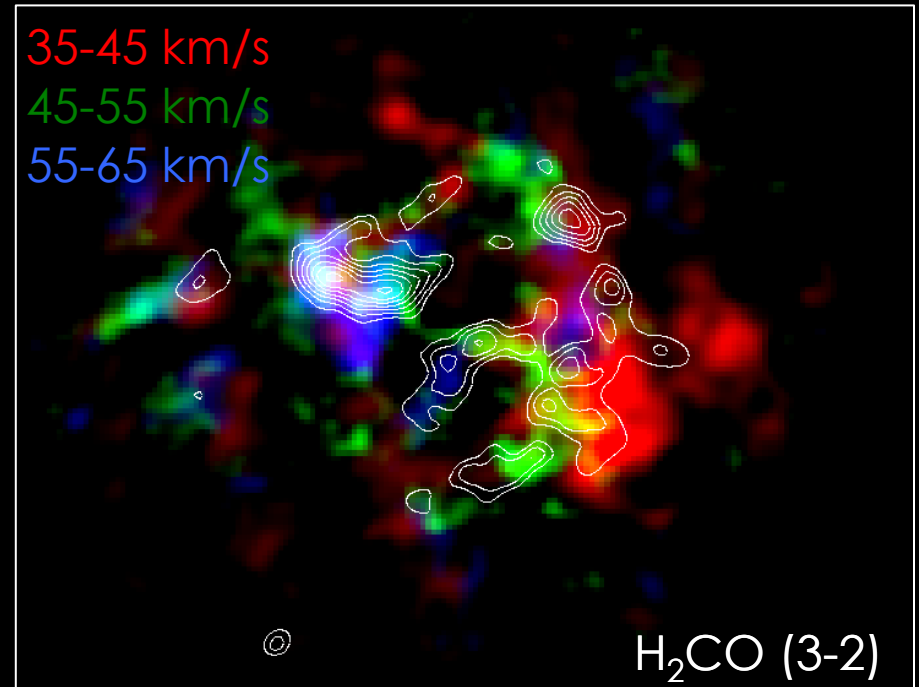
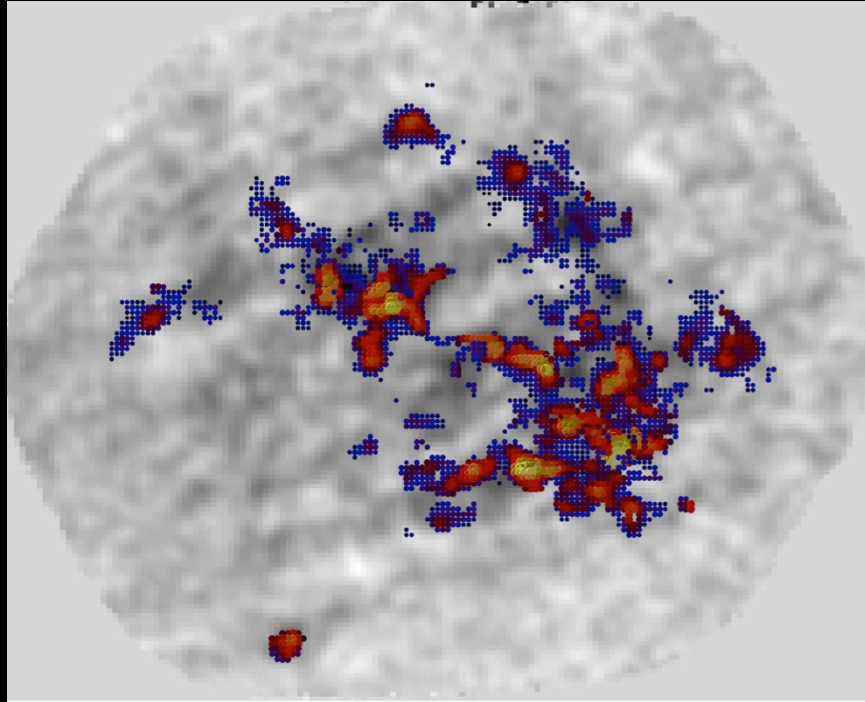


Krumholz & Kruijssen 2015

Torrey, Hopkins et al., 2017

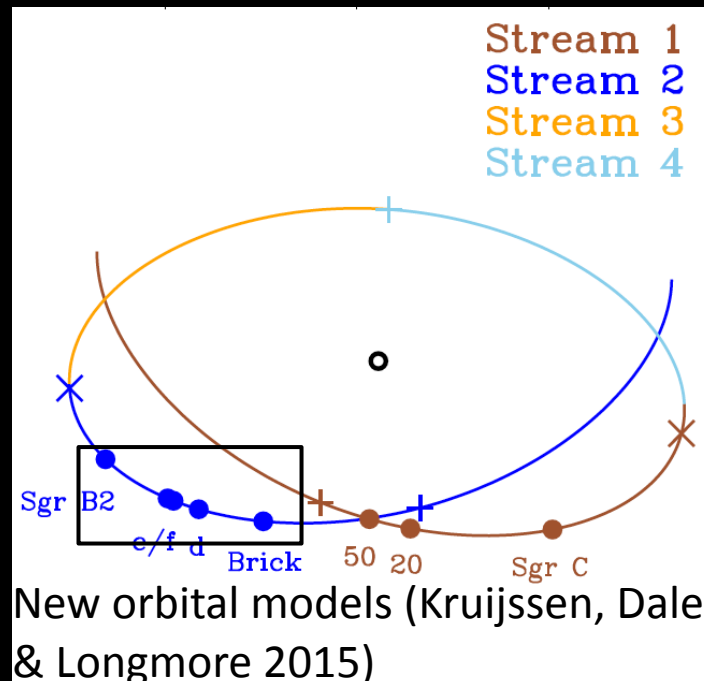
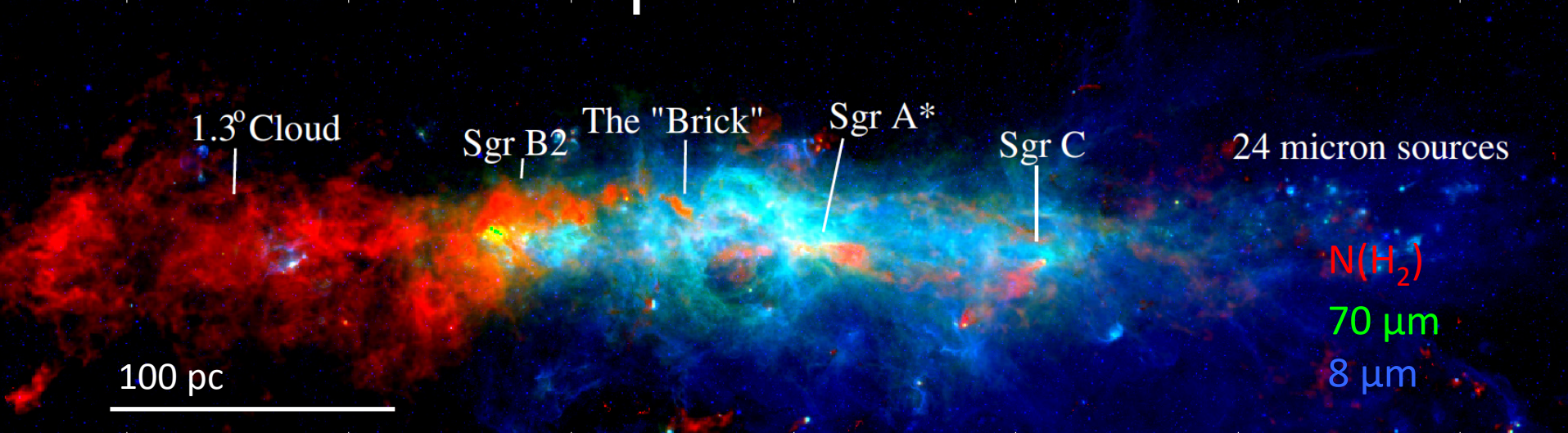


Structure Identification

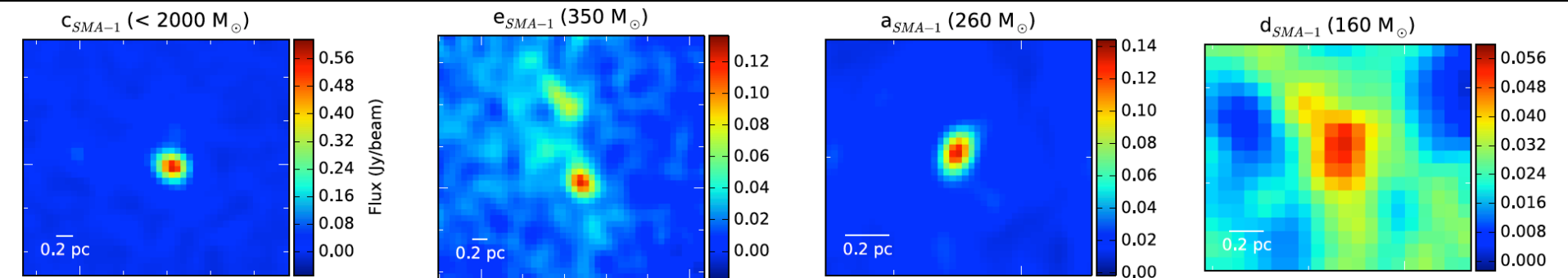
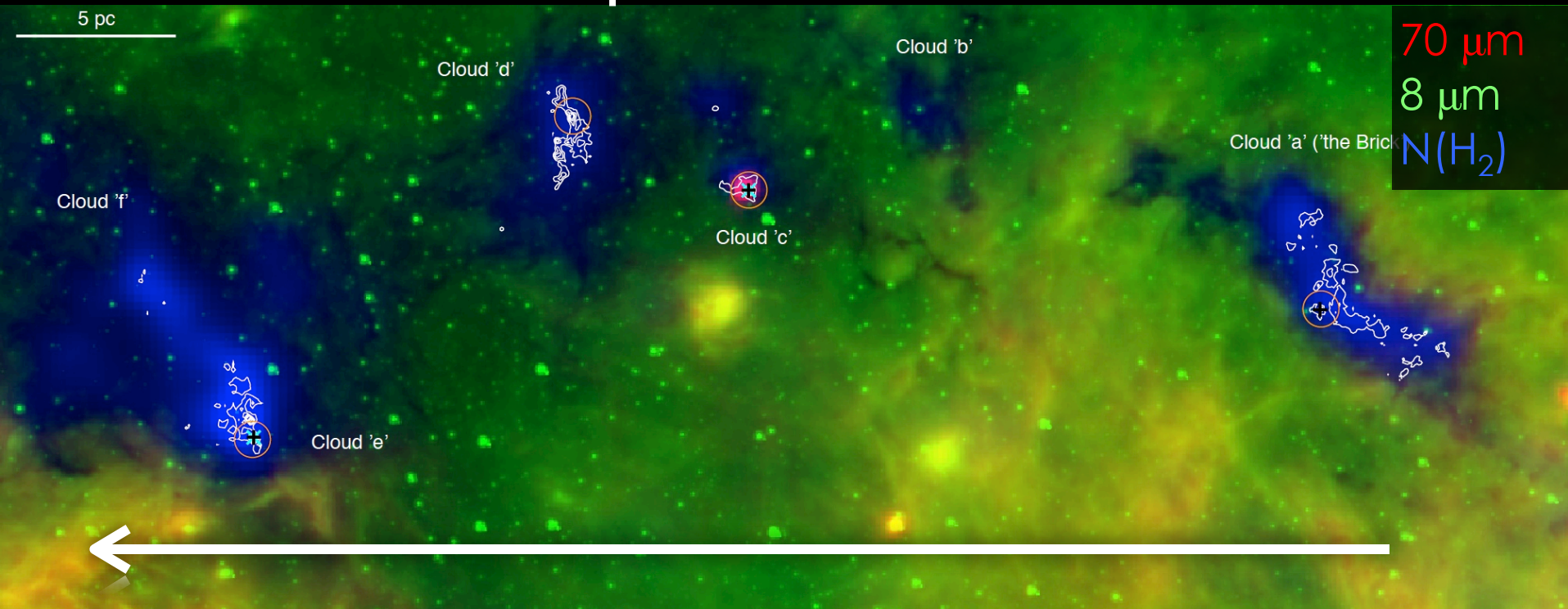


SCOUSE line fitting
Jonny Henshaw
Liverpool

Tidal compression of clouds



Tidal compression of clouds



$$N_{\text{ff}} = 1.76$$

H_2O , CH_3OH , SiO , H_2CO
masers + 70 μm

$$N_{\text{ff}} = 1.28$$

H_2O and
 CH_3OH masers

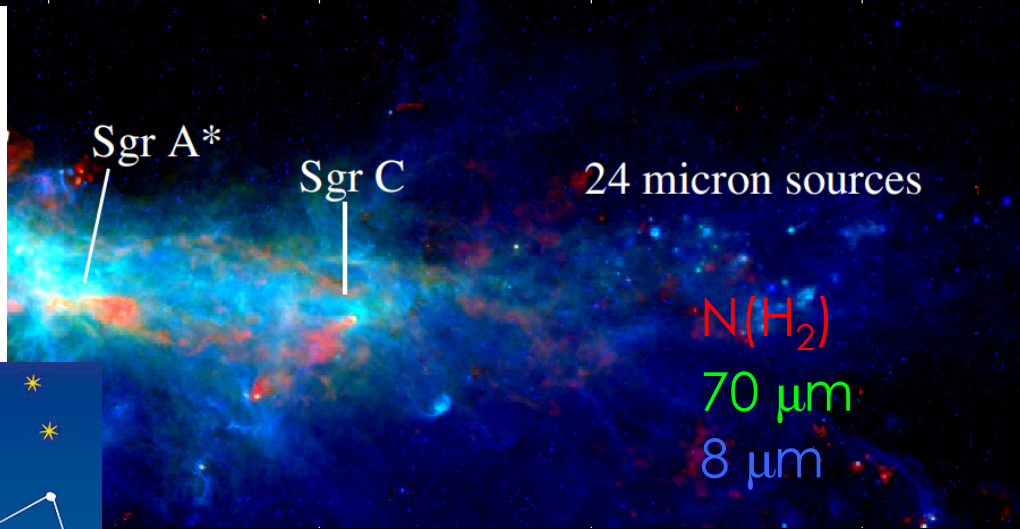
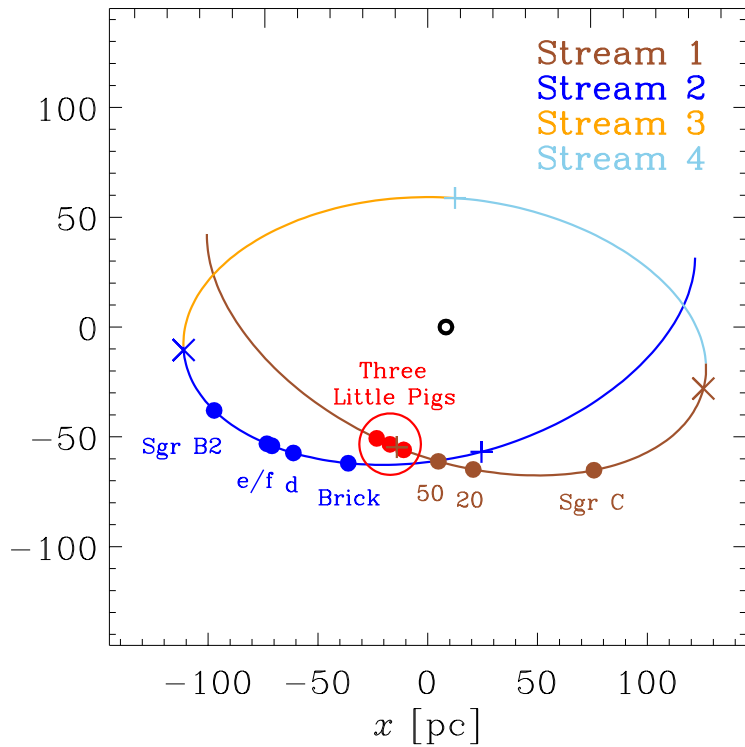
$$N_{\text{ff}} = 0.65$$

H_2O maser

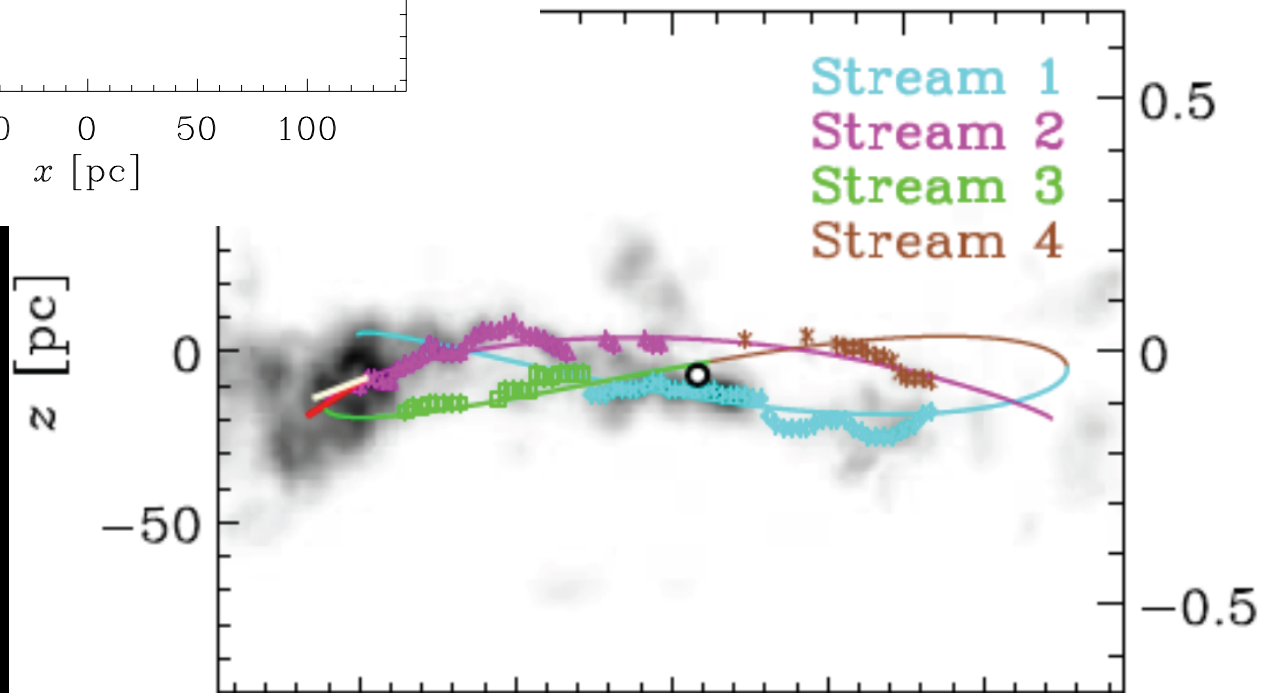
$$N_{\text{ff}} = 0.61$$

No SF
tracers

Galactic longitude [deg]
0.5 0 -0.5

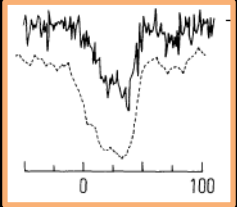


Galactic longitude [deg]
0 -0.5



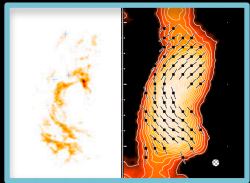
NEW orbital
models
(Kruijssen,
Dale, &
Longmore
2015)

Why is SF low? - Gas properties



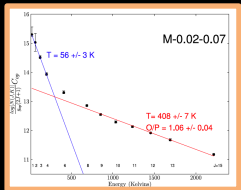
Gas is dense, $n > 10^5 \text{ cm}^{-3}$

Guesten et al. 1983, Zylka et al. 1992, Serabyn et al. 1992, Walmsley et al. 1986



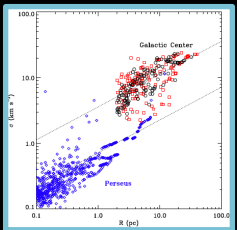
Gas is chemically complex, with $\sim \text{mG}$ magnetic fields, high ISRF, and high CRIR

complex: e.g. Rathborne et al., 2014, Requena-Torres et al. 2008, **magnetic fields:** e.g. Pillai et al. 2015, Yusef-Zadeh & Morris 1987, **high ISFR and CRIR:** e.g. Clarke et al. 2013, Goto et al. 2013, etc.



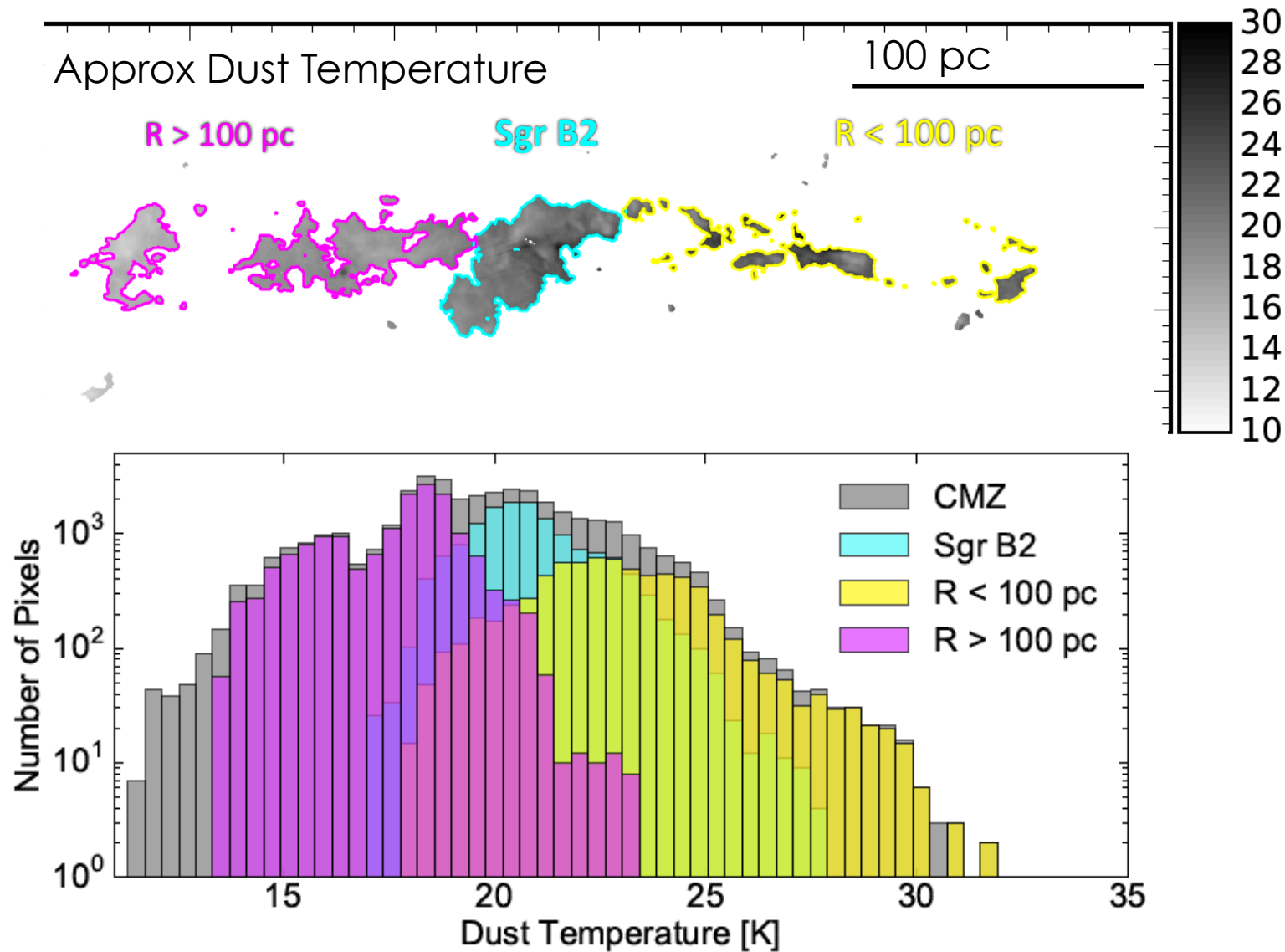
The dense gas is hot ($> 65 \text{ K}$), and 10% is 400 K

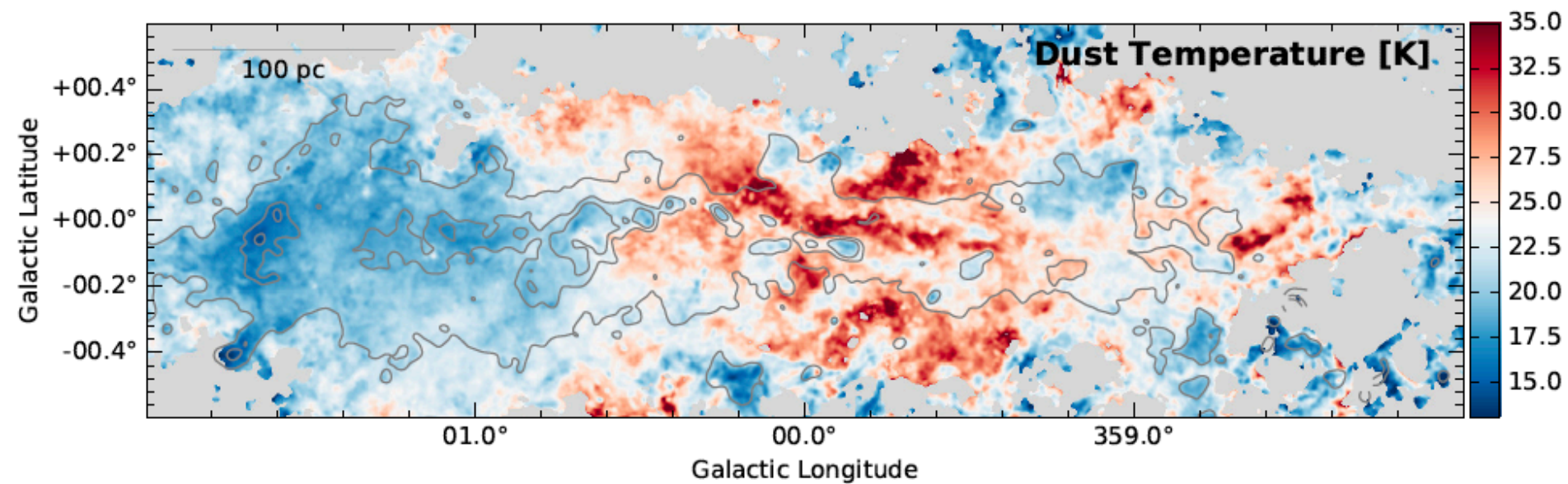
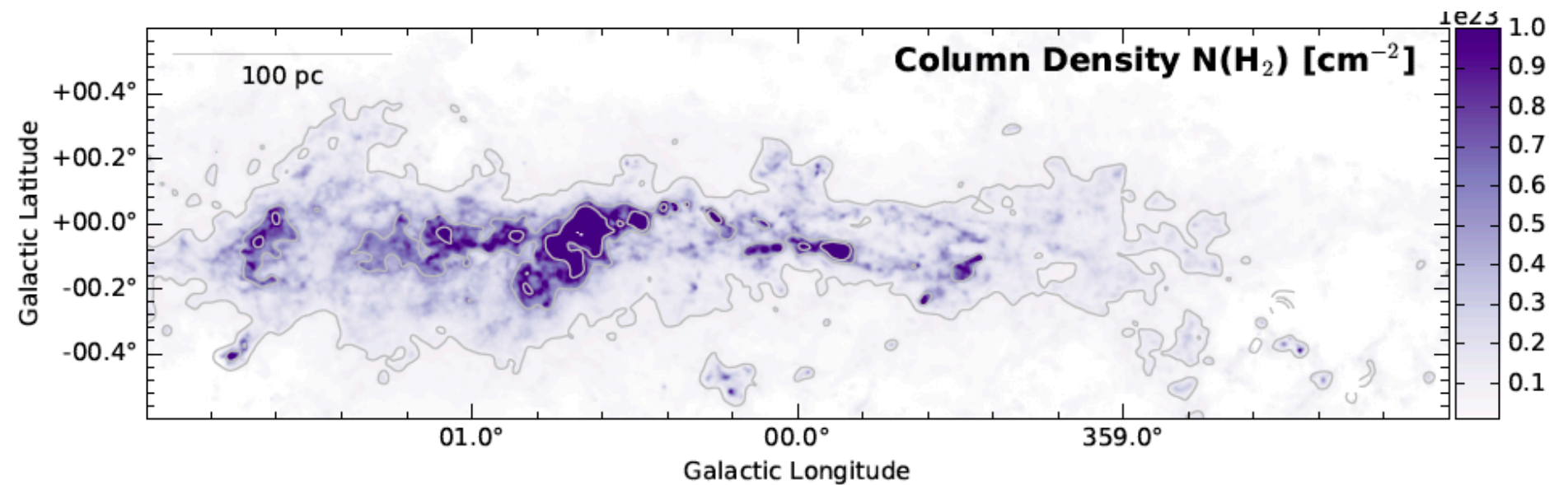
Ginsburg et al. 2016, Mills et al. 2013, Immer et al. 2016, Ott et al. 2014, Krieger et al. in prep.

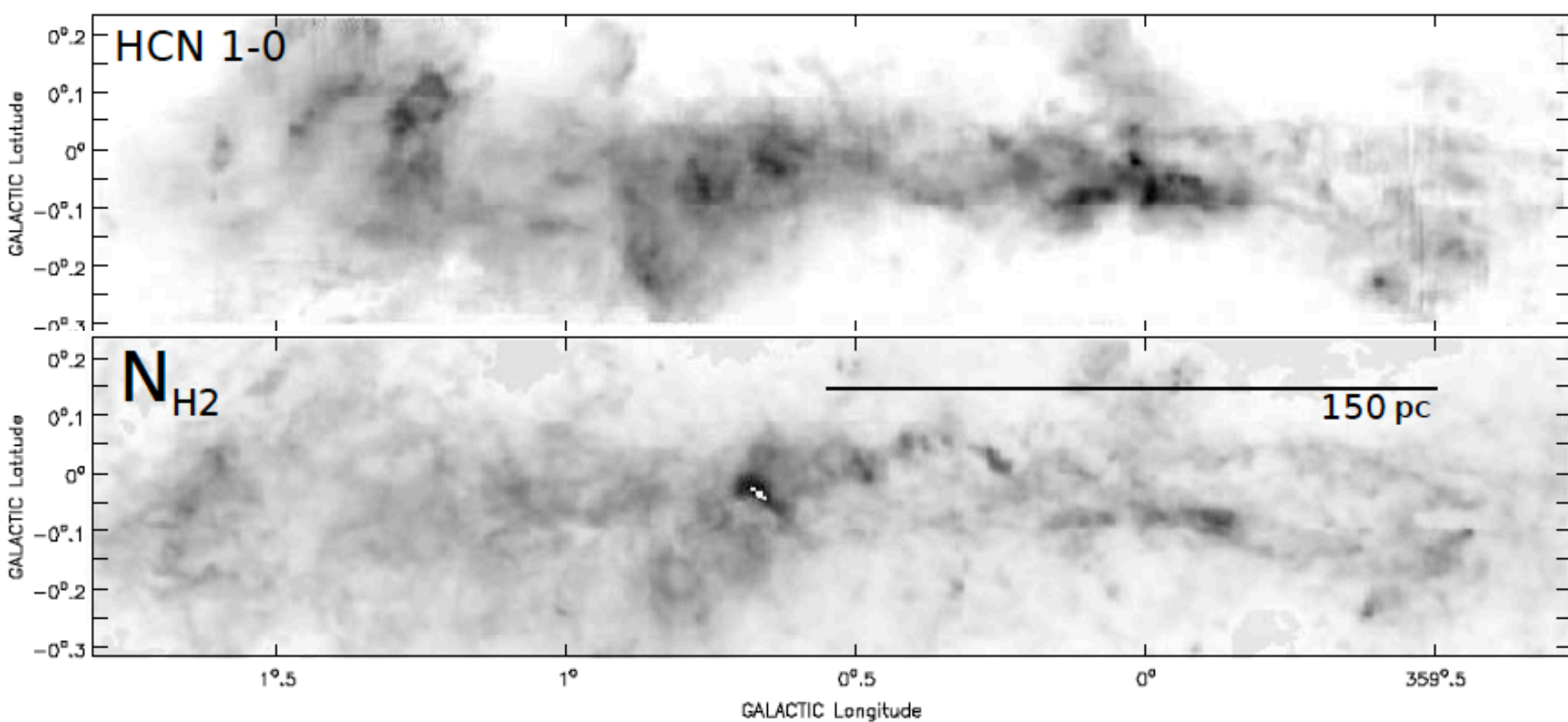


The gas is turbulent ($\Delta v \sim 10 \text{ km/s}$, $\mathcal{M} \sim 10-40$)

Shetty et al. 2012, Rathborne et al. 2015, Kauffmann et al. 2017, Ginsburg et al. 2016, Mills et al. 2013, Immer et al. 2016, etc.







- HCN is well-correlated with dense gas overall in the CMZ - variations would only yield a 10% error in the dense gas mass
 - However, there is a lot of scatter (0.75 dex)
 - Some clouds are under-bright or over-bright by factors of 2-3
 - This is bad if you are looking at an AGN or shock-dominated region of a galaxy
- A lot of the HCN comes from more diffuse gas
- HNC/O is better correlated with dense gas