

# How Parisi–Sourlas supersymmetry constrains the scalar sector

Stam Nicolis

CNRS–Institut Denis–Poisson(UMR7013)  
Université de Tours, Université d'Orléans  
Parc Grandmont, 37200 Tours, France

Rencontres de Physique des Particules 2026  
Montpellier, 12 March 2026

Based on [arXiv:2303.17875](https://arxiv.org/abs/2303.17875), [arXiv:2404.03959](https://arxiv.org/abs/2404.03959) and  
*forthcoming*.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as  
an inevitable  
property of  
relativistic spinning  
particles

How worldline  
supersymmetry can  
resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and  
target space SUSY

The mysteries of  
the Nicolai map

Conclusions and  
outlook

# Outline

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# What is supersymmetry?

- ▶ It is *discretionary*: We can write down supersymmetric theories; but, it seems, that we aren't obliged to do so; or are we, we just haven't realized it yet?

Within perturbation theory, it *seems* that it is possible. Beyond perturbation theory, much less is known, one way or another.

- ▶ It is *inevitable*: We may think that supersymmetry is at our discretion to take into account; it isn't. Just because, historically, it was discovered much later than other possible symmetries doesn't mean anything. History of science, as always, is different from science.

We shall argue that supersymmetry has a bit of both features—but there are many issues that remain to be understood about it.

Two other attributes that will appear are *worldline* (or worldvolume) and *target space*.

## Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

## Is relativity at our discretion?

For a long time people didn't know that invariance under global Lorentz transformations wasn't discretionary, but an inevitable property of nature. It took some time, before it became a reflex to write (we use units where  $c = 1$  and signature  $(+ \underbrace{- \dots -}_{d-1})$ , where  $d$  is the dimension of spacetime)

$$S_{\text{NG}}^{(0)}[x] = -m \int d\lambda \sqrt{\eta_{\mu\nu} \dot{x}^\mu \dot{x}^\nu}$$

for the action of the massive particle, moving in flat spacetime—and still more before realizing that this action is equivalent to the expression

$$S_{\text{P}}^{(0)}[x, e] = \int d\lambda \left\{ \frac{\dot{x}^\mu \dot{x}^\nu}{2e} \eta_{\mu\nu} + \frac{m^2 e}{2} \right\}$$

which can describe a massive or a massless particle—but that doesn't carry spin.

### Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

## What happens when spin is included

A relativistic particle is labeled by the two Casimirs of the Poincaré group, its mass and its spin. It took some time before it was noticed ( Berezin and Marinov (1976) ) that it is possible to describe the property that a particle can carry spin 1/2 by using Grassmann variables,  $\psi^I$ ,  $\{\psi^I, \psi^J\} = 0$ , where  $I, J = 1, 2, 3$ , since the combinations

$$S^I \equiv \frac{1}{2} \varepsilon^{IJK} \psi^J \psi^K$$

satisfy the relations

$$[S^I, S^K] = \frac{1}{2} \varepsilon^{IJK} S^K$$

The reason the  $\psi^I$  are useful is that it is possible to use them to write an action for the free relativistic, massless, particle of spin 1/2 ( Brink, Di Vecchia, Howe (1977) )

$$S_P[x, e, \psi] = \int d\lambda \left\{ \frac{\dot{x}^\mu \dot{x}^\nu}{2e} \eta_{\mu\nu} + \frac{i}{2} \psi^\mu \dot{\psi}^\nu \eta_{\mu\nu} \right\}$$

### Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# What happens when spin is included

There are additional terms that we can—therefore, must—include, since they are consistent with global Lorentz invariance and local reparametrization invariance of the worldline, viz.

$$S_P^{(1)}[x, e, \psi, \chi] = \int d\lambda i\chi\psi^\mu \dot{x}^\nu \eta_{\mu\nu}$$

If the particle is massive, we can add the following terms

$$S_P^{(m)}[\psi_*, \chi] = \int d\lambda \left\{ \frac{i\psi_*}{2} (\dot{\psi}_* - m\chi) + \frac{m^2 e}{2} \right\}$$

We remark that the fields  $\chi$  and  $\psi_*$  must be Grassmann valued fields and that  $e$  and  $\chi$  are auxiliary fields, that impose constraints—that define the mass and the spin of the particle that moves along the worldline.

## Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# What happens when spin is included: $\mathcal{N} = 1$ worldline SUSY

Now Brink, Di Vecchia and Howe remarked that the action,  $S_P = S_P^{(0)} + S_P^{(1)}$ , is invariant, up to a total derivative, under the transformations

$$\begin{aligned}\delta_\zeta x^\mu &= A\zeta\psi^\mu \\ \delta_\zeta \psi^\mu &= B\zeta\dot{x}^\mu\end{aligned}$$

where the parameter  $\zeta$  is a Grassmann variable  $\zeta^2 = 0$  if  $A = iB$ ; these transformations satisfy the relations

$$[\delta_\zeta, \delta_\eta] = 2iB^2\zeta\eta\frac{d}{d\lambda}$$

which justify calling them supersymmetric; indeed this is  $\mathcal{N} = 1$  worldline supersymmetry.

It is straightforward to check that the presence of the mass terms can be made consistent with  $\mathcal{N} = 1$  worldline supersymmetry.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# $\mathcal{N} = 1$ worldline SUSY is an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

We conclude that the free, relativistic spin  $1/2$  particle, in fact, realizes a representation of the  $\mathcal{N} = 1$  supersymmetry algebra. The target space of the relativistic spin  $1/2$  particle, in four dimensional spacetime, is, thus, eight-dimensional; in  $d$  spacetime dimensions, it. is  $2d$  dimensional, with  $d$  commuting and  $d$  anticommuting coordinates—that are mixed through worldline supersymmetry.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Interaction with an external electromagnetic field

Global Lorentz invariance and electromagnetic gauge invariance imply that the interaction of a relativistic spin 1/2 particle with an external electromagnetic field is described by the action

$$S_{\text{int}}[x, e, \psi] = \int d\lambda \{ q \dot{x}^\mu A^\nu(x) \eta_{\mu\nu} + q' \psi^\mu \psi^\nu F^{\rho\sigma}(x) \eta_{\mu\rho} \eta_{\nu\sigma} \}$$

A priori the two coupling constants,  $q$  and  $q'$  are independent; imposing invariance under  $\mathcal{N} = 1$  worldline supersymmetry leads to a relation between  $q$  and  $q'$ , viz.

$$q' = i \frac{q}{2}$$

This shows that  $\mathcal{N} = 1$  worldline supersymmetry can be—explicitly—broken, if this relation isn't satisfied.

We note that this incarnation of worldline supersymmetry doesn't seem to require auxiliary fields. The reason is that the fermions are worldline, not target space fermions, furthermore, the transformations remain linear, even in the presence of the external electromagnetic field.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# From a particle to a field

Now that we have understood the spinning particle, we can, perhaps, guess how to describe systems of indefinitely-many spinning particles. Normally we would imagine a field,  $\Phi(x^\mu, \psi^\mu)$ . Such a field is known—it's called a superfield. However it hasn't been used in this way. It might be interesting to explore why not.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# How do fluctuations affect these properties?

Remains to understand what happens in the presence of fluctuations and how does supersymmetry pertain to them. This was addressed by Parisi and Sourlas in 1982.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Supersymmetry and fluctuations

They remarked that the canonical partition function of a *non-relativistic* particle, moving in one spatial dimension, in equilibrium with a bath of fluctuations,

$$Z = \int [\mathcal{D}x] e^{-\int d\tau \left\{ \frac{1}{2} \dot{x}^2 + V(x) \right\}}$$

implies that the scalar potential,  $V(x)$ , can be written as

$$V(x) = \frac{1}{2} (W'(x))^2$$

up to a constant, since the potential should be bounded from below.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Supersymmetry and fluctuations

This, in turn, implies that the Euclidian action can be written as

$$S[x] = \int d\tau \left\{ \frac{1}{2} (\dot{x} + W'(x))^2 \right\}$$

up to total derivatives; which suggests that, if we define the “noise field”,  $h(\tau)$ , by the relation

$$h(\tau) \equiv \dot{x} + W'(x)$$

then, **if** it can be shown that the fluctuations can produce the Jacobian

$$J \equiv \left| \det \frac{\delta h(\tau)}{\delta x(\tau')} \right|$$

we deduce that the canonical partition function can be written as

$$Z = \int [\mathcal{D}h] e^{-\int d\tau \frac{1}{2} h(\tau)^2}$$

which is independent of the properties of the potential and may be assigned the value 1 with a suitable choice of units.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Supersymmetry and fluctuations

The reason supersymmetry is relevant here can be understood upon noticing that, by writing

$$\left| \det \frac{\delta h(\tau)}{\delta x(\tau')} \right| = e^{-i\theta_{\det}} \det \left( \delta(\tau - \tau') \left( \frac{d}{d\tau} + \frac{\partial^2 W}{\partial x(\tau) \partial x(\tau')} \right) \right)$$

the expression involves the determinant of a local operator. It is therefore useful to include it in the Euclidian action using Grassmann valued fields:

$$\det \left( \frac{d}{d\tau} + \frac{\partial^2 W}{\partial x(\tau) \partial x(\tau')} \right) = \int [\mathcal{D}\psi][\mathcal{D}\chi] e^{\int d\tau \psi(\tau) \left( \frac{d}{d\tau} + \frac{\partial^2 W}{\partial x(\tau)^2} \right) \chi(\tau)}$$

leading to the expression for the classical action

$$S[x, \psi, \chi] = \int d\tau \left\{ \frac{1}{2} (\dot{x} + W'(x))^2 - \psi (\dot{x} + W''(x)\chi) \right\}$$

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Enter the Nicolai map

The map

$$h(\tau) \equiv \dot{x} + W'(x)$$

is known as the Nicolai map, cf. [Nicolai 1980](#).

It maps the field  $x(\tau)$  to the field  $h(\tau)$ . While  $x(\tau)$  is an interacting field—it has a non-trivial potential— $h(\tau)$  is a Gaussian field—but it has ultra-local 2-point function.

Were it possible to solve the differential equation it defines exactly, it would be possible to express  $x(\tau)$  in terms of  $h(\tau)$  thus providing a new way for describing interacting fields in terms of free fields.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# The Nicolai map and fermions

Another property of the Nicolai map (which was in fact Nicolai's motivation for introducing it) is that it allows taking account of fermions in terms of their superpartners, since

$$\det \frac{\delta h(\tau)}{\delta x(\tau')} = \int [\mathcal{D}\psi][\mathcal{D}\chi] e^{\int d\tau d\tau' \psi(\tau) \frac{\delta h(\tau)}{\delta x(\tau')} \chi(\tau')}$$

Therefore, whether the anticommuting fields,  $\psi$  and  $\chi$ , are worldline or target space fermions depends on the properties of the operator

$$\frac{\delta h(\tau)}{\delta x(\tau')}$$

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Supersymmetry and fluctuations: $\mathcal{N} = 2$ worldline SUSY

By introducing an auxiliary field,  $F(\tau)$ , we may write the classical action in the form

$$S[x, \psi, \chi, F] = \int d\tau \left\{ \frac{1}{2} \dot{x}^2 - \frac{1}{2} F^2 + FW'(x) - \psi (\dot{\chi} + W''\chi) \right\}$$

and show that it is invariant under *two* supersymmetric transformations, *linear* in the fields. These realize  $\mathcal{N} = 2$  worldline SUSY.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Supersymmetry and fluctuations: $\mathcal{N} = 2$ worldline SUSY

This symmetry describes the property that the particles that can resolve the fluctuations, with which the particle(s) we are interested in, are its/their superpartners and which particle(s) describe fluctuations and which describe the particle(s) that are not assigned to the bath of fluctuations is a choice, that does not have an invariant meaning; it expresses a choice of frame.

Now we may ask what happens if we can have target space fermions resolving the fluctuations of relativistic scalars. It is in this case that we encounter interesting relations between the number of flavors and the dimensionality of spacetime.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Supersymmetry and fluctuations: Target space SUSY

It is possible to show that this resolution of the degrees of freedom, that can describe the fluctuations—of *relativistic* spinning fields—can be captured by *target space* supersymmetry. The idea of Parisi and Sourlas consists in showing that the Euclidian action for  $N_f = 2$  scalars, in  $d = 2$  spacetime dimensions,

$$S^{(0)}[\{\phi_A\}] = \int d^2x \left\{ \frac{1}{2} \delta^{\mu\nu} \delta^{AB} \partial_\mu \phi_A \partial_\nu \phi_B \right\}$$

can be written as

$$\int d^2x \left\{ \frac{1}{2} \delta^{AB} (\sigma^\mu \partial_\mu \phi_A) (\sigma^\nu \partial_\nu \phi_B) \right\}$$

where the  $\sigma^\mu$  generate the Clifford algebra

$$\{\sigma_{AC}^\mu, \sigma_{CB}^\nu\} = 2\delta^{\mu\nu} \delta_{AB}$$

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Supersymmetry and fluctuations: Target space SUSY

The canonical partition function is given by the expression

$$Z = \int [\mathcal{D}\phi_A] e^{-S^{(0)}[\{\phi_A\}]}$$

Parisi and Sourlas remark that the classical action can be written as

$$S^{(0)}[\{\phi_A\}] = \int d^2x \frac{1}{2} \delta^{AB} h_A(x) h_B(x)$$

where

$$h_A(x) \equiv [\sigma^\mu]_{AB} \partial_\mu \phi_B$$

What is crucial here is that it is possible to show that

$$[\sigma^\mu]_{AB} \partial_\mu \phi_B [\sigma^\nu]_{BC} \partial_\nu \phi_C = \delta^{AC} \delta^{\mu\nu} \partial_\mu \phi_A \partial_\nu \phi_C$$

up to total derivatives.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# How worldvolume controls number of flavors

We remark that these expressions promote a quite surprising message: That if we want to describe the fluctuations of target space fermions, we cannot use one scalar field; the number of scalars depends on the number of spacetime dimensions.

Conversely, if we want to resolve the fluctuations of scalars, the number of scalars, and of the fermions that can resolve their fluctuations, depends on the dimensionality of spacetime.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

**Fluctuations and target space SUSY**

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Supersymmetry and fluctuations: Target space SUSY

The idea, now, is to show that the fluctuations can be described through the *emergence* of the term

$$J = \left| \det \frac{\delta h_A(x)}{\delta \phi_B(x')} \right| = e^{-i\theta_{\det}} \det \frac{\delta h_A(x)}{\delta \phi_B(x')} = e^{-i\theta_{\det}} \det (\delta(x-x') \sigma_{AB}^{\mu} \partial_{\mu}) = \det (\delta(x-x')) e^{-i\theta_{\det}} \det (\sigma_{AB}^{\mu} \partial_{\mu})$$

which implies that the canonical partition function, when the fluctuations can be resolved, is given by the expression

$$Z = \int [\mathcal{D}\phi_A] \left| \det \frac{\delta h_A(x)}{\delta \phi_B(x')} \right| e^{-\int d^2x \frac{\delta^{AB}}{2} h_A(x) h_B(x)} = \int [\mathcal{D}h_A(x)] e^{-\int d^2x \frac{\delta^{AB}}{2} h_A(x) h_B(x)} = 1 = \det (\delta(x-x')) \int [\mathcal{D}\phi_A] [\mathcal{D}\psi_A] [\mathcal{D}\chi_A] e^{-i\theta_{\det}} \times e^{-\int d^2x (\frac{1}{2} \delta^{AB} (\sigma^{\mu} \partial_{\mu} \phi_A) (\sigma^{\nu} \partial_{\nu} \phi_B) - \psi_A \sigma_{AB}^{\mu} \partial_{\mu} \chi_B)}$$

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Supersymmetry and fluctuations: Target space SUSY

We recognize that, this time, the anticommuting fields,  $\psi_A$  and  $\chi_B$ , can be identified with target space, not worldline, fermions and the classical, free, action is invariant under  $\mathcal{N} = 2$  *target space* SUSY.

There are several conceptual issues that remain to be fully clarified here.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

**Fluctuations and target space SUSY**

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Supersymmetry and fluctuations: Target space SUSY–interactions

To describe interactions, we need a superpotential. If we set

$$h_A(x) = [\sigma^\mu]_{AB} \partial_\mu \phi_B + \frac{\partial W}{\partial \phi_A}$$

we deduce the scalar potential  $V(\{\phi_A\})$  :

$$V(\{\phi_A\}) = \frac{1}{2} \delta^{AB} \frac{\partial W}{\partial \phi_A} \frac{\partial W}{\partial \phi_B}$$

We would like to understand under what conditions this is invariant under  $SO(2)$  flavor transformations.

However there's an additional term, that appears, namely,

$$\sigma_{AB}^\mu \frac{\partial \phi_B}{\partial x^\mu} \frac{\partial W}{\partial \phi_B}$$

We'd like to understand, under what conditions this term is a total derivative.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# A worked example: $\mathcal{N} = 2, d = 2$ Wess-Zumino

An interesting case is provided by the equations

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\partial W}{\partial \phi_1} &= g(\phi_1^2 - \phi_2^2) \\ \frac{\partial W}{\partial \phi_2} &= 2gs\phi_1\phi_2\end{aligned}$$

with  $s = \pm 1$ , which was studied by Parisi and Sourlas (1982).

We remark that

$$\frac{\partial^2 W}{\partial \phi_1^2} + \frac{\partial^2 W}{\partial \phi_2^2} = 2g(s + 1)\phi_1$$

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

**Fluctuations and target space SUSY**

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# A worked example: $\mathcal{N} = 2, d = 2$ Wess-Zumino

but that the crossterm

$$[\sigma^\mu]_{AB} \partial_\mu \phi^A \frac{\partial W}{\partial \phi_B} =$$
$$\partial_x \left( \phi_1^2 \phi_2 - \frac{\phi_2^3}{3} \right) + \partial_y \left( \frac{\phi_1^3}{3} - \phi_1 \phi_2^2 \right) +$$
$$2g \phi_1 \phi_2 (s - 1) (\partial_x \phi_1 - \partial_y \phi_2)$$

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

**Fluctuations and target space SUSY**

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# A worked example: $\mathcal{N} = 2, d = 2$ Wess-Zumino

This implies that the superpotential is *either* a holomorphic function of the scalars, *or* it leads to a scalar potential that respects  $SO(2)$  coordinate invariance (in Euclidian signature)—i.e. Lorentz invariance in Lorentzian signature. Obviously we care about the latter more than about the former.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Target space SUSY and fluctuations beyond two dimensions

The attempt by Parisi and Sourlas to generalize their approach beyond  $d > 2$  spacetime dimensions hits obstacles.

- ▶ For  $d \not\equiv 2 \pmod{8}$  (in particular for  $d = 3$  and  $d = 4$ ) the generators of the Clifford algebra don't have a Majorana representation. This can be easily remedied, by doubling the degrees of freedom:

$$h_A(x) = \sigma_{AB}^\mu \partial_\mu \phi_B + \frac{\partial W}{\partial \phi_A}$$
$$h_A(x)^\dagger = \sigma_{BA}^\mu \partial_\mu \phi_B^\dagger + \left( \frac{\partial W}{\partial \phi_A} \right)^\dagger$$

since  $[\sigma_{AB}^\mu]^\dagger = \sigma_{BA}^\mu$ .

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Target space SUSY and fluctuations beyond two dimensions

- ▶ However there is another problem, namely, whether the crossterms

$$\sigma_{AB}^{\mu} \partial_{\mu} \phi_B \left( \frac{\partial W}{\partial \phi_A} \right)^{\dagger} + \sigma_{BA}^{\mu} \partial_{\mu} \phi_B^{\dagger} \frac{\partial W}{\partial \phi_A}$$

are total derivatives;

- ▶ but, even more significantly, whether the crossterms, encountered upon expanding the term

$$\sigma_{AB}^{\mu} \partial_{\mu} \phi_B \sigma_{CA}^{\nu} \partial_{\nu} \phi_C^{\dagger}$$

are total derivatives.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Target space SUSY and fluctuations beyond two dimensions

In fact, we remark that

$$\sigma_{AB}^{\mu} \partial_{\mu} \phi_B \sigma_{CA}^{\nu} \partial_{\nu} \phi_C^{\dagger} = \partial_{\mu} \left( \sigma_{AB}^{\mu} \phi_B \sigma_{CA}^{\nu} \partial_{\nu} \phi_C^{\dagger} \right) - \sigma_{AB}^{\mu} \sigma_{CA}^{\nu} \phi_B \partial_{\mu} \partial_{\nu} \phi_C^{\dagger}$$

The first term is a total derivative; the second term can be written as a sum of the anticommutator and of the commutator of the Pauli matrices. The anticommutator will give rise to the canonically normalized kinetic term; the commutator will produce a vanishing contribution, since it is antisymmetric in the  $\mu$  and  $\nu$  indices, while these are summed over an expression that is symmetric in the same indices.

So the only constraints stem from the requirement that the terms involving the superpotential, that are not invariant under rotations, are, indeed, total derivatives.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Target space SUSY and fluctuations beyond two dimensions

These crossterms are the “leftovers” between the terms generated by the Nicolai map and the terms imposed by the supersymmetry algebra. If they aren't total derivatives, their presence can be probed by the anomalies in the identities that describe how supersymmetry is realized.

In the conventional approach to supersymmetric theories such terms never appear in the first place, that's why they haven't been noticed to date. The reason they appear in this approach is the Nicolai map, that provides a map between the noise fields and the dynamical fields—assuming, however, that the superpartners describe the fluctuations of each. This need not be the case, as the relativistic spinning particle shows.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

**Fluctuations and target space SUSY**

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# The many SUSYs and their relation to fluctuations

What the quantization of the relativistic spinning particle by Brink, DiVecchia and Howe doesn't address, however, is how the  $\mathcal{N} = 1$  worldline SUSY between the position and the spin degrees of freedom is related to the, two,  $\mathcal{N} = 2$  SUSYs, that describe the degrees of freedom that resolve the fluctuations of the position and the spin.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# What does the Nicolai map actually imply?

It provides the hint that supersymmetry is a more general property of physical systems. How this map can be defined for gauge theories is, still, an open problem. Despite recent efforts, it hasn't been possible to define it, yet, in as explicit a form as for Wess-Zumino models.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# The Nicolai map and the scalars of the Standard Model

The upshot of this analysis is that, in order to be able to resolve the fluctuations with which scalar fields are in equilibrium, their number, already, shows a non-trivial dependence on the dimensionality of the worldvolume: In particular, a single scalar field can't provide a complete account of its dynamics, beyond one spacetime dimension; more dimensions imply the necessity of more scalars, in order for their fluctuations to be described in a local way by fermions.

So in  $D = 2$  two scalar fields (one doublet) at least, are required; in  $D = 3$ , six scalar fields (three doublets) at least, are required; and in  $D = 4$ , eight scalar fields (four doublets), at least, are required.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Gauge theories

For lattice gauge theories, on the other hand, it has been possible to define the so-called “trivializing map”,

cf. M. Lüscher (2010),

$$[dV_\mu] = [dU_\mu] e^{-S[U]}$$

This map transforms the non-uniform measure over the gauge group into a uniform measure. On a compact manifold—which is the case of the Lie groups of relevance to particle physics—the uniform distribution has the “universality” property that the Gaussian has for non-compact manifolds. However, curiously, the relation with the Nicolai map hasn’t been established (even though Lüscher does point out that the trivializing map does play the same role as the Nicolai map).

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Conclusions and outlook

- ▶ Worldline SUSY is an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles. Its effects can be probed by their coupling to external electromagnetic fields. What is not that obvious is how to adapt it for relativistic spinning fields.
- ▶ Worldline SUSY can, also, provide a way for resolving the degrees of freedom, with which dynamical degrees of freedom are in equilibrium.
- ▶ However, as the example of the relativistic spinning particle illustrates, the degrees of freedom that are related by worldline SUSY need not resolve the other's fluctuations.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

## Conclusions and outlook

- ▶ Target space SUSY can be, also, understood as providing the resolution of fluctuations. This provides a new way of understanding the relevance of SUSY. Up to now it was thought that the classical action must be supersymmetric and SUSY must then be broken, either spontaneously (giving rise to a goldstino, that must be identified), or explicitly, by ad hoc methods.

The insight of Parisi and Sourlas leads to the scenario where the classical action need not be supersymmetric; supersymmetry describes how the fluctuations—for the Standard Model these are quantum fluctuations—can be resolved in terms of particles, thereby addressing the concern of Einstein, that quantum mechanics describes how matter behaves in the presence of fluctuations, but doesn't describe the fluctuations themselves, hence it's incomplete. The way the fluctuations are resolved is through the superpartners of the degrees of freedom that appear in the classical action.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Conclusions and outlook

- ▶ What this approach to SUSY implies is that the classical action can be composed of vectors, spinors and scalars, not related, necessarily by SUSY; but the requirement that each provide a consistent account in the presence of fluctuations places constraints on the least number one can have.

These constraints are different than the constraints pertaining to perturbative renormalizability: A single scalar field can be consistently described within renormalizable perturbation theory in more than one spacetime dimensions and less than an upper critical dimension; the Parisi–Sourlas insight implies that a single scalar field, beyond one spacetime dimension, is incomplete. And the vehicle to make sense of it is the Nicolai map. Which can be explicitly constructed for scalar theories, but is, still, work in progress for gauge theories.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Conclusions and outlook

- ▶ Understanding the meaning of the Nicolai map for (super)Yang-Mills theories (target space SUSY) remains to be fully spelled out.

Cf. the recent work by Nicolai *et al.* (2021) and by

Lechtenfeld (2024)

and it is interesting to compare it to the work by

de Alfaro, Fubini, Furlan and Veneziano (1985)

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Conclusions and outlook for the two SUSYs

- ▶ So we see that there are two kinds of SUSY: The SUSY—where the superpartners have distinct physical significance, already, at the classical level: For the relativistic spinning particle the superpartners are position and spin. This is, indeed, the “conventional” approach to SUSY.
- ▶ Then there is the SUSY, where the superpartners possess another kind of physical significance, namely, where they resolve the degrees of freedom that define the bath of fluctuations. This turns out to be the case for the *non-relativistic* particle, in equilibrium with thermal or with quantum fluctuations.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Conclusions and outlook for the two SUSYs

- ▶ So for the relativistic spinning particle, if it is in equilibrium with a bath of fluctuations, the fluctuations of the position are encoded by the superpartners of the position—that are **not** the components of the spin!; and the fluctuations of the spin are encoded by the superpartners of the spin—that are **not** the components of the position! So there are *three* supersymmetries at work here that are, however, definitely, related.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Conclusions and outlook for the two SUSYs

In any event the Nicolai map is useful for probing supersymmetric anomalies, in a new way. In the picture of Parisi and Sourlas supersymmetry describes the symmetry between the dynamical degrees of freedom and the degrees of freedom that can serve as fluctuations; what this implies for field theories in four spacetime dimensions remains to be understood.

At the very least it provides an explicit framework for describing more scalar particles within the Standard Model. How to turn this into a roadmap for the LHC collaborations remains to be spelled out.

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

Conclusions and outlook

# Conclusions and outlook for the two SUSYs

There is, still, much more to learn about SUSY!

Introduction

Worldline SUSY as an inevitable property of relativistic spinning particles

How worldline supersymmetry can resolve fluctuations

Fluctuations and target space SUSY

The mysteries of the Nicolai map

**Conclusions and outlook**