The “Virtual” Space Telescope: A New Class of Science Missions

Neerav Shah and Philip Calhoun
NASA Goddard Space Flight Center
Presentation at SSWG
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Many science investigations proposed by GSFC require two spacecraft alignment across a long distance to form a “virtual” space telescope.

**Astrophysics:**
- Milli Arc Second X-ray imaging
- Micro Arc Second X-ray imaging
- Calibration Telescope
- Starshade

**Planetary:**
- Exo-planet finder
- Near Earth Objects

**Heliophysics:**
- X-ray imaging of solar flares
- High-resolution UV/EUV imaging
- Next generation solar coronagraph
What’s the Problem?

To pass KDP-C, and for credible science proposals ➔ TRL 6

• **Perception:**
  Engineers and Technologists:
  *It's been done already*
  ➔ MMS, A-Train, GRAIL, PRISMA, CAN-X 4 5, EO-1, Hubble Servicing, etc.

  Scientists and Program Managers:
  *Precision formation alignment too risky*
  ➔ Multiple launches, multiple spacecraft, never collected science

• **Gap:**
  – Component technologies have been developed (some being developed) and tested (some still to be tested)
  – Relative spacecraft navigation and control demonstrated
  – Never formed a virtual science instrument
  – End-to-End System-level capability currently at TRL 4 ➔ *Need a system demo*

• **Approach:**  *Min($) + CubeSats = Low-cost In-Space Demonstrations*
Roadmap to NASA Science using CubeSats

**Ground/Lab Demo**
- Component-level testing and development
- Goal: TRL 5

**In-Space Engineering Demonstration**
- Integrated system level demonstration in space
- Goal: TRL 6/7

**In-Space Science Demonstration**
- Integrated system level demonstration including a science instrument
- Goal: TRL 8/9

**Current Status:**
- Inertial Alignment System
- Lateral sensing
- Micro Propulsion
- Inertial Alignment Navigation Algorithms

- CANYVAL-X (NASA + Yonsei + GWU) CubeSat Technology Demonstration Mission
  - Build confidence and decrease risk for science-class missions

- VTXO (2015 EpScore UNM + NMSU + GSFC)
- mDOT (Stanford, et.al.)

relevant to StarShade Working Group
CANYVAL-X: The CubeSat Astronomy by NASA and Yonsei using Virtual Telescope Alignment experiment

**Mission Description**
- CANYVAL-X: CubeSat mission as an Engineering Proof of Concept for the “Virtual” Telescope
- Validate GN&C architecture for precise dual-spacecraft inertial flight along a line-of-sight.
- **Goal:** Solar Alignment < 1 arc-min (Accuracy & Stability (5 sec)) → 0.3 cm

**Status**
- GWU design and build mCAT
- GSFC delivered: Sun Sensor (May 2015), thrusters (mCAT) (Oct 2015)
- Yonsei Univ. building 2U and 1U spacecraft
- KARI completed Thermal Vacuum testing
- Launch on Falcon9 in mid-2016
Inertial Alignment

• **Formation Transition:**
  – Differential drag, GPS, and terminal point control to get into string of pearls at 10 m range and 30 cm lateral

• **Formation Acquisition and “Science”**
  – Alignment system drives inertial alignment to 0.3cm → hold alignment for 10 minutes

• ~ 2 week inertial alignment experiment
### Mission-Requirement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>JERRY (1U S/C)</th>
<th>TOM (2U+ S/C)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relative Distance</td>
<td>&gt;= 10m</td>
<td>9.22° (NanoCam C1U Field of View)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Payload Angle</td>
<td>120° (±60°) (Half Intensity Beam Angle)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orbit Control</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>30cm (1 DOF μCAT x4+3axis Reaction Wheel)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orbit Determination</td>
<td>Each Axis±10cm (GPS)</td>
<td>Each Axis±10cm (GPS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude Control</td>
<td>5 ° (Magnetorquer) 10m x tan(5°) = 88cm</td>
<td>1° (Reaction Wheel) 10m x tan(1°) = 18cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude Determination</td>
<td>&lt; 1 arcmin (GSFC Sun Sensor)</td>
<td>&lt; 1 arcmin (GSFC Sun Sensor)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- CANYVAL-X demonstrates a similar formation architecture

- Optic replaced with Commercial Camera

- Inertial reference is sun instead of stars

- EKF to fuse sun and laser delta beta

CANYVAL-X ~1.75 deg

~1 arc-minute

4 orders of magnitude difference

NOTE: CANYVAL-X is an engineering proof of concept using CubeSats, not designed to achieve the fine precision required of a full-scale mission.
Final Thoughts

- Tech Demos that try to “do it all” get cancelled (paraphrase Chip Barnes presentation to SSWG on 2/11)
- Formation flying for over 50 years, but no one has ever built a formation flying science instrument
  - No mission has made a science measurement using a “virtual” space telescope
- Seeking to reduce risk through system demonstrations on low-cost platforms. CubeSats are enabling.
- CANYVAL-X is an engineering proof of concept
CANYVAL-X Team

Yonsei University

George Washington University

NASA Goddard Space Flight Center
CANYVAL–X CubeSat 2U (TOM)

Properties | Value
--- | ---
Mission Life Time | 3-6 Month
Payload | Visible Camera (NanoCam)
Payload Performance | 2048 x 1536 pixels CMOS sensor 35mm lens / F1.9
GN&C | MCAT, Sun Sensor, NanoCam, Reaction Wheels, Mag TorqRods
Data Rate | Uplink: 4.8kbps(UHF) Downlink: 100kbps(S-band)
Mass | 2.7 kg
CANYVAL-X CubeSat 2U (JERRY)

JERRY(1U)

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Value</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission Life Time</td>
<td>3-6 Month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payload</td>
<td>4 Laser Diodes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payload Performance</td>
<td>Half Intensity Beam Angle = ±60° Minimum angle(15.5°) intensity &gt; 96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADCS Performance</td>
<td>(Magnetorquer, sun sensor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Rate</td>
<td>Up/Downlink : 4.8kbps(UHF)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mass</td>
<td>1.0 kg</td>
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