Deconstructing signals of new physics at colliders

a case study with Higgs pair production

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general considerations

Problems

- Proliferation of models on the market
- Still many models have to be built "in-house" for specific problems
- Intensive (often redundant) MC simulations to achieve enough accuracy

Disk space and computing time are often very limited

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- TH/PH: recast public experimental data to constrain theoretical models
- PH/EXP: design new search strategies to explore new avenues
- EXP: optimise even more the interpretation of experimental data

Using public simulated datasets

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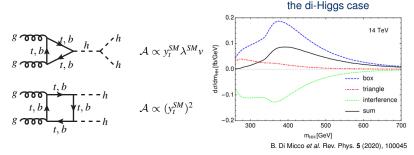
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A possible way

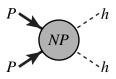
Deconstruct new signals



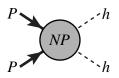
- di-Higgs as a probe of Higgs self-interactions
- HL-LHC has the potential to discover Higgs pair production
- sizable deviations from the SM might be associated with light particles
 - → coupling modifiers do not catch all shape deviations
 - ightarrow the EFT approach might not be always applicable

Deconstruct di-Higgs and see what we can extract

S. Moretti, LP, J. Sjölin, H. Waltari, Phys. Rev. D 107 (2023) no.11, 115010 (only non-reson S. Moretti, LP, J. Sjölin, H. Waltari, Phys. Rev. D 112 (2025) no.5, 055005 (adding resonar

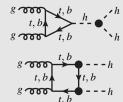


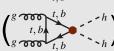
What can the signal be from a general perspective?

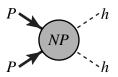


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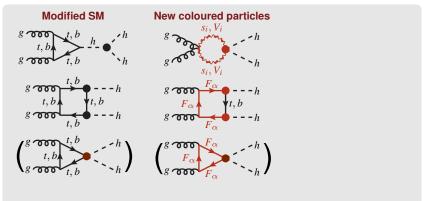
Modified SM

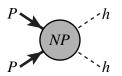




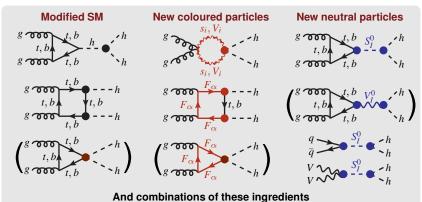


What can the signal be from a general perspective?





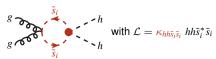
What can the signal be from a general perspective?



The number of possibilities is limited!

Reduced cross-sections

Let's take one signal contribution:

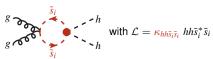


$$\mathcal{A} \propto \kappa_{hh\tilde{s}_i\tilde{s}_i} \longrightarrow \sigma = \kappa_{hh\tilde{s}_i\tilde{s}_i}^2 \hat{\sigma}(m_{\tilde{s}_i})$$

- $\kappa_{hh\tilde{s}_i\tilde{s}_i}$: rescaling of the cross-section
- $\hat{\sigma}(m_{\tilde{s}_i})$: kinematics of the process \longrightarrow reduced cross-section

Reduced cross-sections

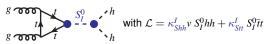
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- $\kappa_{hh\tilde{s}_i\tilde{s}_i}$: rescaling of the cross-section
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Let's add another contribution:



$$\sigma = \kappa_{hh\tilde{s}_i\tilde{s}_i}^2 \hat{\sigma}(m_{\tilde{s}_i}) + (\kappa_{Shh}^I \kappa_{Stt}^I)^2 \hat{\sigma}(m_{S_i}, \Gamma_{S_I}) + \kappa_{hh\tilde{s}_i\tilde{s}_i}^K \kappa_{Shh}^I \kappa_{Stt}^I \hat{\sigma}^{int}(m_{s_i}, m_{S_I}, \Gamma_{S_I})$$

- couplings: rescaling of the reduced cross-section
- masses, total widths and Lorentz structures: kinematics of the individual subprocess

The total cross-section is constructed by adding a complete set of elements

The recipe

For a given process, broadly defined as "initial state \rightarrow final state" at parton level

1) Deconstruction

Identify all combinations proportional to unique couplings products

2) Database building

Simulate individual samples in a multidimensional grid of parameters which affect kinematics and store the samples

3) Recombination

Analyse the process for any choice of theory parameters (masses, couplings, BRs...) by doing a **weighted sum** of the deconstructed samples

Samples are recycled if there are more particles with same relevant parameters masses, widths...

1) Deconstruction

	Topology type	Feynman diagrams	Amplitude
1	Modified hhh coupling	g g g g g g g g g g	$\mathcal{A}_i \propto \kappa_{hhh}$
2	One modified hff coupling	$g \xrightarrow{g \times g \times g} t, b \xrightarrow{t, b} h \xrightarrow{t, b} t, b \xrightarrow{t, b} t, b \xrightarrow{t, b} t, b$	$A_i \propto \kappa_{hff}$
3	Modified hhh coupling and modified hff coupling	g g g g g g g g g g	$A_i \propto \kappa_{hhh} \kappa_{hff}$
4	Two modified hff couplings	$g \xrightarrow{g \times b} t, b \xrightarrow{t, b} t, b \xrightarrow{t, b}h$	$A_i \propto \kappa_{hff}^2$
5	Scalar bubble and triangle with $h\tilde{s}\tilde{s}$ couplings	g or sign hand sign sign sign sign sign sign sign sign	$A_i \propto \kappa_{h\bar{s}\bar{s}}^{ii}$
6	$\begin{array}{c} \text{Modified hhh coupling +}\\ \text{Scalar bubble and triangle}\\ \text{with $h\tilde{s}\tilde{s}$ coupling} \end{array}$	$g \overset{\tilde{S}_i}{\underset{\tilde{S}_i}{\longrightarrow}} h \overset{h}{\underset{\tilde{S}_i}{\longrightarrow}} h \overset{\tilde{S}_i}{\underset{\tilde{S}_i}{\longrightarrow}} h \overset{\tilde{S}_i}{\underset{\tilde{S}_i}{\longrightarrow}} h \overset{h}{\underset{\tilde{S}_i}{\longrightarrow}} h$	$A_i \propto \kappa_{hhh} \kappa_{h\bar{s}\bar{s}}^{ii}$
7	Scalar triangle and box with two $h \hat{s} \hat{s}$ couplings	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\mathcal{A}_i \propto \kappa_{h\bar{s}\bar{s}}^{ij} ^2$
8	Scalar bubble and triangle with $hh\hat{s}\hat{s}$ coupling	$g \xrightarrow{\tilde{s}_i} h g \xrightarrow{\tilde{s}_i} h \\ h g \xrightarrow{\tilde{s}_i} h$	$A_i \propto \kappa_{hh\bar{s}\bar{s}}^{ii}$
9	Neutral scalar	g see t, b f h f h h	$A_i \propto \kappa_{Shh}^I \kappa_{Sff}^I$
10	Neutral scalar + coloured scalar	$g \xrightarrow{\tilde{S}_i} S_i^0 \xrightarrow{\tilde{S}_i} h g \xrightarrow{\tilde{S}_i} S_i^0 \xrightarrow{\tilde{S}_i} h$	$A_i \propto \kappa_{Shh}^I \kappa_{S88}^{Ii}$

di-Higgs in the NMSSM

10 kind of topologies

Minimal deconstruction ingredients

- modified SM couplings
- 4 coloured scalars (of any charge)
- 2 neutral scalars

1) Deconstruction

Cross-section

$$\sigma = \sigma_B + \sigma_M + \sigma_S + \sigma_S + \sigma_{SS} + \sum_{i=M,s,S,S,S} \sigma_{i|B}^{int} + \sum_{i,j=M,s,S,S} \sigma_{i|j}^{int}$$

B: SM background, M: modified SM, s: squark propagation S: neutral scalar propagation, Ss: neutral scalar+squark propagation

One of these terms (interference between diagrams with squarks and the SM):

$$\sigma_{\mathrm{s}|\mathrm{B}}^{\mathrm{int}} = \sum_{i=1,2} \left[\kappa_{h\tilde{q}\tilde{q}}^{ii} \hat{\sigma}_{5|B}^{\mathrm{int}}(m_{\tilde{q}_i}) + \sum_{j>i} (\kappa_{h\tilde{q}\tilde{q}}^{ij})^2 \hat{\sigma}_{7o|B}^{\mathrm{int}}(m_{\tilde{q}_{i,j}}) + \kappa_{hh\tilde{q}\tilde{q}}^{ii} \hat{\sigma}_{8|B}^{\mathrm{int}}(m_{\tilde{q}_i}) \right]$$

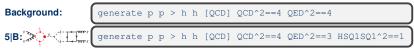
The first element, graphically:

Each term is not physical per se, only the total sum is physical!

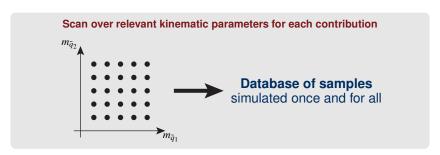
Perform separate MC simulations for each deconstructed term

Example with MG5 AMC:

- 1) Associate individual coupling orders to each new coupling
- 2) Use specific simulation syntax for each process



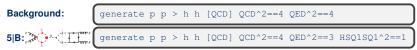
Remove any unwanted particle from propagation and set any other coupling order to 0



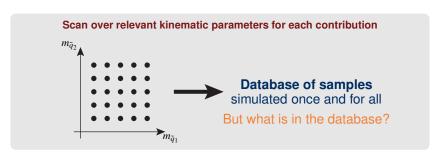
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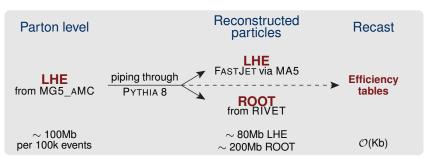


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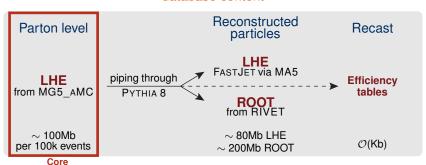
The grid doesn't need to be too dense --> interpolation between points

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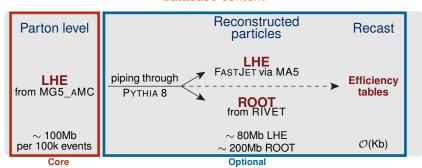
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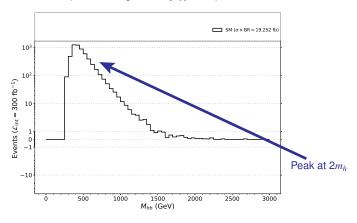
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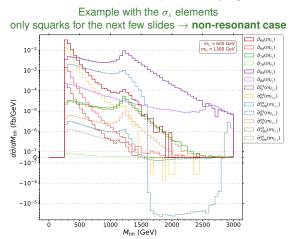
invariant mass distribution m_{hh}

0) Background distribution (intrinsic background only: $pp \rightarrow hh$)



invariant mass distribution m_{hh}

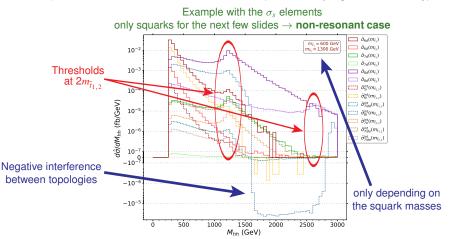
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The deconstructed samples do not need to have the same number of MC events

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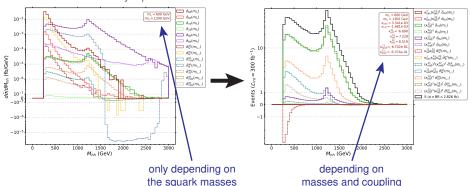


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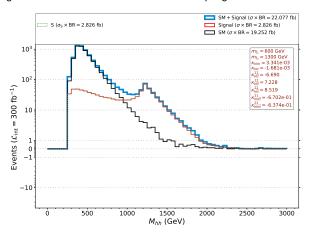
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Example with the σ_s elements only squarks for the next few slides \rightarrow **non-resonant case**

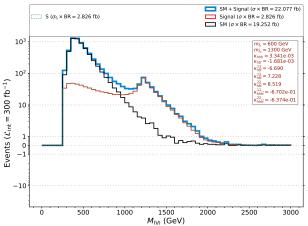


The recombination is done bin-by-bin for each distribution

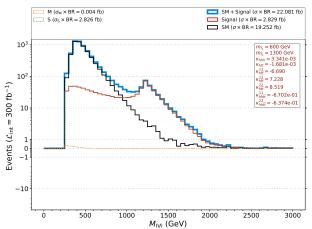
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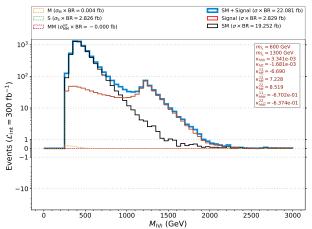
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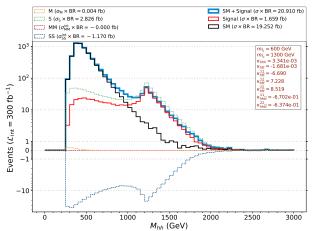
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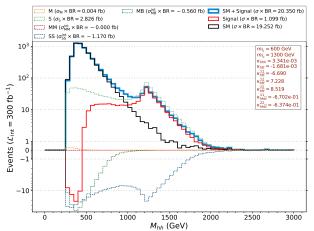
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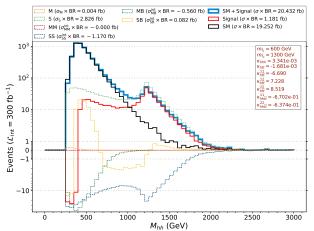
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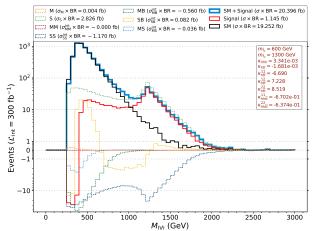
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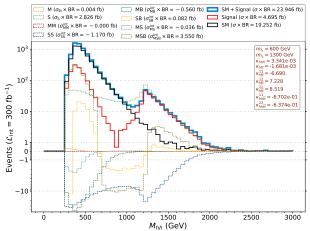
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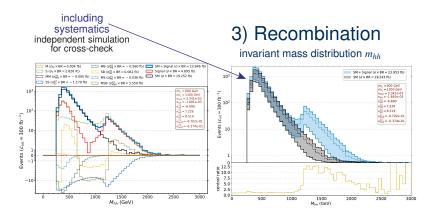


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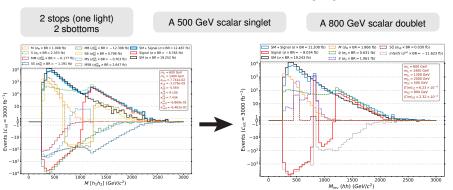


With the same database we can

- analyse the contribution of specific topologies to the total shape
- use a semi-analytic approach to find parameters which maximise key features
 excesses, deficits, threshold effects,...
- find predictions for any other theoretical scenario with same particle content

Adding resonances and all squarks

i.e. going full NMSSM

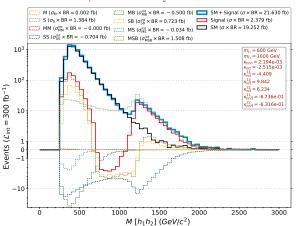


- Stronger negative interference in the squark sector above the threshold
- Stronger event depletion at low m_{bb}
- Singlet scalar nearly invisible (very small couplings to SM guarks)
- Visible peak from the doublet resonance

But this analysis has further scope

gradually increasing $m_{\tilde{t}_1}$

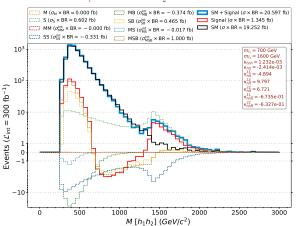
$$m_{\tilde{t}_1} = 600 \text{ GeV}, m_{\tilde{t}_2} = 1600 \text{ GeV}$$



Smooth exploration of the interface between low scale and EFT limit

gradually increasing $m_{\tilde{t}_1}$

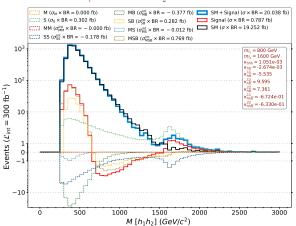
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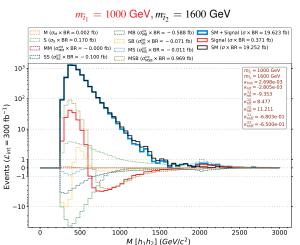
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Smooth exploration of the interface between low scale and EFT limit

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Smooth exploration of the interface between low scale and EFT limit

This approach contains and goes beyond EFT

It can be used to assess the validity range of EFT descriptions

Given an experimental dataset, is it possible to fit the parameters?

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A testing with our MC sets:

- 1) We generated a benchmark
- 2) "Blinded" the parameters and asked our ATLAS colleague to do the parametric fit

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First try

Input parameters

$$m_{\tilde{t}_1} = 600 \text{ GeV}$$

 $m_{\tilde{t}_2} = 1400 \text{ GeV}$
 $\kappa_{hhh} = 1.208e-01$
 $\kappa_{htt} = -3.309e-02$
 $\kappa_{h\tilde{t}t}^{11} = 5.965$

$$\kappa_{h\tilde{t}\tilde{t}}^{12} = 9.598$$
 $\kappa_{h\tilde{t}\tilde{t}}^{22} = 7.825$

$$\kappa_{ht\bar{t}}^{11} = -6.874e-01$$

$$\kappa^{22}_{11100} = -6.437e-01$$

 $\kappa_{hh\tilde{i}\tilde{i}}^{22} = -6.437e-01$

Fitted parameters

$m_{\tilde{t}_1} = 600 \text{ GeV}$
$m_{\tilde{t}_2} = 1300 \text{ GeV}$
$\kappa_{hhh} = 8.430e-02$
$\kappa_{htt} = -5.972e-02$

$$\kappa_{h\tilde{t}\tilde{t}}^{11} = -1.203$$

$$\kappa_{h\tilde{t}\tilde{t}}^{12} = 10.000$$

$$\kappa_{h\tilde{t}\tilde{t}}^{22} = 3.022$$

$$\kappa_{hh\tilde{t}\tilde{t}}^{11} = 1.369$$

$$\kappa_{hh\tilde{t}\tilde{t}}^{22} = 5.366$$



Caveats:

- Only couplings were fitted, stop masses were assumed
- MSSM relations between couplings were assumed, but the point was random

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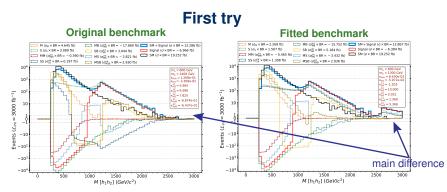
Caveats:

- Only couplings were fitted, stop masses were assumed
- MSSM relations between couplings were assumed, but the point was random

Given an experimental dataset, is it possible to fit the parameters?

A testing with our MC sets:

- 1) We generated a benchmark
- 2) "Blinded" the parameters and asked our ATLAS colleague to do the parametric fit



Different parameter sets lead to very similar distributions

 $M[h_1h_2](GeV/c^2)$

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Second try Original benchmark Fitted benchmark $S (\sigma_5 \times BR = 1.914 \text{ fb})$ SB (aft x BR = 1.921 fb) Signal (σ × BR = − 8.284 fb) SB (dif x BB = 0.994 fb) Signal (σ × BR = -8.275 fb) MM ($\sigma_{MM}^{int} \times BR = -0.181 \text{ fb}$) (32) MS ($\sigma_{MN}^{int} \times BR = -1.554 \text{ fb}$) SM ($\sigma \times BR = 19.252 \text{ fb}$) MM (aim × BR = -0.211 fb) (3) MS (aim × BR = -0.833 fb) SM (σ × BR = 19.252 fb) SS (of × BR = - 0.245 fb) MSR (of x × BR = 1.457 fb) SS (at × BR = -1.514 fb) MSB (at × BR = 1.977 fb 10 ni. = 1400 GeV mi. - 1400 GeV $\kappa_{wa} = 1.180e-01$ Kus = -2.030e-03 102 10 -5.096 11 = -5.965 9.000 Events ($L_{int} = 300 \text{ fb}^{-1}$) $=300 \text{ fb}^{-1}$) 10 10 i = -6.870e-01 = 9.000e-0 -10-10 -10 3000 1500 2000

perfect fit with very close numerical values of relevant parameters!

Relative contributions are different but fitted result is indistinguishable from original

Classes of solutions can fit possible excesses

The technical part

Deconstructing di-Higgs with coloured and neutral scalars

Database grids

Coloured scalars masses (GeV): 600, 800, 1000, 1200, 1400

2000 (EFT limit)

700, 1300 \longrightarrow points for validating interpolation

Neutral scalars masses (GeV): 300, 500, 800, 1200, 1300

100 (below m_H), 250 (2 m_H), 350 (2 m_t) \longrightarrow the thresholds

2000 (EFT limit)

Neutral scalars Γ /**M ratios:** 0.001, 0.01 both NWA, but different to quantify interference effects

Around 33k simulations with 100k MC events each

Database size

LHE samples (parton level): around 4.4 TB
LHE samples (reconstructed objets): around 3.5 TB

The core database could even fit in commercial USB keys

The di-Higgs case study

- Low-energy resonant peaks vs threshold effects can be very relevant
 - → interplay between interferences and width effects
 - → NMSSM as a playground to explore different regimes and combinations
- Characterise a signal can be challenging
 - → Difficult even at HL-LHC at differential level unless NP is light

But it is possible to treat NP contributions in a general way! modular, collaborative, flexible and resource-friendly

Deconstruction

- Comprehensive description of NP effects while minimizing computing resources
- Complete description of interferences and non-trivial shapes
- Smooth connection with EFT description (going beyond EFT actually)
- Limited on grids but interpolation methods
- Reverse engineering of experimental results
- Requires person-power for extending the framework

→ Work in progress

The deconstruction approach as been applied also in:

S. Moretti, LP and L. Shang, JHEP 06 (2025), 132

A. Carvalho, S. Moretti, D. O'Brien, LP and H. Prager, Phys. Rev. D 98 (2018) no.1, 015029

A. Deandrea, T. Flacke, B. Fuks, LP and H. S. Shao, JHEP 08 (2021), 107

A. Banerjee, E. Bergeaas Kuutmann, V. Ellajosyula, R. Enberg, G. Ferretti and LP, SciPost Phys. Core 7 (2024), 079

C. Arina, B. Fuks, LP, et al, Eur, Phys. J. C 85 (2025), 975

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