# Scriptable debugging, execution querying and other advanced debugging techniques

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Get the code here: https://github.com/maxwills/PharoDays2022

#### **Presentation Format**

A mix of hands-on, demonstration and explanations.

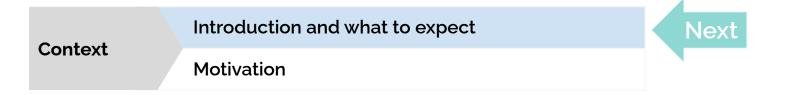
Follow the examples:

Code here: https://github.com/maxwills/PharoDays2022

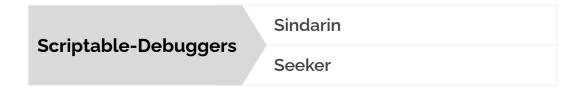
Let's go!

Get the code here: https://github.com/maxwills/PharoDays2022

### **Presentation Agenda**



Obtaining Execution Data	Code insertion (+ Conditions)
	Instrumentation (+ Reflection)



Get the code here: https://github.com/maxwills/PharoDays2022

# What to expect (Spoilers)

We will explore a program execution, trying to answer a few debugging questions.

We will go from commonly-used tools and techniques to not so commonly-used:

Halts, Logging, Breakpoints, MetaLinks, MethodProxies

We will show usage of Scriptable Debuggers in Pharo.

"The debugging activity does not take place only in the Debugger".

### **Presentation Agenda**

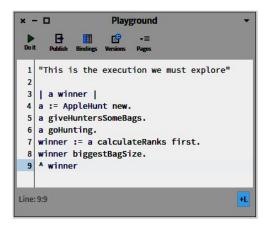


Obtaining Execution Data	Code insertion (+ Conditions)				
	Instrumentation (+ Reflection)				

Scriptable-Debuggers	Sindarin
	Seeker

### **Motivation**

#### We will explore a program using several debugging tools and techniques



Our program tells a story ...

### **Motivation**

#### Getting data from the execution:

Q1. How many times the method **OrderedCollection>>add:** is called? (and with an Apple as argument?)

Q2. How many times any method with selector **add**: is called? What is the actual method in every case?

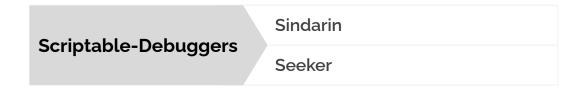
### **Presentation Agenda**

Context

Introduction and what to expect

Motivation

Obtaining	Code insertion (+ Conditions)	Next
Execution Data	Instrumentation (+ Reflection)	

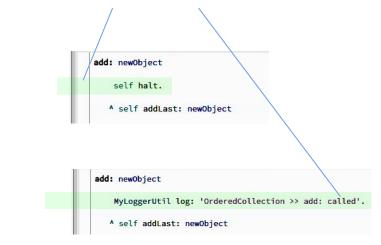


#### **Code Insertion**

× - 🗆	OrderedCo	ollection>>add:	-		
Ordered	Array2D	instance side A	^ 👄 add: ^		
Sparse     Extensions     Extensions     Collections-Sequenceable-1     Collections-Stack     Collections-Stack-Tests     Collections-Streams     Collections-Streams-Tests     Collections-Strings-Tests     Collections-Support     Collections-Support-Tests     Filter	( ) OrderedCollection     ( ) SortedCollection	(b) extensions     (b) extensions     (c) extensions     accessing     adding     converting     copying     enumerating     orinitizzation     private     removing     sorting     sorting     sorting     sorting	add:after:     add:afterindex:     add:before:     add:beforelindex:     addAllFirst:     addAllFirst:     addAllFirst:     addAllFirst:     addAllFirst:     addAllFirst:     addAllFirst:     addAllsat:     addAllsat:     addArfirst:     addLast:     asArray     asOrderedCollection		
All Packages O Scoped View	v   ● Flat O Hier.   ● Inst.side O C deredCollecti x Yatadd: x	lass side   ● Methods O Vars   <u>Cla</u>	ss refs. Q Implementors Q Senders de methc x D D C ← →		
add: newObject A self addLast: n 2/3[2]	newObject	×	≠ adding □ extension □ F +L W		

#### We change the code of the execution to include our inquisitive actions.

Original OrderedCollection>>add: method (comments removed)



Note: Images for illustrative purpose only. Don't put an Halt in OrderedCollection>>add: 10

#### **Code Insertion**

We change the code of the execution to include our inquisitive actions.

- Logging (printing)
- Halt

#### Getting data from the execution:

Q1. How many times the method **OrderedCollection>>add:** is called? (and with an Apple as argument?)

#### **Code Insertion**

Getting data from the execution:

Q1. How many times the method **OrderedCollection>>add:** is called? (and with an Apple as argument?)

Q2. How many times any method with selector add: is called? What is the actual method in every case? Consider only cases when adding Apple, or Hunter objects.

#### Problem:

There are several possible methods with the #add: selector. What to do?

### **Presentation Agenda**

Context Introduction and what to expect
Motivation

Obtaining	Code insertion (+ Conditions)	
<b>Execution Data</b>	Instrumentation (+ Reflection)	Next

Scriptable-Debuggers	Sindarin
	Seeker

#### Instrumentation

This time, to include our inquisitive actions, we change the execution without altering it's code.



+

MetaLinks

MethodProxies

14

Instrumentation

This time, to include our inquisitive actions, we change the execution without altering it's code.

- Breakpoints
- MetaLinks
- MethodProxies

Adds a extra instructions to our execution without modifying its code.

The code:

add: newObject

^ self addLast: newObject

When a method is compiled:

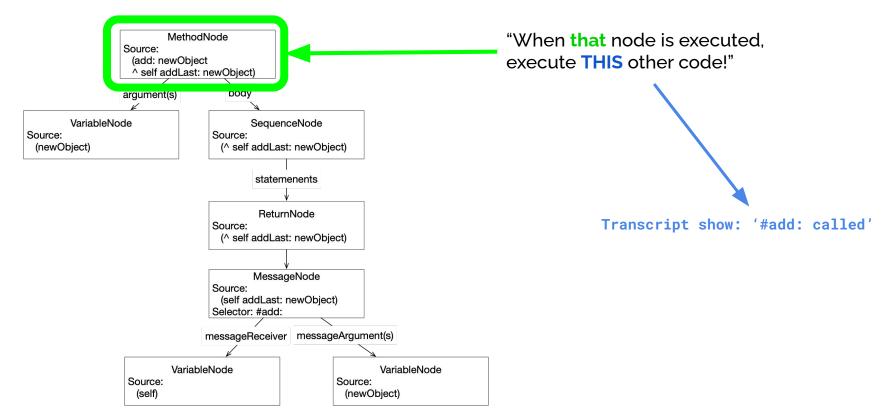
add: newObject

^ self addLast: newObject

#### An AST is produced:

- RBMethodNode(add: newObject ^ self addLast: newObject) RBVariableNode(newObject)
  - RBSequenceNode(^ self addLast: newObject)
    - RBReturnNode(^ self addLast: newObject)
      - RBMessageNode(self addLast: newObject)
        - RBVariableNode(self)
        - RBVariableNode(newObject)





Showing the code in Pharo

Instrumentation through MetaLinks Examples + Reflection

#### **MethodProxies**

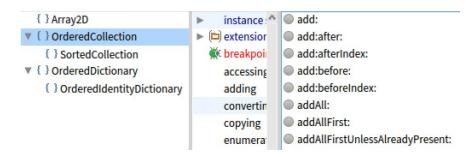
Some facts:

- Not included in Pharo.
- Get it here:

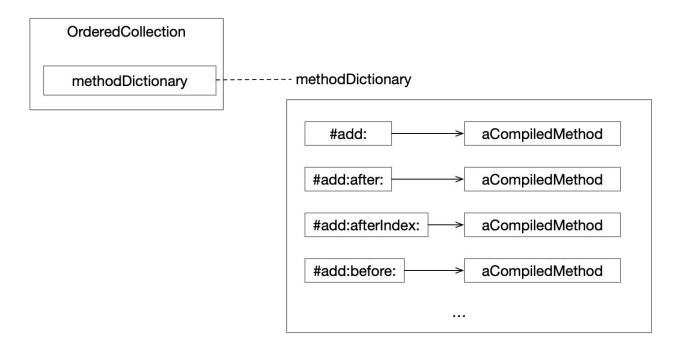
https://github.com/pharo-contributions/MethodProxies

The package is developed and maintained by S. Ducasse, G. Polito and P. Tesone, but feel free to give a hand.

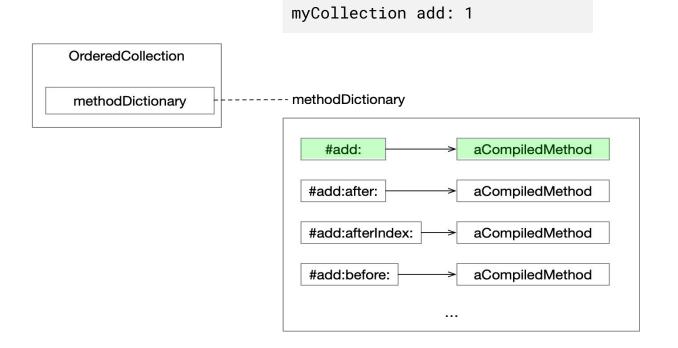
Adds a extra instructions to our execution without modifying its code, by "proxying" its method(s).



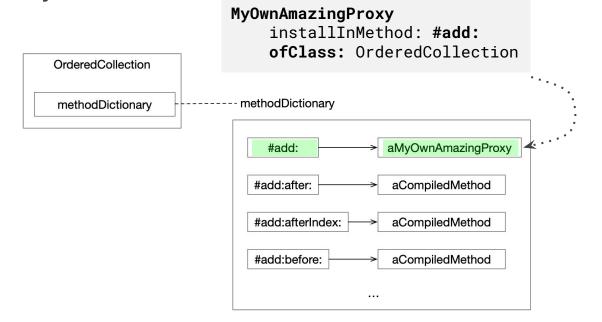
When a method is compiled, the created CompiledMethod object is stored in the methodDictionary of the class.



When sending a message to an object of our class, Pharo will get the CompiledMethod object of the dictionary, and will execute it.



To instrument our method, we can replace the CompiledMethod with a Proxy



#### **Obtaining Execution Data** Comparison of approaches

**Code Insertion** 

- Halt

- Logging

#### Instrumentation

- Breakpoints

- MetaLinks

- MethodProxies

	Code Insertion	Instrumentation
"Simple" to understand.		
"Simple" to debug.		
Don't modify the debugged program code.		
Persistent (recompilation)		
Good Scalability		

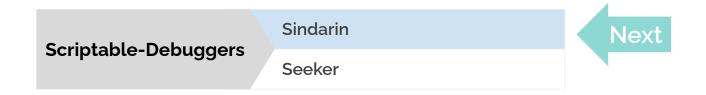
By instrumenting a program, we alter its execution. (Even if we don't modify it's code)

Can we extract execution data without altering the execution at all?

### **Presentation Agenda**

Context Introduction and what to expect Motivation

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# **Scriptable Debuggers**

- Allow developers to automate debugging tasks.
- Expose an API to:
  - Manipulate the debugger and debugged execution.
  - Obtain information about the debugged execution.

Less tedious manual debugging work for the developer

#### Sindarin

**Included in Pharo** 

- Two flavors:
  - With UI: Extension of the StDebugger.
    - Has to activated from the Pharo settings.
  - Headless: The SindarinDebugger Object.
    - Already included in Pharo 9.0 and Pharo 10

#### **Sindarin** Enabling the UI version

× - 🗆	Settings Bro	owser		
Expand all Search for: Hit return to acc	Regexp	Choose packages	Store Settings	Load Setting
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Show line numbers in code panels	5	2		
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► 🍄 Reflectivity				
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Activate extensions	6	2		
Sreakpoints				
► 🌮 Bytecode				
🔻 🛠 Sindarin				
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Show in debugger Activate the tool tab in the debugger right co	olumn.		All packa	iges

Enable it in the Pharo Settings

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7	winner := h	untEvent cal	culate	Ranks f	irst.									
an Un <mark>d</mark> efined	lObject (nil)										•	Ø	6	6
	+ Variable	÷	Value											
implicit	C self		nil											
temp. var	C huntEver	nt	nil											
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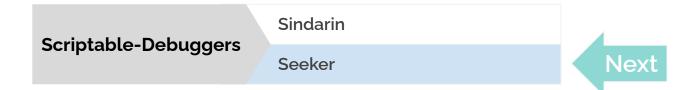
StDebugger with Sindarin UI Extension

#### (To the code)

### **Presentation Agenda**

Context Introduction and what to expect Motivation

Obtaining Execution Data	Code insertion (+ Conditions)
	Instrumentation (+ Reflection)





A prototype scriptable and queryable debugger

- UI version only (as an extension of the StDebugger).
- Not included in Pharo.
- Query-based debugging.
- Time-Traveling mechanics.

#### (To the code)

# The Query Notation (From scripting to querying)

callsToAdd	
callsToAdd := OrderedCollection new.	
<pre>seeker restartAtBytecodeOne. [ seeker canStep ] whileTrue: [      seeker step.      (seeker currentState isMessageSend and: [ seeker currentState node selector = #add: ]) ifTrue: [</pre>	
<pre>callsToAdd add: seeker currentState methodAboutToExecute ] ] . ^ callsToAdd</pre>	

^ (Query from: seeker newProgramStates select: [ :state | state isMessageSend and: [ state node selector = #add: ] ] collect: [ :state | state methodAboutToExecute ]) asOrderedCollection

### Standard Query Notation Equivalent queries in other languages

#### Pharo (Prototype implementation for Pharo 9.0/Pharo10)

```
^ (Query from: seeker newProgramStates
    select: [ :state | state isMessageSend and: [ state node selector = #add: ] ]
    collect: [ :state | state methodAboutToExecute ]) asOrderedCollection
```

#### **SQL** Query

SELECT state.methodAboutToExecute

**FROM** ProgramStates

WHERE state.isMessageSend AND

state.node.selector = 'add:'

#### C# (Linq)

```
var results=(
   FROM state in seeker.newProgramStates
   WHERE state.isMessageSend && state.node.selector == "add:"
   SELECT state.methodAboutToExecute
).ToList();
```

#### Python (List comprehension + properties)

```
results = [
   state.methodAboutToExecute
   for state in seeker.newProgramStates
   if state.isMessageSend and state.node.selector == "add:"
]
```

(To the code!)

### **Queries In Seeker**

- Not any kind of queries, but Time-Traveling Queries (TTQs).
- A set of ready-to-use TTQs are provided.
- Developers can write their own Queries and TTQs.

### **Summary**

- The debugger is not your only tool for debugging.
- Inserting extra behavior to study your program execution for your debugging sessions.
  - Code Insertion, Instrumentation, and dangers.
- Reflection is a powerful mechanism to obtain execution data.
- Scriptable debuggers: Sindarin.
- Scriptable Time-Traveling Queryable Debugger prototype: Seeker.
  - Query Notation and Time-Traveling Queries

#### Have a good day!

Presentation is finished. Extra slides next.

# Context What to expect

We will explore an execution, to find answer to debugging questions.

**Everything goes!** 

The standard debugger, breakpoints, logging, proxies, reflection, scripting, speculating, etc.

I will break some Pharo Images, and show how you can avoid that (\*).

(\*In some cases. There are no guarantees, so don't sue me)

# Context What to expect

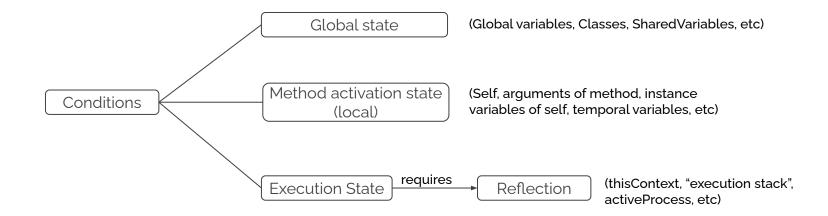
By the end of the session you will:

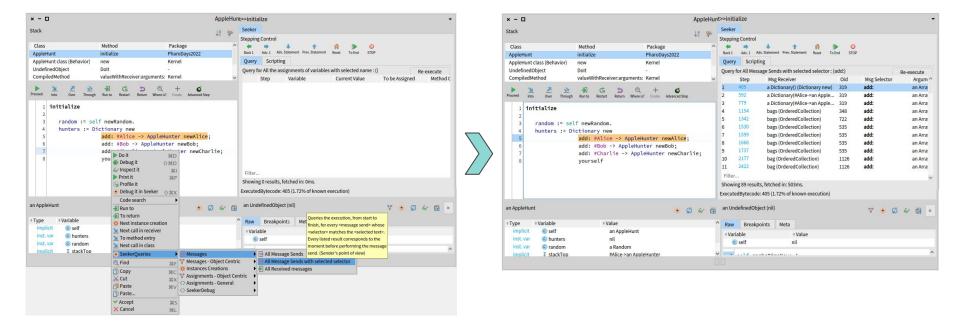
- Be aware of currently available yet not-so-commonly used tools in Pharo.
- Have the knowledge on what is to come in some aspects of debugging.

And (hopefully)

- Your debugging techniques repertory is expanded.
- You had a blast!

### More on Conditions ...





Querying during a debugging session

**Results are display** 

	AppleHunt>>ini										
ack	La Seek										
	Stepp	ing Cont	trol								
Class Method Package	A Constant		+	1	4						
AppleHunt initialize PharoDays2022				Prev. Statement	Reset	To End STOP					
ppleHunt class (Behavior) new Kernel	Que	ry So	cripting								
IndefinedObject Dolt -	Quer	y for All	Message Send	s with selecte	d selector	: (add:)			Re-exe	cute	
compiledMethod valueWithReceiver:arguments: Kernel	~	Step	Msg i	Receiver		Oid	Msg Selec	tor	)	Argum	1
	۵ <sup>1</sup>	405	a Dict	ionary() (Dicti	onary new	) 319	add:		a	an Arra	ł.
ceed Into Over Through Run to Restart Return Where is? Create Ad	vanced Step 2	592	a Dict	ionary(#Alice-	>an Apple	319	add:		а	an Arra	ŧ.
1 initialize	3	779	a Dict	ionary(#Alice-	>an Apple	319	add:		а	an Arra	ŗ,
2	4	1154	bags	OrderedColle	ction)	348	add:		a	an Arra	ŗ,
<pre>3 random := self newRandom.</pre>	5	1342	bags	OrderedColle	ction)	722	add:		а	an Arra	ŗ.
4 hunters := Dictionary new	6	1530	bags	OrderedColle	ction)	535	add:		a	an Arra	ŗ,
5 add: #Alice -> AppleHunter new	Alice: 7	1599	bags	OrderedColle	ction)	535	add:		a	an Arra	r,
6 add: #Bob -> AppleHunter newBob;		1668	bags	OrderedColle	ction)	535	add:		a	an Arra	r,
7 add: #Charlie -> AppleHunter n		1737	bags	OrderedColle	ction)	535	add:		a	an Arra	ŗ.
8 yourself	10	2177	bag (0	OrderedCollec	tion)	1126	add:		a	an Arra	r
,	11	2422	bag (0	OrderedCollec	tion)	1126	add:		a	an Arra	r
	Filt	er									
	Show	ving 89 r	esults, fetched	in: 503ms.							ľ
			code: 405 (1.7.		vecution)						
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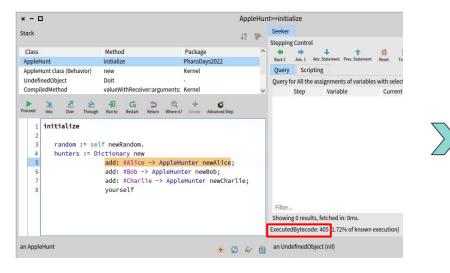
The developer is currently observing the [execution state 405]

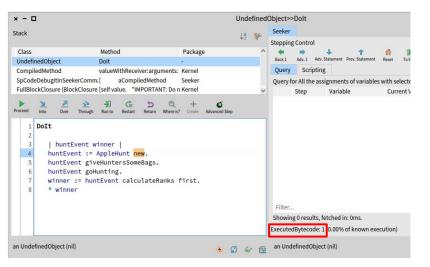
^ UserTTQ from: seeker newProgramStates select: [ :state| state isMessageSend and: [ state messageSelector = #add: ] ] collect: [ :state| MessagesTTQResultItem new bytecodeIndex: state bytecodeIndex; messageArguments: state messageArguments; messageArguments: state messageArguments; " ... " messageSelector: state messageSelector; yourself ]

The TTQ to be executed looks like this

On query activation:

1. The debugger traversing mechanism goes back to [execution state 1].



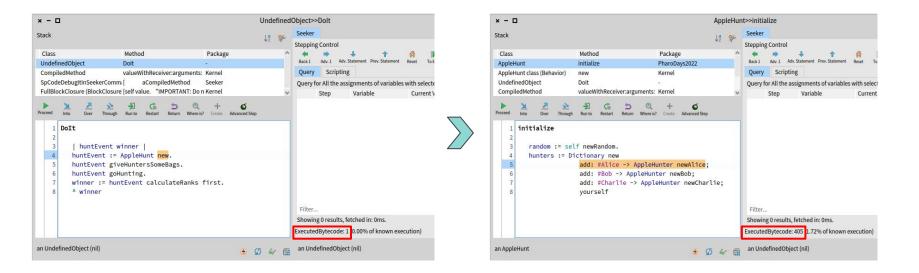


2. The debugger traversing logic is executed, while selecting and collecting relevant data, until the end of the execution.

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tack			12 90	Seeker
			*4 T	Stepping Control
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UndefinedObject	Dolt			
	valueWithReceiver:argument			Query for All Message Sends with selected selector : (add:)
SpCodeDebugitInSeekerCom FullBlockClosure (BlockClosu			Step Msg Receiver Oid Msg Selector Arguments	
trocced Into Over Through	n Run to Restart Return Where is?	+ o invative Advanced Step		
1 DoIt	indexes 1			
3   huntEvent 4 huntEvent :=	AppleHunt new.			
	veHuntersSomeBags.			
6 huntEvent go				
	intEvent calculateRanks fir	st.		
8 ^ winner				
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n UndefinedObject (nil)			4 03 W	🖽 an UndefinedObject (nil) 🤍 🤣 🕼 🕼
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#### 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ... . . . . . . . . .

3. The debugger goes back to the state the developer was observing (Execution state 405).



(Remember: the developer was observing [execution state 405])

On query activation:

- 1. The debugger traversing mechanism goes back to [execution state 1].
- 2. The debugger traversing logic is executed, while selecting and collecting relevant data, until the end of the execution.
- 3. The debugger goes back to the state the developer was observing.

All this, happens "behind doors".

The developer doesn't see any stepping.

# Installing the code used in the presentation

The code is here: <u>https://github.com/maxwills/PharoDays2022</u>

In a Pharo10 image, run the following code:

Baseline in the repository.

### **But first**

An anecdote...

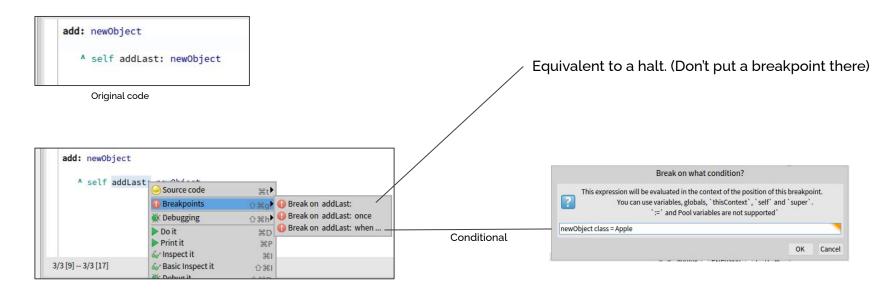
(To the code)

Get the code here: https://github.com/maxwills/PharoDays2022

# **Obtaining Execution Data**

### Instrumentation

Example: the previous "solutions" but with breakpoints.



### **Dissecting The Collection of Execution Data**



### **Dissecting The Collection of Execution Data**

Cleaning up the code

callsToAdd
callsToAdd := OrderedCollection new.
seeker doAndUpdateSessionAfter: [
seeker restartAtBytecodeOne.
[ seeker canStep ] whileTrue: [
seeker step.
(seeker currentState isMessageSend and: [ seeker currentState node selector = #add: ])
ifTrue: [ "This time, instead of logging, we store the data in a collection"
callsToAdd add: seeker currentState methodAboutToExecute ] ] ].
^ callsToAdd

We will mask irrelevant code and comments

### **Dissecting The Collection of Execution Data**

Prepare the storage of the collected results.

```
[ callsToAdd ]
callsToAdd := OrderedCollection new.
seeker restartAtBytecodeOne.
[ seeker canStep ] whileTrue: [
    seeker step.
    (seeker currentState isMessageSend and: [ seeker currentState node selector = #add: ])
ifTrue: [
    callsToAdd add: seeker currentState methodAboutToExecute ] ] .
^ callsToAdd
```

### **Dissecting The Collection of Execution Data**

"Execution Traversing" Logic.

callsToAdd
callsToAdd := OrderedCollection new.
<pre>seeker restartAtBytecodeOne. [ seeker canStep ] whileTrue: [    seeker step.</pre>
<pre>(seeker currentState isMessageSend and: [ seeker currentState node selector = #add: ]) ifTrue: [</pre>

#### "Traversing the execution" logic:

- 1. Go to the beginning of the execution (restart).
- 2. Stepping the execution in a loop, until it finishes.

### **Dissecting The Collection of Execution Data**

"Selecting the interesting states" Logic.

```
| callsToAdd |
callsToAdd := OrderedCollection new.
seeker restartAtBytecodeOne.
[ seeker canStep ] whileTrue: [
    seeker step.
    (seeker currentState isMessageSend and: [ seeker currentState node selector = #add: ])
ifTrue: [
    callsToAdd add: seeker currentState methodAboutToExecute ] ] .
^ callsToAdd
```

#### The "selection condition" code evaluates to true or false on each execution state.

### **Dissecting The Collection of Execution Data**

Addition of some execution data into the result. The "Collecting" Logic.

```
| callsToAdd |
callsToAdd := OrderedCollection new.
seeker restartAtBytecodeOne.
[ seeker canStep ] whileTrue: [
    seeker step.
    (seeker currentState isMessageSend and: [ seeker currentState node selector = #add: ])
ifTrue: [
    callsToAdd add: seeker currentState methodAboutToExecute ] ] .
^ callsToAdd
```

### **Dissecting The Collection of Execution Data**

Return the collected results.

```
| callsToAdd |
callsToAdd := OrderedCollection new.
seeker restartAtBytecodeOne.
[ seeker canStep ] whileTrue: [
    seeker step.
    (seeker currentState isMessageSend and: [ seeker currentState node selector = #add: ])
ifTrue: [
    callsToAdd add: seeker currentState methodAboutToExecute ] ] .
^ callsToAdd
```

# From scripts to query notation

### (Components mapping)

callsToAdd	
callsToAdd := OrderedCollection new.	
<pre>seeker restartAtBytecodeOne. [ seeker canStep ] whileTrue: [</pre>	
<pre>seeker step. (seeker currentState isMessageSend and: [ seeker currentState node selector = #add: ])</pre>	
<pre>ifTrue: [</pre>	

A (Query from: seeker new	wProgramStates
select: [ :state	<pre>state isMessageSend and: [ state node selector = #add: ] ]</pre>
collect: [ :state	<pre>state methodAboutToExecute ]) asOrderedCollection</pre>