Towards Visual Exploration of Parallel Programs using a Domain-specific Language

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MOTIVATION & APPROACH

The execution of parallel programs is often considered as a black box, where only input and output is known, but only little is displayed about the execution of the code itself.

However, knowledge about the execution behavior is crucial for the understanding, correctness and especially for the performance of the implementation.

Intermediate analysis tools usually read back hardware counters and display statistics that correspond to the question "What is going wrong". In contrast to these tools, the aim of this work [1] is to utilize visualizations that allow programmers to quickly test their hypotheses on "Why is something going wrong".

REFERENCES


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DOMAIN SPECIFIC LANGUAGE

Domain-specific Language (DSL)
- We have developed a DSL, based on ViSlang [2], to rapidly develop parallel programs and to analyze their execution behavior and interaction with the underlying hardware through the aid of visualizations

Code Annotations
- Our DSL provides code annotations that define the recording of the execution behavior, as well as the recording of arbitrary intermediate data

Source-to-Source Compiler
- A compiler transforms programs, written in our DSL, to OpenCL programs with additional instrumentations (corresponding to the annotations) that enable the recording of trace information

Application
- Our DSL approach facilitates rapid prototyping, debugging and profiling of parallel programs

INTERMEDIATE DATA VISUALIZATION

Intermediate Data Extraction
- This example demonstrates the usage of code annotations to extract the intermediate data (in this case: intermediate values of a bilateral filter)
- Instead of manually inserting code to extract the data, code annotations provide a quicker and simpler solution

Data Visualizations
- The two images at the top show input and output
- The images below show the filter values corresponding to a certain pixel
- The graph at the bottom shows a 2D representation of one horizontal snippet of the filter values

LINKED VIEWS & VISUAL EXPLORATION

CODE VIEW

DATA VISUALIZATION VIEW

DOMAIN VIEW

Code View: Serves as tool for the development, as well as a visual element, which color encodes and highlights source code corresponding to selected elements

Data Visualization View: Shows visualizations of arbitrary intermediate data, local and global memory accesses and different control flow, using the well-known D3 framework [3].

Domain View: A specialized view that can be used to show the output of a certain domain and that can be linked with the other views.

View Linking: The different views automatically expose their properties within the interface of our tool in order to facilitate their visual linking.

REFERENCES


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