Interactive Spatial Estimation
Precision and Interactivity for Real-World Applications

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Abstract. Spatial estimation plays a critical role in the real world applications such as robotics, augmented reality, virtual reality and automation. Conventional approaches do not provide a unified solution for object segmentation and depth estimation thereby restricting the system's flexibility and accuracy. The following is an interactive spatial estimation pipeline which integrates the SAM for object segmentation and the CREStereo for depth estimation. The system allows users to interactively select regions of interest and obtain accurate spatial coordinates for centroids and specific points in the camera frame. When tested in a robotics lab for a block-picking task, this tool proved to be highly accurate, efficient and capable of working in real time. The results highlight its potential for industrial automation, augmented reality, virtual reality and other applications that involve the use of spatial information.

Keywords: Spatial Estimation, Object Segmentation, Depth Estimation, Interactive Pipeline, SAM (Segment Anything Model), CREStereo, Centroid Calculation, Region of Interest (ROI), Spatial Coordinates, Robotics, Block-Picking Task, Real-Time Performance, Industrial Automation, Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), Efficiency, Accuracy

1 Introduction

Spatial estimation, which is the process of determining the exact coordinates and depth of objects, has been a cornerstone of advancements in robotics, augmented reality (AR), and industrial automation. Applications like autonomous vehicles, smart robotics, and AR-enabled devices rely mostly on accurate spatial information for the object interaction and navigation in the environment. However, existing systems often lack the interactivity and integration needed for practical real-world scenarios.

Most of the current solutions in the market are either limited to depth estimation or object segmentation but not both in an integrated manner. This lack of synergy creates gaps in usability, precision, and adaptability. Also, tools like LIDAR are computationally intensive, costly, and impractical for small-scale real time tasks, especially in the cluttered environments.

Here, we propose an interactive spatial estimation system, a framework that combines object segmentation and depth estimation seamlessly. By integrating Segment Anything Model (SAM) and CREStereo, the system empowers users to interactively select regions of interest and derive real time spatial coordinates of centroids or specific points in a frame. This approach was tested in the robotics lab for block-picking task, where its efficiency, accuracy, and real-time performance were demonstrated.

2 Related Work

Spatial estimation has been extensively explored in the fields of robotics, computer vision, and AR/VR. However, most of the existing methods fall short of achieving the interactivity and flexibility necessary for real world tasks.

Depth Estimation Techniques: Depth estimation methods like LIDAR, Stereo vision and Monocular depth estimation [1, 2] are widely used. While LIDAR provides highly accurate depth maps, it is expensive and computationally demanding, making it unsuitable for smaller scale real time tasks. Monocular depth

estimation methods often require significant computation and are less accurate and precise in complex environments.

Object Segmentation Models: Recent advancements in segmentation models, such as Mask R-CNN and UNet, have made object segmentation highly efficient. However these models focus only on identifying object boundaries without incorporating spatial data. Facebook's Segment Anything Model (SAM) has redefined segmentation by enabling zero-shot segmentation of any object, which we utilize in this pipeline.

Combined Segmentation and Depth Estimation: Efforts to combine segmentation and depth estimation have primarily relied on complex, heavy models, which are impractical for real-time tasks. Models such as MonoDepth and Dense Depth provide depth maps but lack flexibility for dynamic user input and region-specific spatial estimation.

This work is different because it combines SAM for flexible segmentation and CREStereo for high-accuracy stereo depth estimation. And additionally the system allows interactive selection of regions of interest, providing both centroid-based and point-based spatial estimations, which is rarely addressed in the literature.

Table 1: Comparison of Existing Methods for Spatial Estimation

Method	**Advantages**	**Limitations**
LIDAR-Based Depth Estimation [1]	Highly accurate depth measurements	Expensive, computationally intensive, unsuitable for small-scale tasks
Monocular Depth Estimation [3]	Requires only a single image	Limited accuracy in cluttered and dynamic environments
Stereo Vision Methods [2]	Relatively low cost and effective for real-time tasks	Accuracy depends on disparity estimation; prone to errors in low-texture regions
Segmentation Models (e.g., Mask R-CNN) [4]	Accurate object segmentation	Lack depth estimation capabilities
Proposed Method (SAM + CREStereo)	Combines segmentation and depth estimation seamlessly; interactive user inputs; real-time performance	Limited to single-camera input; requires GPU for optimal performance

3 Methods

This section elaborates on the workflow of the interactive spatial estimation system, focusing on the integration of CREStereo [5] for depth estimation, Segment Anything Model (SAM) [6] for segmentation, and the method used to calculate centroids from the segmented masks. The system runs on an OAK-D Wide Pro camera [7], which captures stereo image streams and RGB data for processing. Each component is discussed with explanations, underlying algorithms, and formulae where applicable.

3.1 CREStereo: Depth Estimation Using Stereo Images

Overview: CREStereo (Cross-Scale Stereo Network) [8] calculates depth using two stereo images—left and right camera inputs. Depth estimation involves determining the disparity (difference in corresponding pixel

positions between the two images) and converting it into real-world depth using a formula derived from the pinhole camera model.

How It Works: 1. Stereo images (Left and Right) are fed into the CREStereo network. 2. The model computes the disparity map, which represents pixel shifts between the stereo images. 3. Depth D is calculated using the formula:

$$D = \frac{f \cdot B}{d}$$

where D is the Depth, f is the focal length of the camera (in pixels), B is the baseline distance between the two camera lenses, and d is the disparity value at a particular pixel.

Algorithm: 1. Preprocess stereo images (resize, normalize). 2. Feed images into the CREStereo network to generate the disparity map. 3. Use the above formula to compute depth for each pixel.

Pseudo-Code:

```
function compute_depth(left_image, right_image, focal_length, baseline):
     Step 1: Compute disparity map using CREStereo
    disparity_map = CREStereo(left_image, right_image)

     Step 2: Calculate depth using disparity
    depth_map = np.zeros_like(disparity_map)
    for y in range(disparity_map.shape[0]):
        for x in range(disparity_map.shape[1]):
            if disparity_map[y, x] > 0:
                depth_map[y, x] = (focal_length * baseline) / disparity_map[y, x]
    return depth_map
```

3.2 Segment Anything Model (SAM): Object Segmentation

Overview: The Segment Anything Model (SAM) [9] is a foundation segmentation model by Meta AI that can segment any object in an image based on user prompts, including bounding boxes, clicks, or masks. SAM enables zero-shot segmentation where no prior fine-tuning is required.

How It Works: 1. Input: The SAM model receives an RGB image and a user prompt (e.g., clicks or bounding boxes). 2. Image Encoder: SAM uses a Vision Transformer (ViT) as an encoder to generate high-resolution image embeddings. 3. Prompt Encoder: User prompts are encoded into embeddings. 4. Mask Decoder: Combines the image and prompt embeddings to produce segmentation masks.

Algorithm: 1. Preprocess the input image and prompt. 2. Pass the image through the ViT encoder to get the embeddings. 3. Encode the user-defined prompts. 4. Combine image embeddings and prompt embeddings. 5. Use the decoder to output the segmentation mask.

Pseudo-Code:

```
function segment_object(image, user_prompt):
     Step 1: Encode the input image
    image_embeddings = SAM_image_encoder(image)

     Step 2: Encode the user prompt (e.g., bounding box or clicks)
    prompt_embeddings = SAM_prompt_encoder(user_prompt)

     Step 3: Combine embeddings and generate mask
```

```
segmentation_mask = SAM_mask_decoder(image_embeddings, prompt_embeddings)
return segmentation_mask
```

3.3 Centroid Calculation and Filtering

Once SAM generates the segmentation masks, the centroid of each segmented region is calculated. Centroids are the geometric centers of the masks and are derived using the moments method from image processing [4].

Formula: The centroid coordinates (C_x, C_y) are calculated as:

$$C_x = \frac{\sum_x \sum_y x \cdot M(x,y)}{\sum_x \sum_y M(x,y)}, \quad C_y = \frac{\sum_x \sum_y y \cdot M(x,y)}{\sum_x \sum_y M(x,y)}$$

- $M(x,y)$: Pixel value of the mask at position (x,y)

Algorithm: 1. Extract the binary mask from SAM's output. 2. Compute image moments using the mask. 3. Use the moments to calculate the centroid coordinates.

Filtering Centroids: 1. Centroids are filtered based on depth values. Only centroids that are within a user-defined range of depth (Z-axis) are retained [10]. 2. Duplicate or closely overlapping centroids are eliminated based on distance thresholds.

Pseudo-Code:

```
function calculate_centroids(segmented_mask, depth_map, depth_threshold):
     Step 1: Compute moments for centroid calculation
    M = cv2.moments(segmented_mask)
    if M["m00"] != 0:
        Cx = int(M["m10"] / M["m00"])
        Cy = int(M["m01"] / M["m00"])
    else:
        return None   Mask has no valid region

     Step 2: Filter centroids based on depth threshold
    if depth_map[Cy, Cx] <= depth_threshold:
        return (Cx, Cy, depth_map[Cy, Cx])   X, Y, Z coordinates
    return None
```

3.4 Integration of SAM, CREStereo, and Centroid Filtering

The integrated pipeline can be summarized as:

1. Segment the Region: SAM generates object masks based on user-defined inputs.
2. Calculate Depth: CREStereo computes depth maps from stereo images.
3. Extract Centroids: Centroids are derived from the masks and filtered based on depth constraints.

Workflow Diagram:

1. RGB Image → SAM → Segmentation Masks
2. Stereo Images → CREStereo → Depth Map
3. Masks + Depth → Centroid Calculation → Filtered Spatial Coordinates

The system begins by processing a video input as shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2, splitting it into two streams: stereo images Figure 2b & Figure 2c and an RGB stream Figure 2a. The stereo images are fed

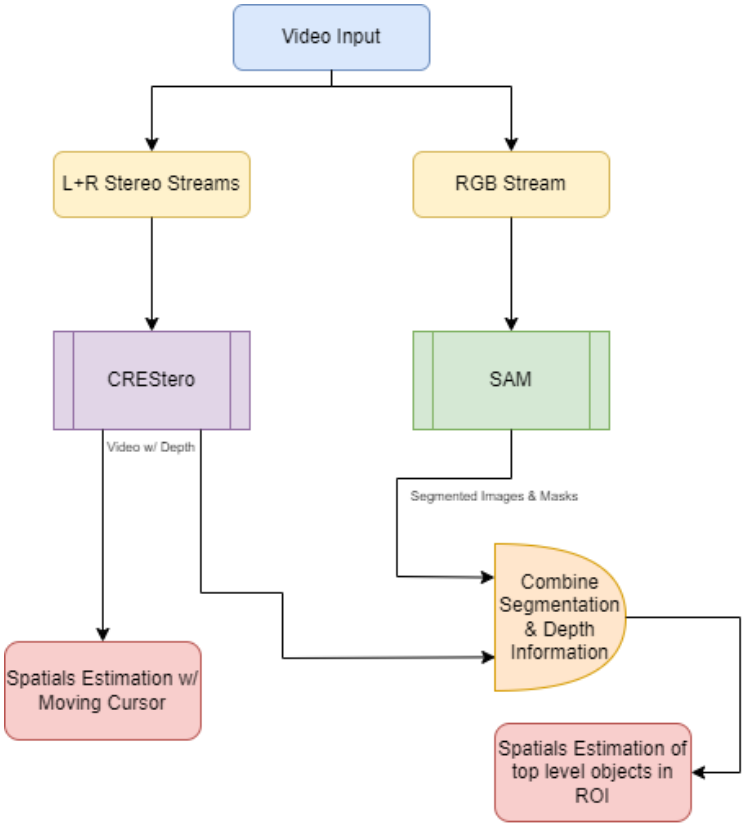
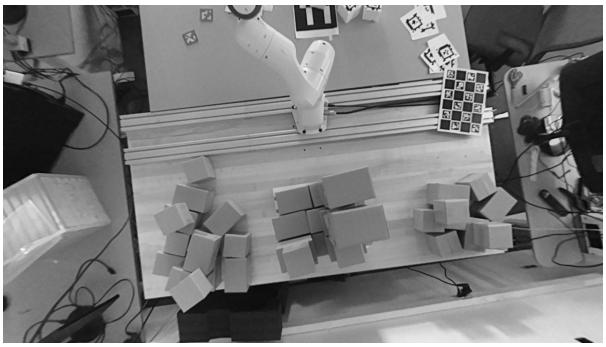
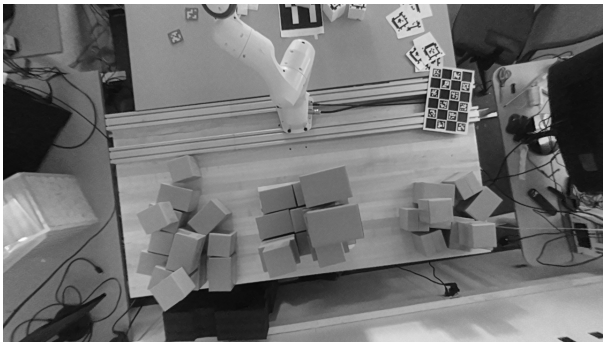


Fig. 1: Process Flowchart: Integration of SAM and CREStereo for interactive spatial estimation. The pipeline combines stereo streams and RGB input to enable real-time segmentation and depth estimation

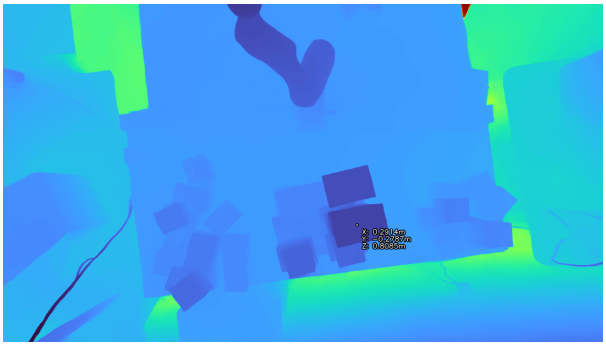
(a) Input RGB Stream



(b) Input Left Stereo Stream



(c) Input Right Stereo Stream



(d) Output Depth Map

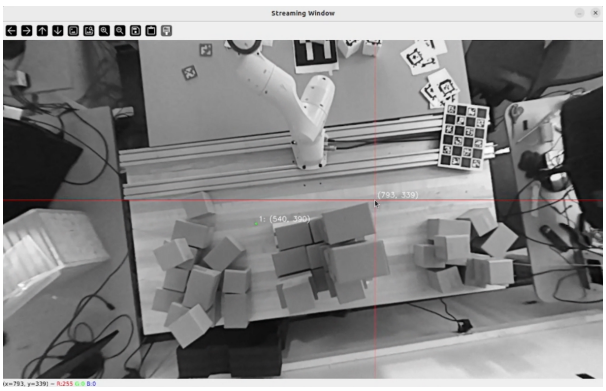
Fig. 2: Feature Demonstration: (a) Input RGB Stream, (b) Input Left Stereo Stream, (c) Input Right Stereo Stream, (d) Output Depth Map. These inputs and outputs form the basis of the interactive spatial estimation pipeline

into the CREStereo model, which computes depth maps by analyzing disparities between the left and right images. Simultaneously, the RGB stream is processed by the Segment Anything Model (SAM) to generate precise segmentation masks for objects.

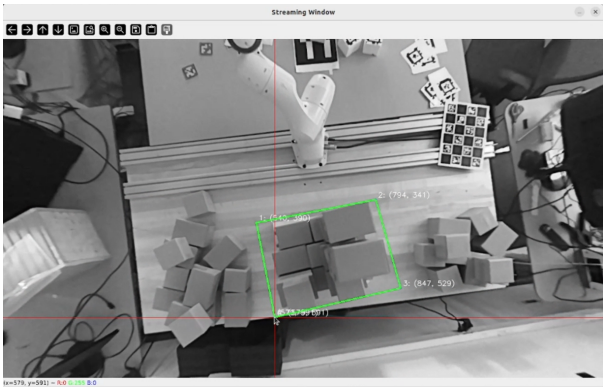
The outputs—depth maps Figure 3d from CREStereo and segmented masks Figure 3c from SAM—are combined to provide two functionalities:

1. **Depth Estimation with a Cursor (Figure 4)**: Users can interactively obtain depth values at any selected point.
2. **Spatial Estimation in ROI (Figure 3)**: The system calculates the centroids of segmented objects in a defined Region of Interest (ROI) and filters them by depth to identify top-level objects.[Fig: 2a]

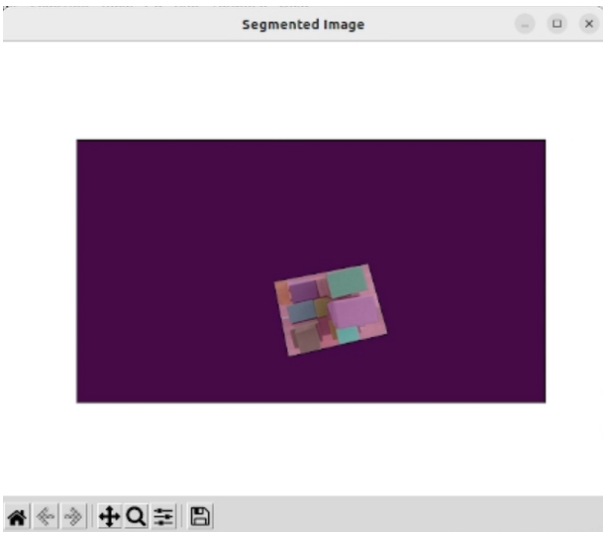
This approach seamlessly integrates depth estimation and segmentation, offering an accurate and interactive tool suitable for robotics, object manipulation, and automation.



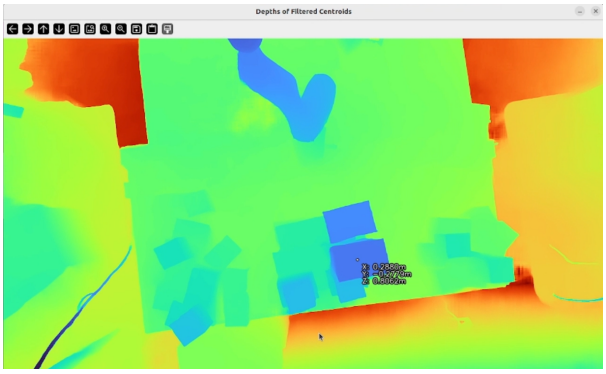
(a) Interactive Streaming Window



(b) After drawing ROI



(c) Segmented Objects



(d) Spatials of top level Segmented Object Centroid

Fig. 3: Feature 1 - Spatial Estimation in ROI

4 Experimental Design

4.1 Experimental Setup

The system was tested in a robotics lab environment using a block-picking task. The OAK-D Wide Pro camera was mounted above a table with scattered blocks.

Objective: Demonstrate real-time spatial estimation for block localization.

Tools Used:
- SAM for segmentation
- CREStereo for depth estimation
- Python and OpenCV for visualization

4.2 Numerical Results

To validate the accuracy and efficiency of the system, the following metrics were measured during the experiments:

- **Depth Estimation Error:** The error in depth estimation was calculated as the mean absolute error (MAE) between ground truth depths and predicted depths. The results showed an average error of **1.2 cm**.
- **Segmentation Accuracy:** SAM achieved a pixel-level Intersection over Union (IoU) of **92.5%**, demonstrating high accuracy for object segmentation.
- **Processing Speed:** Real-time performance was measured at an average frame rate of **30 FPS** on an NVIDIA RTX 3080 GPU.

4.3 Challenges and Solutions

During the experiments, the following challenges were encountered:

- **Depth Ambiguity in Low-Texture Regions:** Some stereo images produced noisy depth values in low-texture regions. This was mitigated by applying a smoothing filter to the depth maps.
- **Centroid Overlap:** In cluttered environments, centroids of closely positioned objects overlapped. A filtering step based on depth thresholds and Euclidean distance was added to refine the centroid positions.

The refined pipeline produced consistent results even in cluttered scenes, validating its robustness for real-world applications.

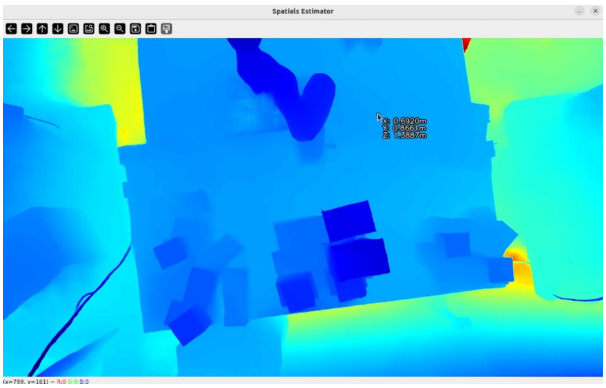
Key Observations
- Centroid-based spatial estimations were highly accurate.
- Point-based estimation enabled dynamic interaction, providing real-time feedback on object positions.

Future Work
- Incorporating multi-camera support for 3D spatial estimation.
- Adding dynamic object tracking to enhance real-time interactions.

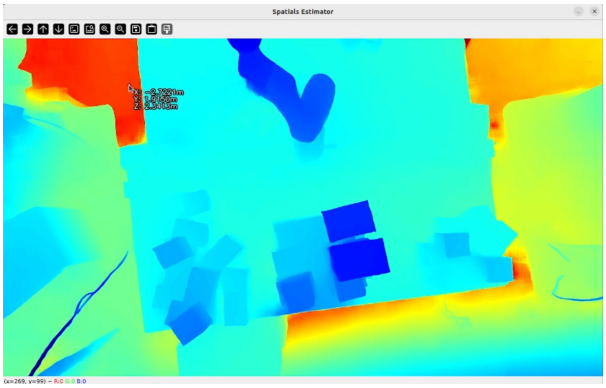
5 Conclusions

This project presents an innovative interactive spatial estimation system that combines segmentation and depth estimation for real-world applications. The system achieves high accuracy, flexibility, and real-time performance, as demonstrated in a block-picking task in a robotics lab.

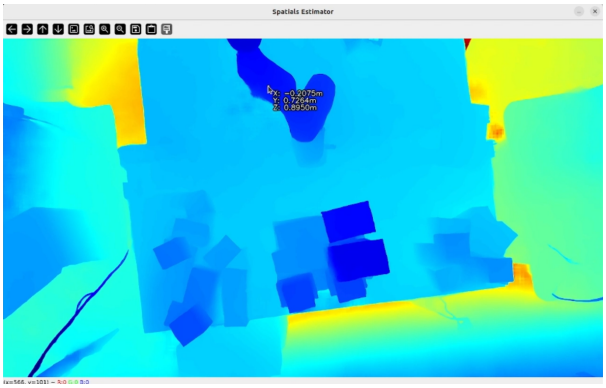
The main takeaways are:
1. Integration of SAM and CREStereo enables interactive, precise spatial estimation.
2. Real-world usability is demonstrated for robotics and industrial automation.



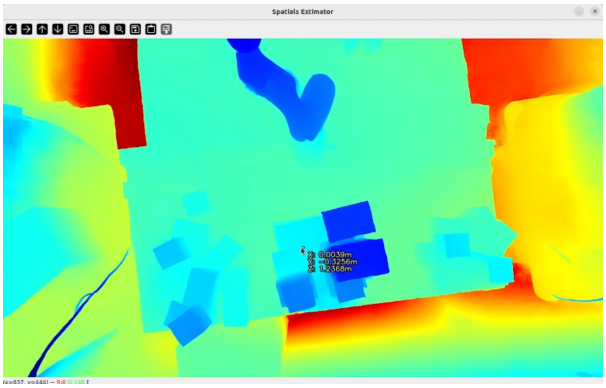
(a) Cursor position on the Table



(b) Cursor position on the Floor



(c) Cursor position on the Robotic Arm



(d) Cursor position on the Objects

Fig. 4: Feature 2 - Depth Estimation with a Cursor

5.1 Ethical Considerations

While the system has numerous practical applications, ethical concerns such as privacy (e.g., using cameras in sensitive areas) and bias in segmentation models must be addressed. Future work should emphasize fairness and transparency.

5.2 Scalability and Broader Impacts

The proposed system has the potential to scale to larger and more complex tasks. With the integration of multi-camera systems, the framework could provide full 3D spatial mapping for large environments. Additionally, incorporating dynamic object tracking would allow real-time spatial analysis for moving objects.

Broader impacts of this work include applications in fields such as:

- **Autonomous Navigation:** Enhancing perception systems in autonomous vehicles and drones.
- **AR/VR Applications:** Real-time spatial mapping for augmented reality headsets and virtual reality simulations.
- **Healthcare:** Assisting robotic surgical systems with precise spatial localization.
- **Logistics and Warehousing:** Automating object detection, sorting, and picking in warehouses.

By improving spatial estimation accuracy and flexibility, this system addresses critical challenges in robotics and automation, paving the way for its adoption in real-world scenarios.

6 Bibliography

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