

QUENCHING CRITICAL OPALESCEENCE INTO DARKNESS

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A transparent fluid becomes cloudy if its density fluctuates over a length comparable to the wavelength of light. Discovered 200 years ago, critical opalescence refers to such a phenomenon at the critical point, which ends the boundary between a liquid and gas. We found that fast cooling supercritical SF_6 darkens it, indicating photon absorption by excitons of the heterostructural near-critical fluid and implying an irruption of quantum effects in a quintessentially classical context.

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