

SELF-CONSISTENT 3D SURFACE RECONSTRUCTION AND REFLECTANCE MODEL ESTIMATION OF METALLIC SURFACES

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Abstract: 3D surface reconstruction data measured with active range scanners typically suffer from high-frequency noise on small scales. This poses a problem for highly demanding surface inspection tasks and all other applications that require a high accuracy of the depth data. One way to achieve increased 3D reconstruction accuracy is the fusion of active range scanning data and photometric image information. Typically, this requires modeling of the surface reflectance behavior, which, in turn, implies the surface to be known with high accuracy to determine valid reflectance parameters as long as no calibration object is available. In this study, we propose an approach that provides a detailed 3D surface reconstruction along with simultaneously estimated parameters of the reflectance model. For 3D surface reconstruction, we employ an algorithm that combines active range scanning data for large-scale accuracy with image-based information for small-scale accuracy. For inferring the reflectance function, we incorporate the estimation of the reflectance model into a self-consistent computational scheme that successively increases the resolution and thus determines the reflectance parameters based on refined depth information. We present results for a homogeneous dark rough metallic surface, which is reconstructed based on a single coarse 3D scan and 12 images acquired under different illumination conditions.

1 INTRODUCTION

Active range scanning approaches typically suffer from high-frequency noise and thus lack the capability to perceive and resolve fine surface details especially for non-diffusely reflecting surfaces. While filtering may reduce high-frequency noise and recover some of the underlying details, the overall quality and accuracy is not improved significantly while the effective lateral resolution decreases. If one wants to truly enhance the amount of surface detail, it is desirable to supplement the absolute depth data obtained by active range scanners with gradient information obtained using image-based approaches like shape from shading (Horn, 1970) or photometric stereo (Woodham, 1980). The crucial problem lies in finding an approach that fuses both data sources and at the same time exploits the mutual advantages: Range scanning approaches provide robust large-scale data with high-frequency noise, while image-based data provide accurate small-scale details but tend to deviate systematically from the true large-scale shape. A well-known example for that fusion process has been proposed by Nehab et al. (Nehab et al., 2005) and

their results clearly demonstrate the improved small-scale accuracy. However, their approach only deals with pre-existing data and omits the gradient determination stage, which is challenging e.g. for metallic surfaces. Later approaches for fusing depth data and photometric image information (cf. e.g. (Wöhler and d'Angelo, 2009) and references therein) include an estimation of the surface gradients but still assume the reflectance function to be known in advance.

It is thus interesting from a theoretical and relevant from a practical point of view to develop a self-consistent approach that incorporates all steps necessary for 3D surface reconstruction, including an estimation of the reflectance function. Apart from surface inspection, the demand for highly accurate surfaces comes from other fields as well. In computer graphics, the problem of determining the reflectance function from arbitrarily shaped surfaces commonly lacks accuracy due to the fact that the examined surface shape is not known to the required level of detail (Weyrich et al., 2008). While several image-based methods solve that problem by assuming known shapes (Matusik et al., 2003b), this is only possible for surfaces which provide all illu-

mination and viewing geometries required for a reliable reflectance parameter estimation. Once this precondition is fulfilled and the surface is known to the required level of detail, the determination of the reflectance function becomes a problem of non-linear model adaptation using methods such as the Levenberg-Marquardt algorithm (Moré, 1978). As a result of previous and current research, a large variety of reflectance models have been developed, which are typically selected based on the material at hand. The most popular ones include the classical Lambertian model (Lambert, 1760; Horn, 1989) for strictly diffuse surfaces, the Phong model (Phong, 1975) for empirically modeled specularities, its more physically motivated version (Lewis, 1994), its generalized version (Lafortune et al., 1997), and more specialized models for metals and rough surfaces (Cook and Torrance, 1981; Beckmann and Spizzichino, 1987) and anisotropic surfaces (Ward, 1992).

Image-based algorithms analyze the object *appearance* and thus commonly depend on a reflectance model that is known a priori as accurately as possible. Unfortunately, this usually requires the surface shape to be known in advance with very high accuracy, as discussed above. To overcome that drawback, we present a self-consistent approach for the simultaneous determination of surface shape and reflectance function parameters for strongly non-Lambertian surfaces. In contrast to methods from the field of computer graphics, e.g. (Lensch et al., 2003), we do not only change local surface normals to model the appearance of the object in a rendered image, but actually incorporate that information into the 3D reconstruction of the surface.

The critical aspect lies in the determination of reflectance parameters without fine surface shape data being available. Our approach thus uses strongly downsampled absolute depth and image data to determine initial reflectance function parameters. These are reliable since the absolute depth and image data are reasonably accurate on that scale. The surface reconstruction algorithm then uses that information and computes a refined surface. The process then iteratively continues on a higher resolution scale (cf. Section 2). The alternating scheme of reflectance function estimation and surface reconstruction thus successively refines the 3D surface reconstruction and the estimated reflectance parameters (cf. Section 3). For data acquisition, we use a calibrated range scanning system with 12 attached LED light sources with known (calibrated) illumination directions and a single camera position. Our experimental results are described in Section 4.

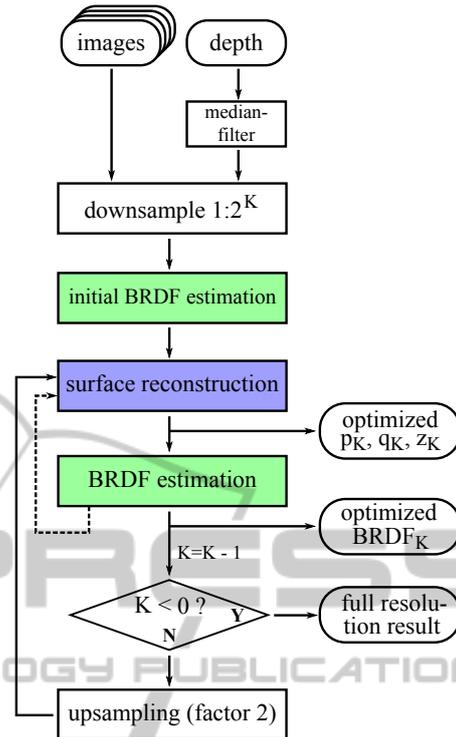


Figure 1: Overview of the self-consistent algorithm for 3D surface reconstruction and reflectance parameter estimation.

2 SELF-CONSISTENT RECONSTRUCTION

Fig. 1 illustrates the proposed self-consistent 3D reconstruction algorithm. The main elements are the estimation of the reflectance parameters (green) and the surface reconstruction (blue). The algorithm starts with the given image and depth data, which are initially subsampled by a factor of 2^K with appropriate spatial low-pass filtering to avoid aliasing. The subsampling stage ensures the removal of spurious high spatial frequency components from the range scanner data and thus provides the basis for robust reflectance estimation on that scale. Once the initial reflectance parameters are known, the reconstruction exploits the reflectance information to incorporate the image-based depth data. The successive steps “surface reconstruction” and “BRDF estimation” can be iterated in an inner loop (cf. dashed line in Fig. 1) without increasing the current resolution scale. Afterwards, the result of the 3D reconstruction stage is upsampled by a factor of 2 using bicubic interpolation and then serves as the initialization for the next iteration. The algorithm terminates when the full resolution scale is reached.

3 SURFACE RECONSTRUCTION AND BRDF ESTIMATION

In this paper, we will use $u \in [1 \dots N]$ and $v \in [1 \dots M]$ to denote the integer pixel coordinates of an image $I \in \mathbb{R}^{N \times M}$. The image data I contain intensity measurements for each pixel, and the available range scanner data $z_{RS}(u, v)$ provide pixel-synchronous absolute depth measurements for most but generally not all image pixels, i.e. there may be gaps in the absolute depth data.

Local illumination directions, viewing directions, and surface normals are denoted by the vectors $\vec{s}(u, v)$, $\vec{v}(u, v)$, and $\vec{n}(u, v)$, respectively, with $\|\vec{s}\|_2 = \|\vec{v}\|_2 = \|\vec{n}\|_2 = 1$. The vector \vec{r} denotes the incident light direction mirrored at the respective surface normal. The reflectance model parameters P are introduced later when the applied reflectance model M is discussed. The reflectance function itself is termed BRF (Bidirectional Reflectance Function) or BRDF (Bidirectional Reflectance Distribution Function).

The algorithm computes the optimized surface gradient fields

$$p(u, v) = \frac{\partial z(u, v)}{\partial x} = \partial_x z(u, v) = z_x(u, v) \quad (1)$$

$$q(u, v) = \frac{\partial z(u, v)}{\partial y} = \partial_y z(u, v) = z_y(u, v) \quad (2)$$

and the optimized surface $z^*(u, v)$. A rendered image of the surface obtained using the reflectance function of the surface, a set of surface gradients, illumination and viewing directions is denoted “reflectance map” R according to

$$R = R(p(u, v), q(u, v), \vec{s}(u, v), \vec{v}(u, v), \vec{n}(u, v), P, M). \quad (3)$$

An approach for recovering and fusing absolute depth z_{RS} and gradient data (p, q) has been proposed by us previously (Herbort et al., 2011). The algorithm is an extension of Horn’s method for the simultaneous recovery of height and gradients (Horn, 1989). While Horn’s approach operates solely on image data, the extension regards the fusion with absolute depth data.

To give a complete background for the approach presented in this study and to provide better explanations, we summarize the main ideas and give an overview of its capabilities: The algorithm as such minimizes the overall error

$$E = E_I + \gamma E_{\text{int}} + \delta E_{\text{RS}} \quad (4)$$

according to

$$z^* = \arg \min_{p, q, z} (E_I + \gamma E_{\text{int}} + \delta E_{\text{RS}}) \quad (5)$$

by finding an optimal surface $z^*(u, v)$, which is composed of the gradient field $(p(u, v), q(u, v))$. The

weight parameters γ and δ have to be determined empirically, i.e. by manually choosing a set of parameters that lets the optimization scheme iterate and converge. Each component of the error function E contributes to different aspects that enforce certain restrictions upon the optimal surface. The intensity error

$$E_I = \sum_{u, v} (I - R)^2 \quad (6)$$

determines the difference between the observed original image I and the reflectance map R . The extension towards several images is straightforward by evaluation of the mean error over all images and their respective reflectance maps. The error term E_I causes the optimized surface to alter its gradients until the image and the reflectance map match as closely as possible. The integrability error

$$E_{\text{int}} = \sum_{u, v} (z_x - p)^2 + (z_y - q)^2 \quad (7)$$

denotes the deviations of the estimated gradient field from the gradients of the determined surface, i.e. from an integrable gradient field, and thus prevents the occurrence of local gradient spikes. The range scanner depth gradient error

$$E_{\text{RS}} = \sum_{u, v} [(\partial_x(G * z_{rs}) - G * p)^2 + (\partial_y(G * z_{rs}) - G * q)^2] \quad (8)$$

measures the deviation of the estimated surface gradients from those derived from the range scanner data on large spatial scales. This is achieved by removing small surface details by convolution with a (Gaussian) low-pass filter G , which then allows an adaptation of the low spatial frequency components of the reconstructed surface gradients to those of the range scanner data (Herbort et al., 2011).

The generation of the reflectance map R requires the reflectance properties of the surface to be known. This is typically achieved in a data driven or model driven way (Matusik et al., 2003a). In our algorithm, we apply a reflectance model, since there is only a limited range of viewing directions available if, as in our case, a fixed camera is used. The estimation of the model from sparse data is usually possible and robust, while the inevitable interpolations of data driven approaches possibly produce unexpected results. In the following, the chosen model (cf. Section 1 for other examples) is discussed.

The three-component Lambert/Phong model (Nayar et al., 1990) has been applied to isotropic surfaces with non off-specular reflectance behavior (Wöhler and d’Angelo, 2009). The observed intensity is described by

$$I = I_0 \rho [\vec{n} \cdot \vec{s} + \sigma_l (\vec{v} \cdot \vec{r})^{m_l} + \sigma_s (\vec{v} \cdot \vec{r})^{m_s}]. \quad (9)$$

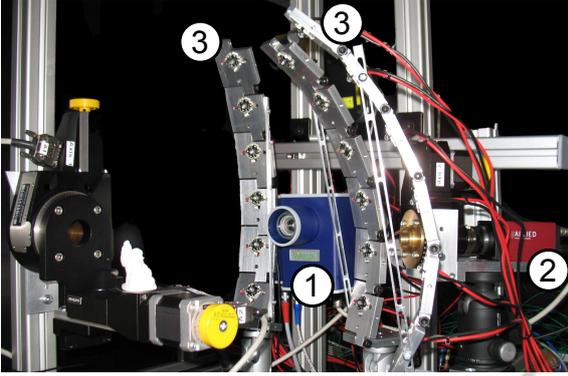


Figure 2: Overview of the experimental setup. The object has a height of about 50 mm, the distance between the object and the scanner (1), camera (2), and illumination (3) amounts to approximately 250 mm.

Its parameters are the intensity I_0 of the incident light, the surface albedo ρ , the specular lobe strength σ_l , the specular lobe width m_l , the specular spike strength σ_s , and the specular spike width m_s (Wöhler and d’Angelo, 2009). A more generalized form allows a directional diffuse behavior according to

$$I = I_0 \rho \left[(\vec{n} \cdot \vec{s}) + \sigma_{ds} (\vec{n} \cdot \vec{s})^{m_{ds}} + \sigma_l (\vec{v} \cdot \vec{r})^{m_l} + \sigma_s (\vec{v} \cdot \vec{r})^{m_s} \right] \quad (10)$$

with the directional diffuse width m_{ds} and strength σ_{ds} . In our experiments (cf. Section 4), this model has been shown to be flexible enough to represent the reflectance behavior, while having a feasible number of 7 parameters (the term $I_0 \rho$ can be set to the “effective albedo” ρ_{eff}). The directional diffuse term has empirically proven to have a favorable effect on the 3D reconstruction accuracy when few light sources (i.e. images) are available. Note that the system described in this study poses almost no restrictions regarding the applied reflectance model. The only requirements are the capability of the reflectance function to model the reflectance behavior and the solvability of the fitting problem, i.e. it must be possible to obtain the reflectance model parameters from the given/obtained data I , p , q , and z .

4 EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

This section initially provides an overview of the experimental setup. The obtained results are then presented and discussed.

4.1 Experimental Setup

Since our range scanning system¹ already contains a camera² and records pixel-synchronous depth and image data, there is no need for data registration prior to the reconstruction. All 12 attached LED light sources³ have been calibrated using a white diffuse sphere⁴ and solving Lambert’s law $I(u, v) = I_0 \rho (\vec{n}(u, v) \cdot \vec{s})$ for the global light direction \vec{s} and the intensity I_0 . In contrast to the popular method to use a specularly reflecting sphere, using the Lambertian sphere yields more robust results due to the larger number of measurements being involved in the optimization. The obtained phase angles, i.e. the angles between the illumination directions and the viewing direction, range from 18° to 67° . Note that the bright regions in the intensity images exhibit very strong specular spikes, as they are typical for metallic surfaces. To account for these large dynamic variations within the image due to the dark surface and the strong specular spikes of the metallic material, we recorded high dynamic range (HDR) images.

4.2 Results

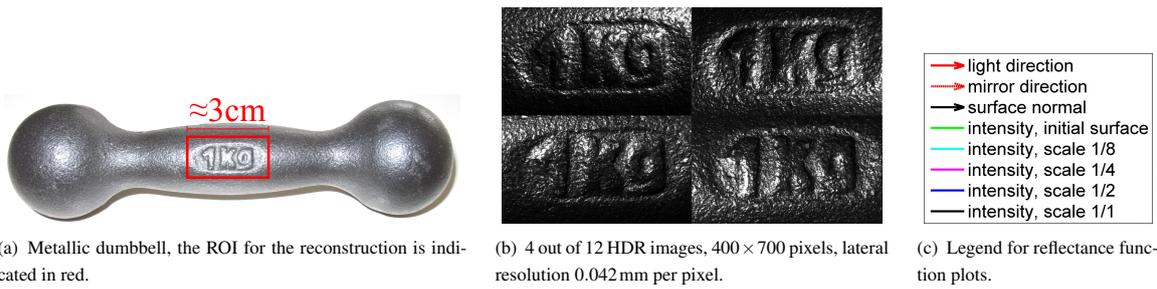
The results for the 3D reconstruction of an embossing on the surface of a metallic dumbbell consisting of dark cast iron are presented in Fig. 3. The object and the area of interest are depicted in Fig. 3(a), the input data for the algorithm are shown in Fig. 3(b) and 3(d). Four of the 12 images acquired under different illumination directions (cf. Fig. 3(b)) and the raw scanner data (cf. Fig. 3(d)) are shown as well. Figs. 3(j)–3(m) illustrate how the surface evolves over 4 iterations ($K = 3$) from a coarse surface at $1/8$ of the full scale (cf. Fig. 3(j)) over the intermediate scales $1/4$ (cf. Fig. 3(k)) and $1/2$ (cf. Fig. 3(l)) to the full scale where the resolution of the 3D surface reconstruction reaches the full resolution of the images (300×700 pixels at a scale of $42 \mu\text{m}$ per pixel) as shown in Fig. 3(m). Note that with each iteration, an increasing amount of surface detail becomes visible and is thus incorporated into the reconstructed surface. The comparison of the images and the surface shows correspondences between surface bumps and their bright or dark counterparts in the images.

¹ViALUX zSnapper Vario, structured/modulated light range scanner

²AVT pike 421B, 14 Bit monochrome CCD camera, 2048×2048 pixels

³Seoul P4 LED, $\lambda \approx 525$ nm (green), luminous flux approximately 120 lm

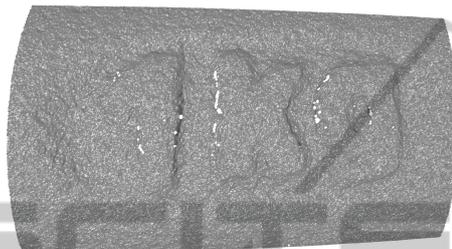
⁴30 mm diameter, manufactured by Optopolymer, Munich



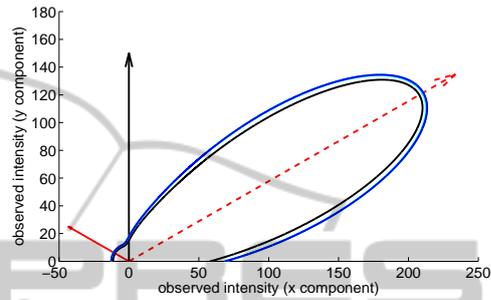
(a) Metallic dumbbell, the ROI for the reconstruction is indicated in red.

(b) 4 out of 12 HDR images, 400×700 pixels, lateral resolution 0.042 mm per pixel.

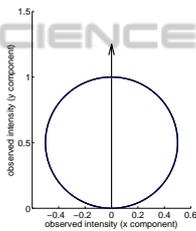
(c) Legend for reflectance function plots.



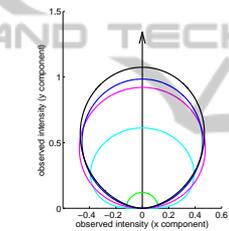
(d) Raw range scanner data.



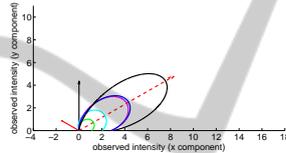
(e) Development of the full reflectance function.



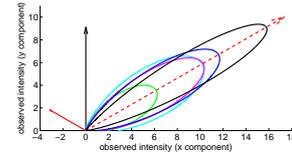
(f) Diffuse component 1.



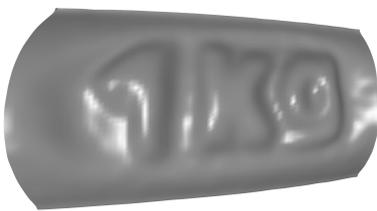
(g) Diffuse component 2.



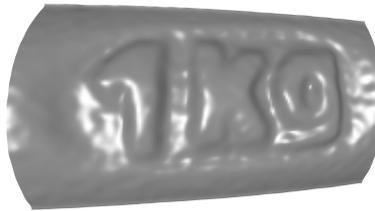
(h) Specular lobe.



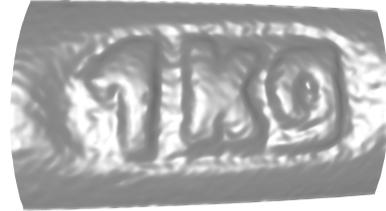
(i) Specular spike.



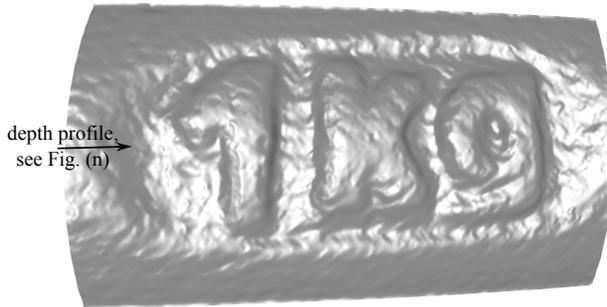
(j) Reconstruction result at scale 1/8.



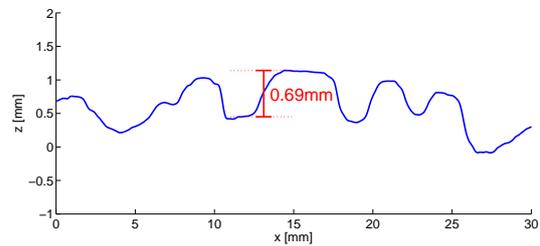
(k) reconstruction result at scale 1/4.



(l) reconstruction result at scale 1/2.



(m) reconstruction result at full scale (400×700 pixels.)



(n) Depth difference measurement on a cross-sectional surface profile (cf. arrow in (m)).

Figure 3: Experimental results for an embossing in a metallic dumbbell consisting of dark cast iron. In (f)–(i), the diffuse components are plotted with the direction \vec{s} of incident light varying over the upper hemisphere, while the specular components are plotted with the viewing direction \vec{v} being varied.

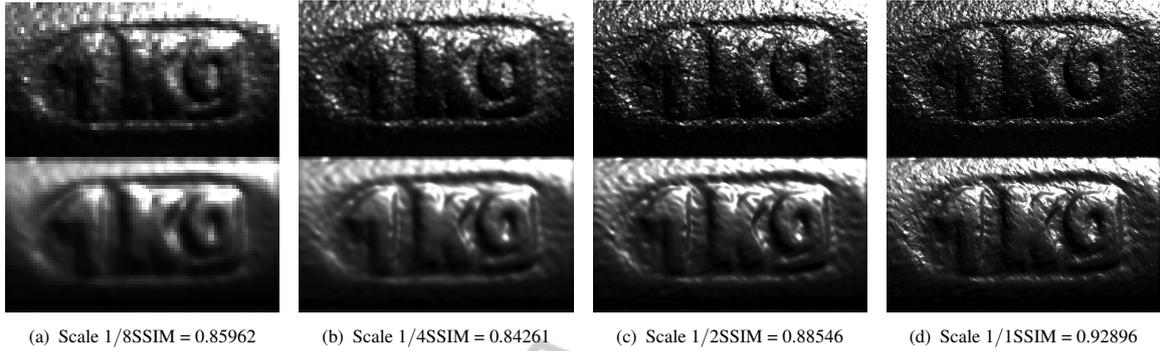


Figure 4: Details regarding the final reflectance maps for different scales under illumination from one selected LED. For each image, the upper half shows the image data and the lower half the reflectance map.

Table 1: Determined reflectance function parameters for each reconstruction scale and the final result.

scale	ρ_{eff}	σ_{ds}	m_{ds}	σ_l	m_l	σ_s	m_s
initial	17.24	0.12	0.0001	1.46	1.85	7.10	9.21
1/8	10.52	0.61	0.45	2.62	1.79	11.75	9.88
1/4	11.59	0.92	0.91	4.83	3.65	11.83	15.03
1/2	12.42	0.98	1.24	5.01	4.05	13.40	18.17
1/1	14.27	1.07	1.45	8.73	7.39	18.22	49.80

The same is true for the correspondences between images and reflectance maps in Fig. 4. An analysis of a cross-sectional profile of the surface with an indicated depth difference measurement is shown in Fig. 3(n), where the reconstructed surface has a depth difference of 0.69 mm, whereas a tactile reference measurement with a caliper gauge yields 0.67 ± 0.02 mm.

Figs. 3(e)–3(i) show the estimated reflectance functions for each resolution level. The full reflectance function (cf. Fig. 3(e)) is decomposed into its four components as shown in Figs. 3(f)–3(i), where a normalization with respect to the effective albedo ρ_{eff} has been performed in order to demonstrate the development of the respective component without the influence of the albedo. Note that the diffuse components are plotted with the direction \vec{s} of incident light varying over the upper hemisphere, while the specular components are plotted with the viewing direction \vec{v} being varied. The numerical results for each component are listed in Table 1.

The plots show an increasing strength of the specular reflectance components while their widths decrease, which causes the characteristic sharp and intense specular reflections on the surface apparent at full resolution. This behavior can also be observed in the resulting reflectance maps shown in Fig. 4. Both diffuse components are significantly lower in their intensities compared to the specular components, which is the typical behavior of metallic surfaces. In Fig. 4, the structural similarity (SSIM) measure known from the domain of video coding (Wang et al., 2004) is used to illustrate the similarity between the acquired

images and the corresponding reflectance maps. The SSIM is a real number from the interval $[0, 1]$ and increases with increasing similarity.

4.3 Validation on Synthetic Data

Since we lack the availability of a ground truth with the required accuracy, we can only evaluate the accuracy of our approach using synthetically generated data. For this purpose, we use the result of the described surface reconstruction algorithm as the ground truth surface and the obtained reflectance maps as the corresponding synthetic images. Our algorithm is then initialized with these data, where Gaussian noise with a standard deviation of $60\mu\text{m}$ is added to imitate the inaccuracies of the range scanner. The obtained results are shown in Fig. 5. Note that the RMSE of the reconstructed surface with respect to the synthetic ground truth only amounts to $10.2\mu\text{m}$, which corresponds to approximately 1/4 of the lateral pixel extent of $42\mu\text{m}$, where the highest deviations occur near the margin of the reconstructed surface section.

The reflectance function estimated based on the synthetic data set is shown in Fig. 6. The estimated reflectance function resembles the ground truth closely to within a few percent. Fig. 6 shows the results for different numbers of subiterations (cf. Fig. 1), which have a very small effect on the inferred shape of the reflectance function. The surface is reconstructed at a high accuracy (cf. Fig. 5), and the rendered reflectance maps closely resemble the synthetic images

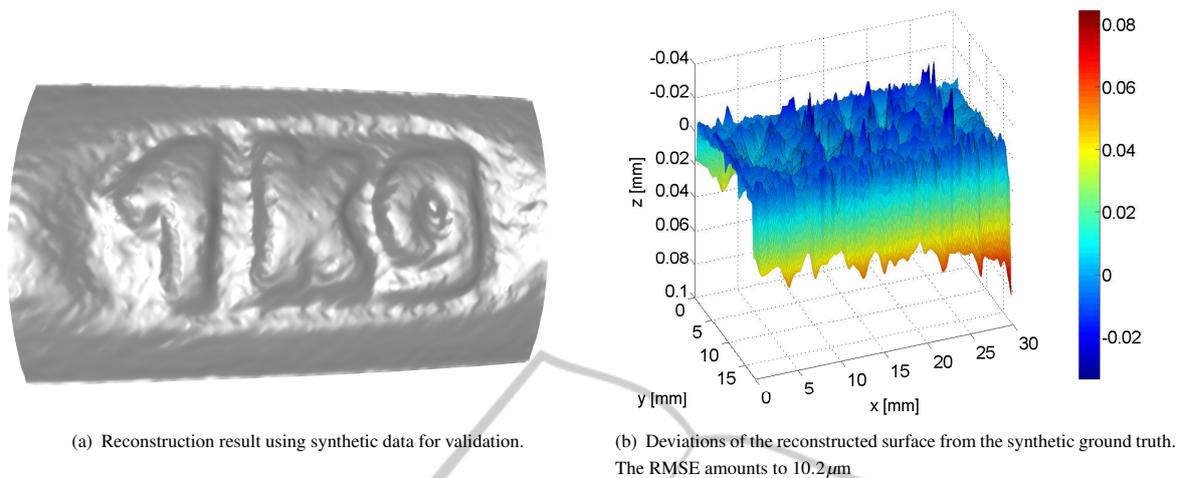


Figure 5: Validation of the proposed algorithm based on synthetic ground truth data.

used for 3D reconstruction as the SSIM corresponds to a very high value of 0.985 on the full resolution scale (cf. Fig. 7).

5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this study, we have described an approach that provides a detailed 3D surface reconstruction along with simultaneously estimated parameters of the reflectance model based on a combination of active range scanning data for large-scale accuracy with image-based photometric information for small-scale accuracy. The simultaneous estimation of the 3D surface profile and the reflectance model is incorporated into a self-consistent computational scheme that successively increases in resolution. We have presented results for a dark rough metallic surface, which has been reconstructed based on a single coarse 3D scan and 12 images acquired under different illumination conditions. The experimental evaluation has shown that the obtained surface exhibits a high level of visible detail. A comparison of a depth difference on the reconstructed 3D surface profile with a simple tactile measurement has shown deviations of the order of some $10\mu\text{m}$, while a validation based on synthetic image data has revealed a RMSE of $10.2\mu\text{m}$ or about $1/4$ of the lateral extent of a pixel. However, a better validation of the absolute accuracy is still required, e.g. using data from a highly precise tactile measurement device.

Additionally, it has been shown that the application of a parametric reflectance model allows to determine the reflectance parameters along with the reconstructed surface. Since the estimated strengths of

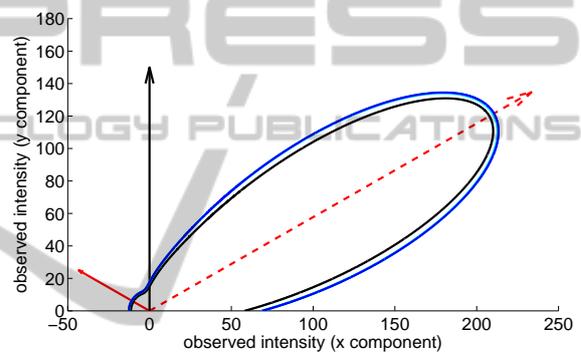


Figure 6: Full reflectance function determined using synthetic data. Black: ground truth; blue: 4 sub-iterations. There are no differences visible within the thickness of the blue line for 1 and 2 sub-iterations.



Figure 7: Full-scale synthetic image (top) and corresponding reflectance map (bottom) of the reconstructed surface. The SSIM amounts to 0.985, thus indicating a very high similarity.

the specular lobe and the specular spike already increase with increasing resolution level, it might be fa-

avorable to choose a more suitable reflectance model or to use a data-driven, non-parametric approach to model the observed complex behaviors and/or to acquire images from several viewpoints. Nevertheless, the accurate 3D reconstruction results show that the applied reflectance function is suitable for integrating the image-based photometric information with the absolute depth data.

A somewhat critical aspect lies in the generalization of the presented approach with regard to inter-reflections. Currently, the algorithm assumes only first-order reflections, which induces errors if inter-reflections occur. Hence, future work will address the development of a mechanism for the compensation or the exploitation of the effects of interreflections at specular surfaces.

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