

Introduction to CUDA C

GPU Technology Theater, SC11

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What is CUDA?



- CUDA Architecture
 - Expose GPU computing for general purpose
 - Retain performance
- CUDA C/C++
 - Based on industry-standard C/C++
 - Small set of extensions to enable heterogeneous programming
 - Straightforward APIs to manage devices, memory etc.
- This session introduces CUDA C/C++

Prerequisites

- You (probably) need experience with C or C++
- You don't need GPU experience
- You don't need parallel programming experience
- You don't need graphics experience



CONCEPTS

Heterogeneous Computing

Blocks

Threads

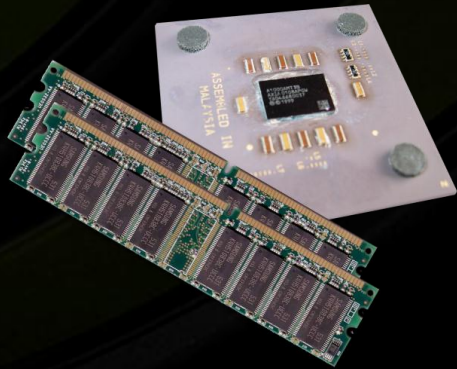
Indexing

HELLO WORLD!

Heterogeneous Computing



- Terminology:
 - *Host* The CPU and its memory (host memory)
 - *Device* The GPU and its memory (device memory)



Host



Device

Heterogeneous Computing



```
#include <iostream>
#include <algorithm>

using namespace std;

#define N 1024
#define RADIUS 3
#define BLOCK_SIZE 16

__global__ void stencil_1d(int *in, int *out) {
    __shared__ int temp[BLOCK_SIZE * 2 * RADIUS];
    int gindex = threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x;
    int lindex = threadIdx.x + RADIUS;

    // Read input elements into shared memory
    temp[gindex] = in[gindex];
    if (threadIdx.x < RADIUS) {
        temp[lindex - RADIUS] = in[gindex - RADIUS];
        temp[lindex + BLOCK_SIZE] = in[gindex + BLOCK_SIZE];
    }

    // Synchronize (ensure all the data is available)
    __syncthreads();

    // Apply the stencil
    int result = 0;
    for (int offset = -RADIUS; offset <= RADIUS; offset++)
        result += temp[lindex + offset];

    // Store the result
    out[gindex] = result;
}

void fill_ints(int *x, int n) {
    fill_n(x, n, 1);
}

int main(void) {
    int *in, *out; // host copies of a, b, c
    int *d_in, *d_out; // device copies of a, b, c
    int size = (N + 2 * RADIUS) * sizeof(int);

    // Alloc space for host copies and setup values
    in = (int *)malloc(size); fill_ints(in, N + 2 * RADIUS);
    out = (int *)malloc(size); fill_ints(out, N + 2 * RADIUS);

    // Alloc space for device copies
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_in, size);
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_out, size);

    // Copy to device
    cudaMemcpy(d_in, in, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);
    cudaMemcpy(d_out, out, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);

    // Launch stencil_1d() kernel on GPU
    stencil_1d<<<N/BLOCK_SIZE, BLOCK_SIZE>>>>(d_in + RADIUS, d_out + RADIUS);

    // Copy result back to host
    cudaMemcpy(out, d_out, size, cudaMemcpyDeviceToHost);

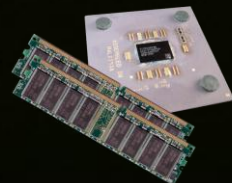
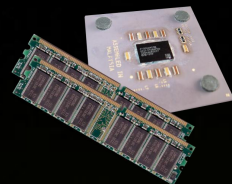
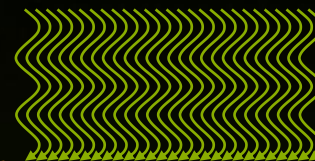
    // Cleanup
    free(in); free(out);
    cudaFree(d_in); cudaFree(d_out);
    return 0;
}
```

parallel fn

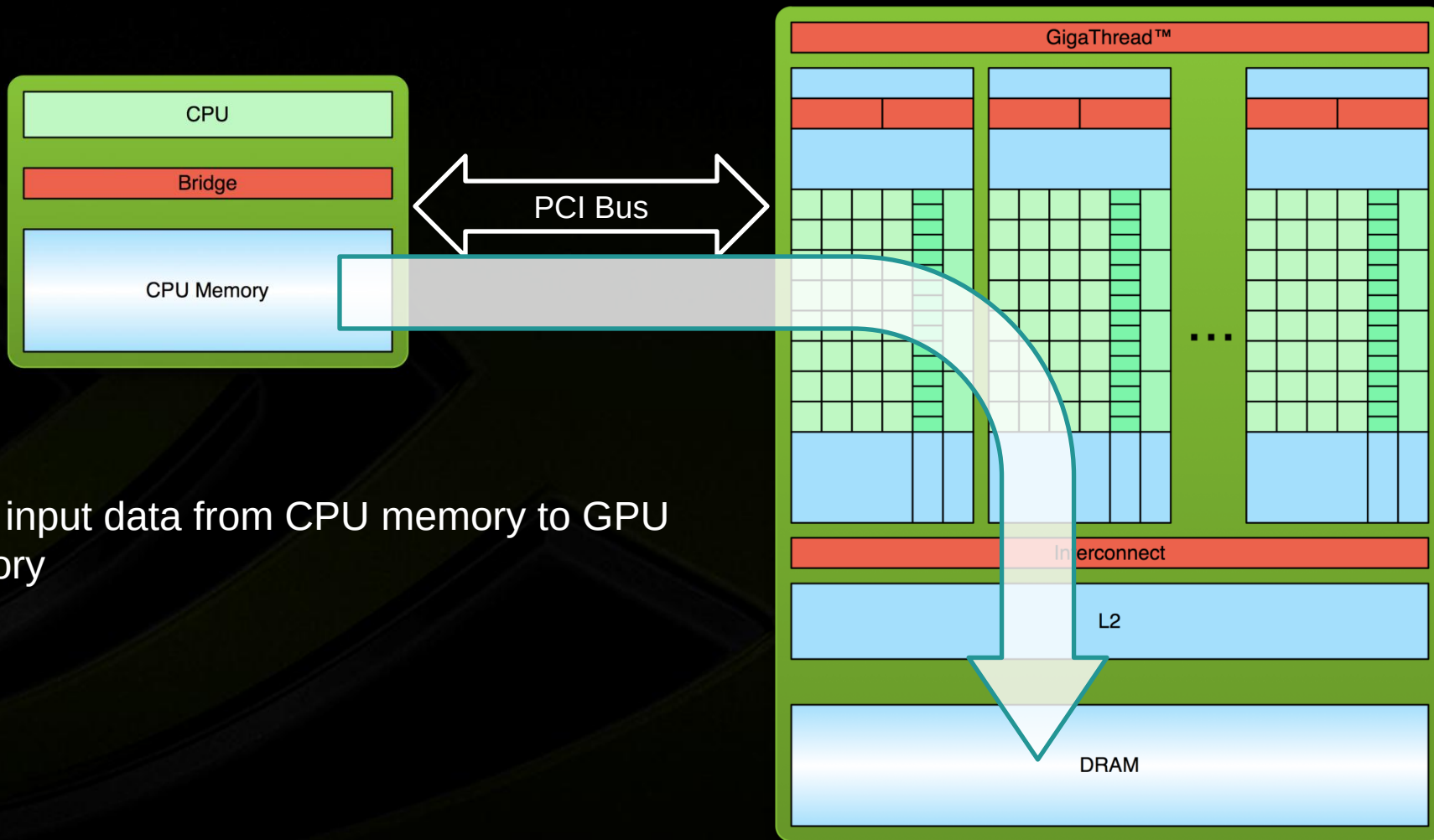
serial code

parallel code

serial code

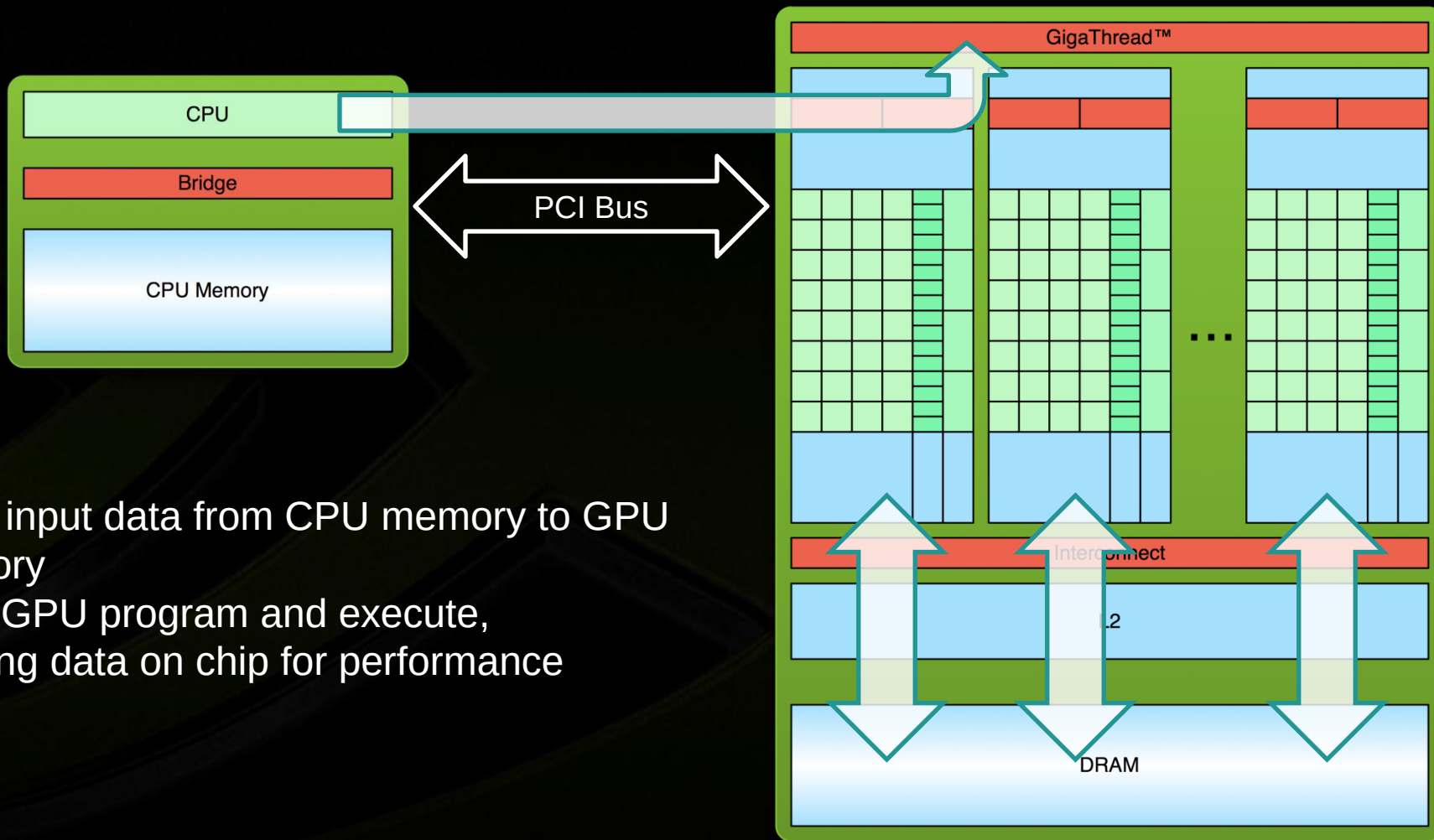


Simple Processing Flow



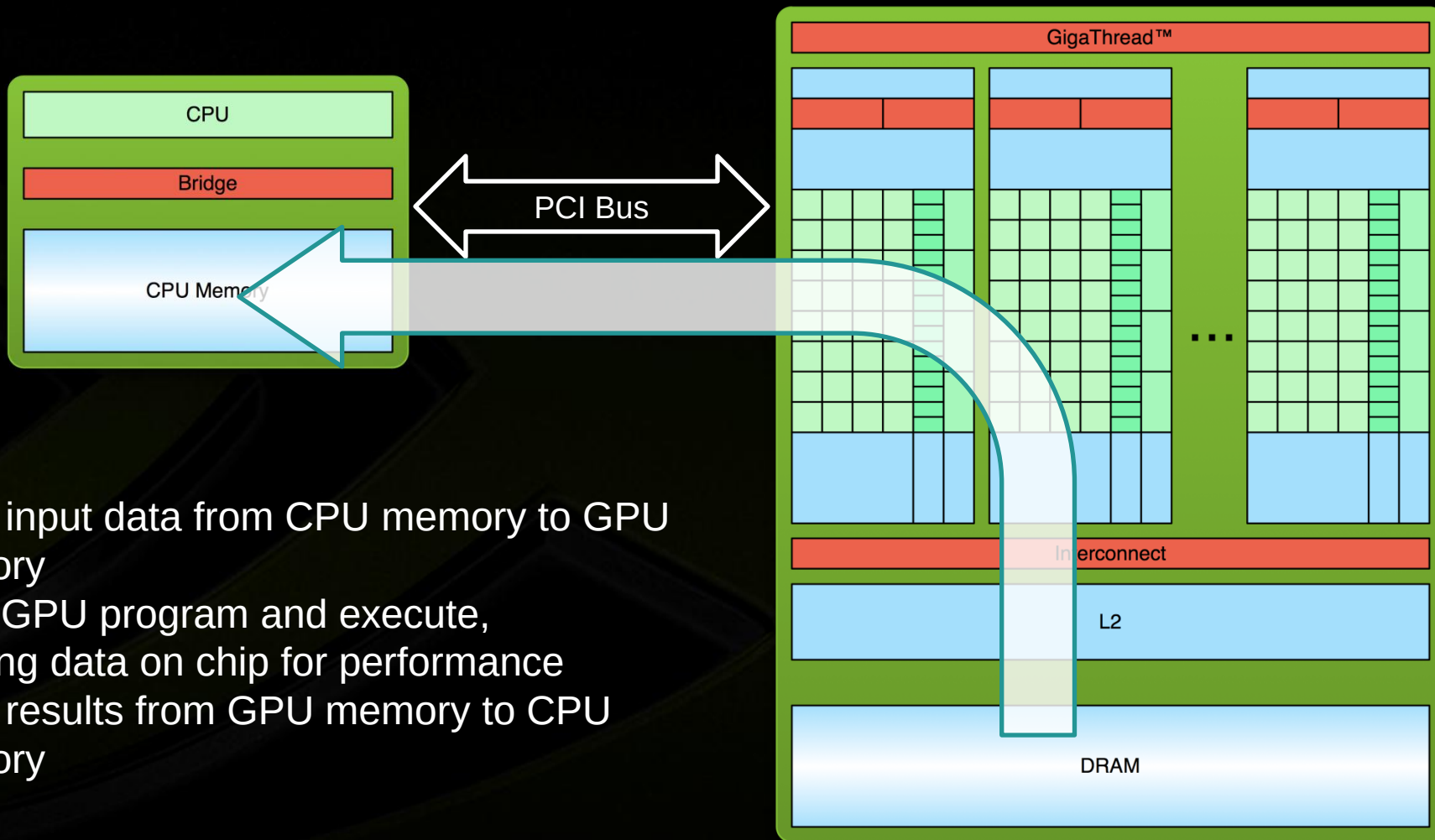
1. Copy input data from CPU memory to GPU memory

Simple Processing Flow



1. Copy input data from CPU memory to GPU memory
2. Load GPU program and execute, caching data on chip for performance

Simple Processing Flow



1. Copy input data from CPU memory to GPU memory
2. Load GPU program and execute, caching data on chip for performance
3. Copy results from GPU memory to CPU memory

Hello World!



```
int main(void) {  
    printf("Hello World!\n");  
    return 0;  
}
```

- Standard C that runs on the host
- NVIDIA compiler (nvcc) can be used to compile programs with no *device* code

Output:

```
$ nvcc  
hello_world.cu  
$ a.out  
Hello World!  
$
```

Hello World! with Device Code

```
__global__ void mykernel(void) {  
}  
  
int main(void) {  
    mykernel<<<1,1>>>();  
    printf("Hello World!\n");  
    return 0;  
}
```

- Two new syntactic elements...

Hello World! with Device Code

```
__global__ void mykernel(void) {  
}
```

- CUDA C/C++ keyword `__global__` indicates a function that:
 - Runs on the device
 - Is called from host code
- `nvcc` separates source code into host and device components
 - Device functions (e.g. `mykernel()`) processed by NVIDIA compiler
 - Host functions (e.g. `main()`) processed by standard host compiler
 - `gcc, cl.exe`

Hello World! with Device C0de



```
mykernel<<<1,1>>>();
```

- Triple angle brackets mark a call from *host* code to *device* code
 - Also called a “kernel launch”
 - We’ll return to the parameters (1,1) in a moment
- That’s all that is required to execute a function on the GPU!

Hello World! with Device Code



```
__global__ void mykernel(void) {  
}  
  
int main(void) {  
    mykernel<<<1,1>>>();  
    printf("Hello World!\n");  
    return 0;  
}
```

- `mykernel()` does nothing, somewhat anticlimactic!

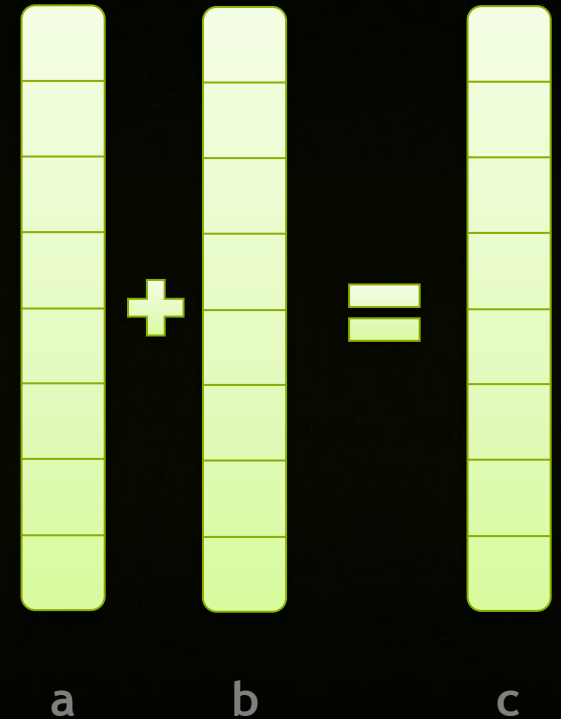
Output:

```
$ nvcc hello.cu  
$ a.out  
Hello World!  
$
```

Parallel Programming in CUDA C/C++



- But wait... GPU computing is about massive parallelism!
- We need a more interesting example...
- We'll start by adding two integers and build up to vector addition



Addition on the Device

- A simple kernel to add two integers

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    *c = *a + *b;  
}
```

- As before `__global__` is a CUDA C/C++ keyword meaning
 - `add()` will execute on the device
 - `add()` will be called from the host

Addition on the Device

- Note that we use pointers for the variables

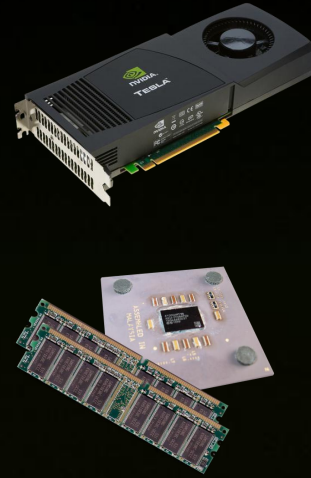
```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    *c = *a + *b;  
}
```

- `add()` runs on the device, so `a`, `b` and `c` must point to device memory
- We need to allocate memory on the GPU

Memory Management



- Host and device memory are separate entities
 - *Device* pointers point to GPU memory
 - May be passed to/from host code
 - May *not* be dereferenced in host code
 - *Host* pointers point to CPU memory
 - May be passed to/from device code
 - May *not* be dereferenced in device code
- Simple CUDA API for handling device memory
 - `cudaMalloc()`, `cudaFree()`, `cudaMemcpy()`
 - Similar to the C equivalents `malloc()`, `free()`, `memcpy()`



Addition on the Device: add()

- Returning to our add() kernel

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    *c = *a + *b;  
}
```

- Let's take a look at main()...

Addition on the Device: main()



```
int main(void) {  
    int a, b, c;                // host copies of a, b, c  
    int *d_a, *d_b, *d_c;      // device copies of a, b, c  
    int size = sizeof(int);  
  
    // Allocate space for device copies of a, b, c  
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_a, size);  
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_b, size);  
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_c, size);  
  
    // Setup input values  
    a = 2;  
    b = 7;
```

Addition on the Device: `main()`



```
// Copy inputs to device
cudaMemcpy(d_a, &a, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);
cudaMemcpy(d_b, &b, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);

// Launch add() kernel on GPU
add<<<1,1>>>(d_a, d_b, d_c);

// Copy result back to host
cudaMemcpy(&c, d_c, size, cudaMemcpyDeviceToHost);

// Cleanup
cudaFree(d_a); cudaFree(d_b); cudaFree(d_c);
return 0;
}
```

CONCEPTS

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Threads

Indexing

RUNNING IN PARALLEL

Moving to Parallel

- GPU computing is about massive parallelism
 - So how do we run code in parallel on the device?

```
add<<< 1, 1 >>> ();
```

```
add<<< N, 1 >>> ();
```



- Instead of executing `add()` once, execute N times in parallel

Vector Addition on the Device



- With `add()` running in parallel we can do vector addition
- Terminology: each parallel invocation of `add()` is referred to as a **block**
 - The set of blocks is referred to as a **grid**
 - Each invocation can refer to its block index using `blockIdx.x`

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    c[blockIdx.x] = a[blockIdx.x] + b[blockIdx.x];  
}
```

- By using `blockIdx.x` to index into the array, each block handles a different index

Vector Addition on the Device



```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    c[blockIdx.x] = a[blockIdx.x] + b[blockIdx.x];  
}
```

- On the device, each block can execute in parallel:

Block 0

```
c[0] = a[0] + b[0];
```

Block 1

```
c[1] = a[1] + b[1];
```

Block 2

```
c[2] = a[2] + b[2];
```

Block 3

```
c[3] = a[3] + b[3];
```

Vector Addition on the Device: add()

- Returning to our parallelized add() kernel

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    c[blockIdx.x] = a[blockIdx.x] + b[blockIdx.x];  
}
```

- Let's take a look at main()...

Vector Addition on the Device: main()



```
#define N 512
int main(void) {
    int *a, *b, *c;           // host copies of a, b, c
    int *d_a, *d_b, *d_c;     // device copies of a, b, c
    int size = N * sizeof(int);

    // Alloc space for device copies of a, b, c
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_a, size);
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_b, size);
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_c, size);

    // Alloc space for host copies of a, b, c and setup input values
    a = (int *)malloc(size); random_ints(a, N);
    b = (int *)malloc(size); random_ints(b, N);
    c = (int *)malloc(size);
```

Vector Addition on the Device: `main()`

```
// Copy inputs to device
cudaMemcpy(d_a, a, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);
cudaMemcpy(d_b, b, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);

// Launch add() kernel on GPU with N blocks
add<<<N,1>>>(d_a, d_b, d_c);

// Copy result back to host
cudaMemcpy(c, d_c, size, cudaMemcpyDeviceToHost);

// Cleanup
free(a); free(b); free(c);
cudaFree(d_a); cudaFree(d_b); cudaFree(d_c);
return 0;
}
```

CONCEPTS

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Indexing

INTRODUCING THREADS

CUDA Threads



- Terminology: a block can be split into parallel **threads**
- Let's change `add()` to use parallel *threads* instead of parallel *blocks*

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    c[threadIdx.x] = a[threadIdx.x] + b[threadIdx.x];  
}
```

- We use `threadIdx.x` instead of `blockIdx.x`
- Need to make one change in `main()` ...

Vector Addition Using Threads: main()



```
#define N 512
int main(void) {
    int *a, *b, *c;           // host copies of a, b, c
    int *d_a, *d_b, *d_c;     // device copies of a, b, c
    int size = N * sizeof(int);

    // Alloc space for device copies of a, b, c
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_a, size);
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_b, size);
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_c, size);

    // Alloc space for host copies of a, b, c and setup input values
    a = (int *)malloc(size); random_ints(a, N);
    b = (int *)malloc(size); random_ints(b, N);
    c = (int *)malloc(size);
```

Vector Addition Using Threads: `main()`



```
// Copy inputs to device
cudaMemcpy(d_a, a, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);
cudaMemcpy(d_b, b, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);

// Launch add() kernel on GPU with N threads
add<<<1,N>>>(d_a, d_b, d_c);

// Copy result back to host
cudaMemcpy(c, d_c, size, cudaMemcpyDeviceToHost);

// Cleanup
free(a); free(b); free(c);
cudaFree(d_a); cudaFree(d_b); cudaFree(d_c);
return 0;
}
```

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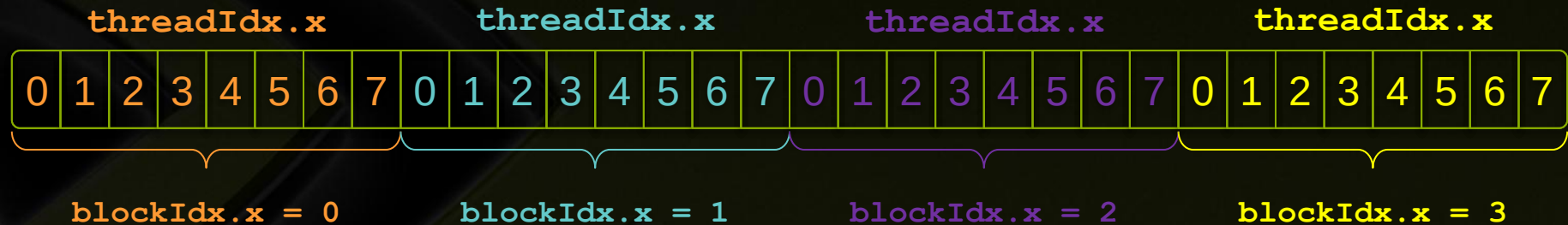
COMBINING THREADS AND BLOCKS

Combining Blocks and Threads

- We've seen parallel vector addition using:
 - Many blocks with one thread each
 - One block with many threads
- Let's adapt vector addition to use both *blocks* and *threads*
- Why? We'll come to that...
- First let's discuss data indexing...

Indexing Arrays with Blocks and Threads

- No longer as simple as using `blockIdx.x` and `threadIdx.x`
 - Consider indexing an array with one element per thread (8 threads/block)



- With M threads/block a unique index for each thread is given by:

```
int index = threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * M;
```

Indexing Arrays: Example

- Which thread will operate on the red element?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----



```
int index = threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * M;  
          =      5      +      2      * 8;  
          = 21;
```

Vector Addition with Blocks and Threads



- Use the built-in variable `blockDim.x` for threads per block

```
int index = threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x;
```

- Combined version of `add()` to use parallel threads *and* parallel blocks

```
__global__ void add(int *a, int *b, int *c) {  
    int index = threadIdx.x + blockIdx.x * blockDim.x;  
    c[index] = a[index] + b[index];  
}
```

- What changes need to be made in `main()`?

Addition with Blocks and Threads: `main()`



```
#define N (2048*2048)
#define THREADS_PER_BLOCK 512
int main(void) {
    int *a, *b, *c;           // host copies of a, b, c
    int *d_a, *d_b, *d_c;     // device copies of a, b, c
    int size = N * sizeof(int);

    // Alloc space for device copies of a, b, c
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_a, size);
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_b, size);
    cudaMalloc((void **)&d_c, size);

    // Alloc space for host copies of a, b, c and setup input values
    a = (int *)malloc(size); random_ints(a, N);
    b = (int *)malloc(size); random_ints(b, N);
    c = (int *)malloc(size);
```

Addition with Blocks and Threads: `main()`



```
// Copy inputs to device
cudaMemcpy(d_a, a, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);
cudaMemcpy(d_b, b, size, cudaMemcpyHostToDevice);

// Launch add() kernel on GPU
add<<<N/THREADS_PER_BLOCK, THREADS_PER_BLOCK>>>(d_a, d_b, d_c);

// Copy result back to host
cudaMemcpy(c, d_c, size, cudaMemcpyDeviceToHost);

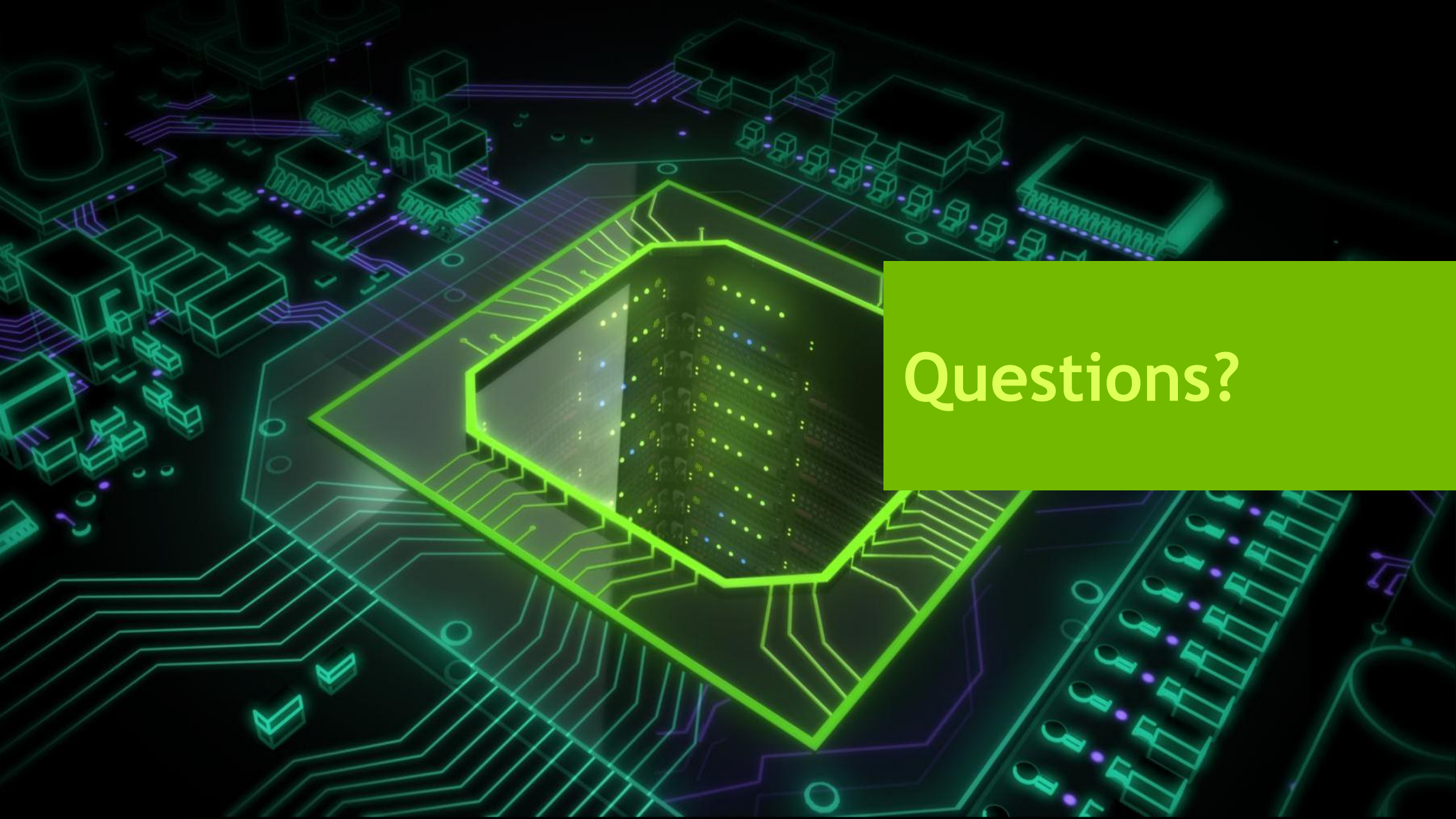
// Cleanup
free(a); free(b); free(c);
cudaFree(d_a); cudaFree(d_b); cudaFree(d_c);
return 0;
}
```

Why Bother with Threads?

- Threads seem unnecessary
 - They add a level of complexity
 - What do we gain?
- Unlike parallel blocks, threads have mechanisms to:
 - Communicate
 - Synchronize

Topics we skipped

- We skipped some details:
 - Inter-thread communication and synchronization
 - Asynchronous operation of CPU, GPU, and DMA
 - Error handling
 - Device management
 - ...
- You can learn more:
 - Refer to the CUDA C Programming Guide
 - CUDA By Example (Sanders and Kandrot)

The background is a complex, glowing green circuit board. It features various components like integrated circuits, capacitors, and resistors, all interconnected by a network of glowing green lines representing traces. A large, glowing green square is positioned in the center, containing a grid of small, glowing green dots. The overall aesthetic is futuristic and technological.

Questions?