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# A Survey of Urban Reconstruction

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# Who are the Authors?

- Przemyslaw Musialski:
  - Postdoc (TU-Wien/ASU), formerly researcher at VRVis
  - Field: Graphics, Image Processing
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  - Associate Prof (ASU/KAUST)
  - Field: Graphics, Image Processing

#### Daniel Aliaga

- Associate Prof (Purdue University)
- Field: Vision, Graphics

#### Michael Wimmer

- Associate Prof (TU-Wien)
- Field: Graphics
- Luc van Gool
  - Full Prof (ETH Zurich & KU Leuven)
  - Field: Vision, Photogrammetry & Remote Sensing
- Werner Purgathofer
  - Full Prof (TU-Wien) and Scientific Director (VRVis)
  - Field: Graphics













# What is Urban Reconstruction?

- Creating digital models of real cities
- Cities are large collections of man-made objects at many LODs





# **Possible Applications**

- Cyber-Tourism
- Computer Games
- Movie-Industry and Entertainment Industry
- Digital Maps and Routing
- City-Planers and Architects
- Archeological Research
- More Sciences (Sociology,...)





### Scope

### We cover geometric reconstruction

- Graphics, Vision and some Photogrammetry & Remote Sens.
- Different Levels of Detail
- Interactive and Automatic Methods

### We do NOT cover

- Manual Reconstruction (CAD-Modeling)
- Procedural Modeling
- Mobile- and Mapping-Technology
- Geo-Sciences
- Architecture & Civil Engineering
- Hardware, Sensors, Electrical Engineering





# **Contributions from Different Fields:**

### Computer Graphics

- Usually Interactive Modeling
- Inverse Procedural Modeling
- (Procedural Modeling)

### Computer Vision

- Automatic Reconstruction
- Inverse Procedural Modeling
- Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing
  - Measuring and Documenting the Earth



# Input Data



# Challenges

### Full Automation

- The Chicken-Or-Egg Dilemma
- Top-Down versus Bottom-Up

### Quality and Scalability

- User-Interaction does not scale well
- Fully-automatic systems lack production quality

### Acquisition Constraints

- Real buildings are often not easy to capture
- Occlusions, Reflections and other obstacles



#### • A. Point Clouds & Cameras

- Fundamentals of Stereo
- Structure from Motion
- Multiview Stereo

#### • B. Buildings & Semantics

- Image Based Modeling (IMB)
- LiDAR-Based Modeling
- Inverse-Procedural Modeling (IPM)

#### • C. Façades & Images

- Façade Image Processing
- Façade Parsing
- Façade Modeling

#### D. Blocks & Cities

- Ground Based Reconstruction
- Aerial Reconstruction
- Massive City Reconstruction

#### **A. Point Clouds & Cameras**



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#### **B. Buildings & Semantics**

# **Image-Based Modeling LiDAR-Based Modeling** Inverse Procedural Modeling

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#### **D. Blocks & Cities**



#### **Aerial Reconstruction**



#### **Massive City Reconstruction**





### Camera Model

- Central Projection
- Pinhole Camera



- What is Camera Calibration?
- Calibration means to obtain the parameters:
  - Intrinsic Calibration:
    - Projection Parameters
    - (Focal Length, etc.)
  - Using Markers we can infer intrinsic parameters





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  - Pose of the camera in the world space



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- Extrinsic Calibration (Pose Estimation)
  - Pose of the camera in the world space
  - Can be determined from
    5 (7) image correspondences



### Stereo Geometry

- Given is the point x1 on the image
- How to determine the 3D point X?



### Stereo Geometry

We need a second image with x2 corresponding to x1



Stereo Triangulation





### Structure from Motion

- Only images as input
- A high number of images can be registered
- A high number of points can be triangulated
- Since images where taken with a camera in motion

→ Structure from Motion (SFM)

### Structure from Motion

- Input: set of images
- Challenges:
  - Correspondence Problem
  - Structure Triangulation Problem
  - Additional product: Camera poses



(a) Structure from Motion

- Correspondence Problem
- Feature Detection and Matching
  - Mutual matching e.g. KD-Tree



- Geometric verification: (RANSAC)
  - Fischler & Bolles [FB81]



### Incremental process

- Starting from initial image pair
- Adding more images
- Features and Camera
   Poses are determined
- Image networks are generated

### Bundle Adjustment

Non-linear optimization of the whole network

### Photo Tourism

- Snavely et al.
   [SSS06,SSS07,SGSS08, SSG\*10]
- Use collections of images of sight seeing from the Internet
- Generate sparse point clouds
- Use image-blending in order to smoothly move from image to image





### Building Rome in a Day

- Agrawal et al. [ASS\*09]
- Optimization of the pipeline
- Over 150 000 images of Rome
- (250 000 from Venice)
- Processed in parallel in a processor-cluster
- Reconstructs sparse point clouds







# **A.3 Multiview Stereo**

### Dense Multiview Stereo

- Use sparse stereo and camera networks as input
- Compute dense, possibly water-tight, reconstructions



Input photos

Sparse reconstruction

Dense reconstruction

# **A.3 Multiview Stereo**

- Dense Matching Systems
  - Pollefeys et al. [PvGV\*04, PNF\*08]
  - Vergauven and van Gool [VvG06]
  - Akbarzadeh et al. [AFM\*06]
  - Frahm et al. [FFGG10]
  - Furukawa and Ponce [FP07, PF9]
  - Agrawal et al. [AFS\*11,FP09]





# **A.3 Multiview Stereo**

- Problem:
  - Dense reconstructions are not perfectly flat



### Solution: Planar Priors

- Manhattan World Priors
  - Furukawa et al. [FCSS09]
- Piece-Wise Planar Priors
  - Micusic and Kosecka [MK09, MK10]
  - Sinha et al. [SSS09]
  - Chauve et al. [CLP10]
  - Gallup et al. [GLP10]



[VvG06]



[FP07]





[MK10]

# A. Point-Clouds and Cameras

### Summary

- Sparse MVS and SfM are mature and robust
- Dense MVS deliver also quite impressive results
- Systems are very generic not only urban reconstruction
- Scale well as shown by Frahm et al. [FFGG10]:
  - 3 million images on one day on a single PC
- Downside: results are usually dense meshes, not segmented and semantic objects

#### A. Point Clouds & Cameras




Also referred to as *Photogrammetric Modeling*



#### Subcategories

- Interactive Multiview Modeling
- Automatic Multiview Modeling
- Interactive Singleview Modeling
- Automatic Singleview Modeling

### Façade (Debevec et al. [DTM96])

- Primitive polyhedral elements
- Parallel and Orthogonal
- Constrained to each other to reduce the parameter space

### Good layer of abstraction

- Low-level features are difficult to deal with
- Surface model is implicit





- Façade Modeling Process [DTM96]
  - Multiview Input
  - Automatic edge detection in images
  - User establishes corresponding edges in images interactively
  - System optimizes in background (non-realtime)
- Iterative modeling process



 Finally projective texturing from input images

- Photobuilder:
  - Cipolla and Robertson [CR99,CRB99]
  - Automatic edge detection
  - User interactively labels a few parallel and orthogonal edges
  - Camera parameters can be determined

1. Original uncalibrated photographs



2. Primitive definition and localisation





3. Finding vanishing points and camera calibration





### • Photobuilder:

- Cipolla and Robertson [CR99,CRB99]
- Automatic edge detection
- User interactively labels a few parallel and orthogonal edges
- Camera parameters can be determined
- System computed this model

4. Computation of projection matrices and camera motion



5. Triangulation, 3D reconstruction and texture mapping



- Interactive Modeling from Video (VideoTrace)
  - Van den Hengel et al. [vdHDT\*06, vdHDT\*07]
  - Camera and point-cloud network from SFM as input
  - Hierarchy of primitive shapes as model
  - User-input to establish relations
  - Automatic optimization in background (near-realtime)



- Interactive Multiview Modeling from Unordered Sets of Photographs
  - Sinha et al. [SSS\*08]
  - Image-Network as input
  - Automatic detection of vanishing points
  - Simple interactions like rough sketching
  - Realtime interactive optimization in background



#### Further methods and improvements

- Combination of ground and aerial imagery
  - Lee et al. [LHN00, LJN02, LN03,...]
- Database with reusable elements
  - El-Hakim et al. [EhWGG05,EhWG05]
- Automatically snapping polygons
  - Arikan et al [ASW\*12]





#### Automatic Multiview Modeling

- Buildings are well suited due to parallelism and orthogonality
- Line features, contours and vanishing points can be found automatically
- Using least-squares and robust estimation (RANSAC) planes can be fitted
- Automation of the Interactive Modeling Approach
  - Libowitz and Zisserman [LZ99]
  - Coorg and Teller [CT99]
  - Werner and Zisserman [WZ02]





#### Automatic Multiview Modeling

- Dick et al. [DTC00, DCT04]
- Probabilistic model with predefined prior distributions
- Parameters fitted from a set of images using MCMC
- Semantically annotated objects



- Single Image Interactive Modeling
  - Utilize the symmetry of the building to reconstruct 3d structure Jiang et al. 2009 [JTC09]
  - Interactively determine a frustum
  - Determine camera pose (calibration)
  - Use mirror-symmetry for stereo-reconstruction



#### Summary

- There is a large number of approaches
- Some methods attempt automatic solutions
- Nonetheless, the quality of fullyautomatic systems is still below expected production standards
- Due to the demand of high-quality models, interactive/semi-manual modeling is still interesting



### **Overview**



- LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging)
- scans are well suited for reconstruction, but
- Problems:
  - Point cloud contains holes due to occlusions



Especially in ground-based LiDAR

- LiDAR scans are well suited for reconstruction but
- Problems:
  - Oblique scanning angles
  - Laser energy attenuation on range
  - Especially in ground-based LiDAR



- Interactive Modeling from LiDAR (SmartBoxes)
  - Nan et al. [NSZ\*10]
  - User assembles small sets of "boxes" from primitive shapes



These are automatically fitted

to the point cloud minimizing a sum of two energies:

- Data: how well does each box fit to the local point cloud
- Context: how well are the boxes synchronized



- Interactive Modeling from LiDAR (SmartBoxes)
  - Nan et al. [NSZ\*10]



- Automatic Modeling from terrestrial LiDAR
  - Scans of buildings are well suited for automatic reconstruction
    - Stamos and Allen [SA00, SA02]
    - Früh and Zakhor [FZ03,FZ04]
    - Pu and Vosselman [PV09]
    - Vanegas et al. [VAB12]
    - and more
  - Segmentation into planar regions
    - Clustering of Normals
  - Plane Fitting
    - RANSAC
    - Least-Squares
  - Fitting of Outline Polygons





#### Automatic Model Fitting

Manhattan-World assumption in order to improve the robustness of the fit



#### Automatic Segmentation of LiDAR

- Recursive Heuristic Splitting using Symmetry
  - Shen et al. [SHFA11]



- Automatic Modeling from aerial LiDAR
  - 2.5D dual contouring (Zhou and Neumann [ZN08, ZN10])
  - Detailed results



- Automatic Modeling from aerial LiDAR
  - 2.5D dual contouring (Zhou and Neumann [ZN08, ZN10])



#### Summary

- LiDAR is accessible for quite a while
- Top-down fitting of buildings into the data delivers good results



- The full potential of LiDARdriven reconstruction is still not explored
- More interesting methods are expected to appear in the near future

### **Overview**



#### Rather novel approach

- Related to Procedural Modeling
- Idea: derive a grammar from the structure
- façade → Subdiv("Y", 3.5, 0.3, 1r, 1r, 1r)
  (fl1 | ledge | fl2 | fl2 | fl2 }



- Infer from the input (Imagery or LiDAR)
  - (1) A grammar
  - (2) Parameters of the grammar
  - Some methods predefine (1) and infer only (2)

#### Interactive and Automatic approaches



- Interactive Systems
  - Aliaga et al. [ARB07]
  - Model a geometric model interactively from a few photos



 Segment the model interactively and assign grammar





#### Interactive Systems

– Aliaga et al. [ARB07]





- Use grammar to generate novel variations of the building

#### Interactive Systems

– Aliaga et al. [ARB07]



– Use grammar to generate novel variations of the building

#### Automatic Methods

- Simplification:

predefine grammar and fit only the parameters

- Vanegas et al. [VAB10]
- Using aerial imagery and GIS-data



#### Automatic Methods

- Generate initial 3D building envelope
  - Use the footprint from GIS and extrude
- Divide the bounding box into floors



#### Automatic Methods

- Generate initial 3D building envelope
  - Use the footprint from GIS and extrude
- Divide the bounding box into floors
- Adjust each floor automatically from the information from images and the constraints of the grammar



#### Further methods

- Use partial symmetry to derive shape grammars of 3D models
  - Bokeloh et al. [BWS10]
- Generative Modeling Language (GML)
  - Havemann [Hav05]
  - Hohmann et al. [HKHF09,HHKF10]
- Façade Image Segmentation
  - Coming in the next section!





#### Summary

- IPM is a quite new field
- It enables a very compact description of the models
- Very suitable for generation of content
- Many further exciting papers to appear!



### **Overview**



# C.1 Façade Image Processing

### Imagery is essential in Urban Reconstruction

- For a realistic look
- As source for reconstruction

### Applications

- Panoramas
- Projective
  Textures
- Source for 3D structure





## C.1 Façade Image Processing

#### Strip-Panoramas

- Agrawala et al. [AAC\*06]


#### Multiview Projective Texturing

• Aliaga et al. [\*10]



color equalized

#### Multiview Projective Texturing

Musialski et al. [MLS\*10]



#### Multiview Projective Texturing

Musialski et al. [MLS\*10]



#### Multiview Projective Texturing

• Musialski et al. [MLS\*10]



#### Symmetry-based façade image repair

Musialski et al. [MWR\*09]





Input Image







**Output Image** 



Symmetry-based façade image repair





#### Summary

- Panoramas are a kind of reconstruction by themselves
- Processing of urban imagery is quite well researched
- There are still challenges
  - Automatic segmentation
  - Parsing and semantic extraction



### **Overview**



#### Façade parsing

- Automatic semantic segmentation façade data
  - Images or Laser Scans
- Often use of higher-order models, like grammars
- First step is low level processing
  - Feature-, Edge-, Blob-Detection





#### Façade parsing

- Automatic semantic segmentation of façade data
  - Teboul et al. [TSKP10,TKS\*11]



#### Façade parsing

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#### Further methods

- Predefined grammar based segmentations of images
  - Allegre and Dalleart [AD04]
- Predefined grammar based segmentations of image and LiDAR
  - Brenner and Ripperda [BR06,RB07,RB09]
- Inference of both grammar and parameters from LiDAR
  - Becker and Haala [BH07,NH09]







#### Symmetry Detection

- Another example of higher-order knowledge is symmetry
- Number of methods detect symmetry in façades
  - In perspective images
    Wu et al. [WFP10]

- In ortho-rectified, occluded images
  - Musialski et al. [MRM\*10]





#### Symmetry detection in point clouds

- Pauly et al. [PMW\*08]



- The symmetries can be used to complete missing data

#### Summary

- Recent automatic methods provide quite stable results
- The downside is the still quite low level-of-detail
- Also, errors are often difficult to fix
- This field is still in active research



### **Overview**



#### Interactive Modeling

- Pro: provides very good quality
- Con: slower and does not scale very well



#### Post-processing of automatic methods

- Xiao et al. [XFT\*08]
- Use automatic heuristics to generate initial segmentation
- User interactive post-processing to fix errors in the initial segmentation
- Infer depth from multi-view setups
- Post-process interactively to fix errors









#### Post-processing of automatic methods

- Xiao et al. [XFT\*08]
- Very good results
- But a quite a time consuming task



- Coherence-Based Interactive Modeling
  - Musialski et al. [MWW12]
  - Incorporate the user from the beginning
    - Let the user define high-level structure
    - Group coherent regions
    - Perform automatic splits on overlapping groups
    - Combine these splits for final segmentation
    - Add depth interactively









#### Coherence-Based Interactive Modeling

- Very good results
- Better high-level structure
- Still quite time-consuming



- Summary
  - Interactive Modeling is slow and does not scale well
  - Today's productions still rely mostly on interactive methods
  - Integration of userinteraction and automatism is still to improve



### **Overview**



### **D.1 Ground-Based Reconstruction**

- Algorithms work well with small data sets
- Challenge: large scale
  - Irschara et al. [IZB07,IZB11]
  - Data acquisition problem: incorporate users to provide photos (Wiki-Principle)



### **D.1 Ground-Based Reconstruction**

#### Generate reconstructions during acquisition

- Cornelis et al. [CLCvG08]
- Use a vehicle to drive and acquire input images
- Run reconstruction in "real-time", during diving



# **D.1 Ground-Based Reconstruction**

#### Summary

- Generally limited to smaller areas compared to aerial approaches
- But the only way to provide high-detailed street level models



### **Overview**



- Aerial data is very well suited
- Good for documenting and measuring



#### Often, combination of different inputs

- Digital Surface Model (DSM)
  - Surface with man-made objects
- Digital Terrain Models (DTM)
  - Pure terrain surface







#### Often, combination of different inputs

- Lafarge et al. [LDZPD11]
- Extract buildings from DSM
- Treat each building as a 3d parametric block of geometric primitves



#### Further methods

- Combine aerial and ground imagery
  - Wang et al. [WYN07]
  - Stitch ground-images to panoramas
  - Detect footprints in aerial imagery
  - User interaction for fine tuning
- More automatic methods with DSM
  - Zebedin et al. [ZBKB08]
  - Karantzalos and Paragios [KP10]





### **Overview**



# **D.3 Massive City Reconstruction**

- Imaged-Based ground dense reconstruction
  - Frahm et al. [FFGG\*10]
  - Tuning and optimization of existing algorithms
  - 3 Million input images
  - 1 single PC
  - 1 day of computing



## **D.3 Massive City Reconstruction**

#### Water-Tide Polygonal Meshes from LiDAR

- Poullis and You [PY09,PY11]
- Areas of several thousands of buildings



# **D.3 Massive City Reconstruction**

#### Massive reconstruction from LiDAR

– Lafarge and Mallet [LM11]


# **D.3 Massive City Reconstruction**

### Massive reconstruction from LiDAR

- Lafarge and Mallet [LM11]
- Complete reconstructions:
  - Particular polygonal buildings
  - Vegetation
  - Terrain
- Generalized for any urban environments



### **D.3 Massive City Reconstruction**



# **D. Blocks and Cities**

### Summary

- Current results are impressive
- Problems remain in
  - Processing of huge amounts of data
  - Scalable algorithms
  - Integration of different data types

#### **D. Blocks & Cities**







## **Conclusions and Outlook**

#### Automatic reconstructions

- often rely on assumptions which are not true in practice
- Combination of user-interaction and automatic methods can be improved

#### Collaborative reconstruction

- Many projects incorporate Internet or user data
- Simple methods could animate user to contribute to the reconstructions

#### More interdisciplinary work

- The borders between Graphics and Vision are thin
- But the interdisciplinary cooperation between those and the Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing could be improved

### The End

- Thank you!
- Questions?

## The End

- Thank you!
- Questions?

