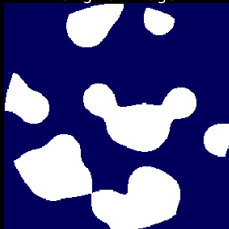


# A hand-waving introduction to sparsity for compressed tomography reconstruction

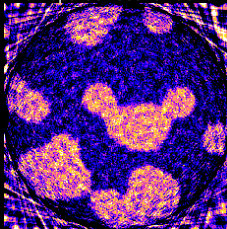
Gaël Varoquaux and Emmanuelle Gouillart



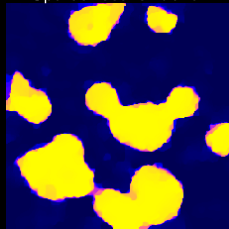
Original image



Non-sparse reconstruction

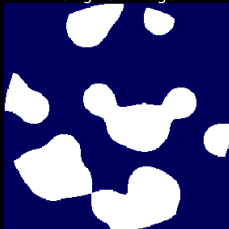


Sparse reconstruction

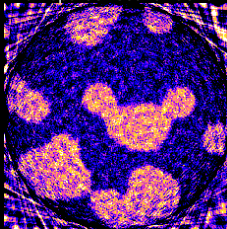


- 1 Sparsity for inverse problems
- 2 Mathematical formulation
- 3 Choice of a sparse representation
- 4 Optimization algorithms

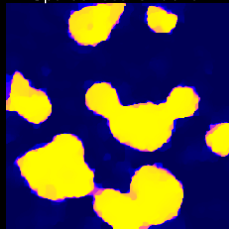
Original image



Non-sparse reconstruction



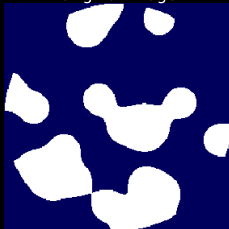
Sparse reconstruction



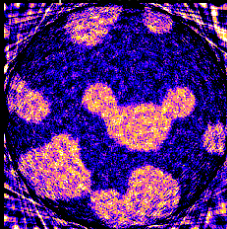
# 1 Sparsity for inverse problems

- Problem setting
- Intuitions

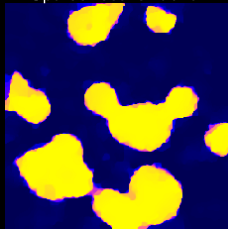
Original image



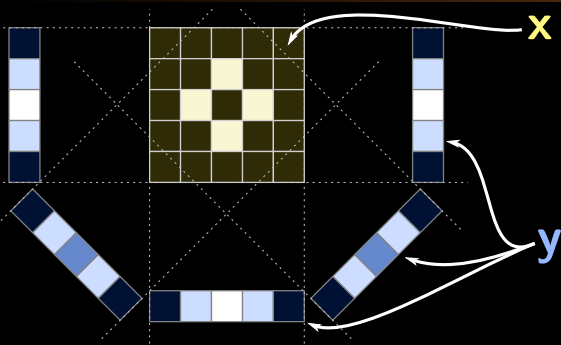
Non-sparse reconstruction



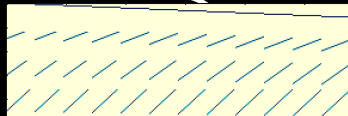
Sparse reconstruction



# 1 Tomography reconstruction: a linear problem



$$y = Ax$$



$$y \in \mathbb{R}^n, \quad A \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times p}, \quad x \in \mathbb{R}^p$$

$n \propto$  number of projections

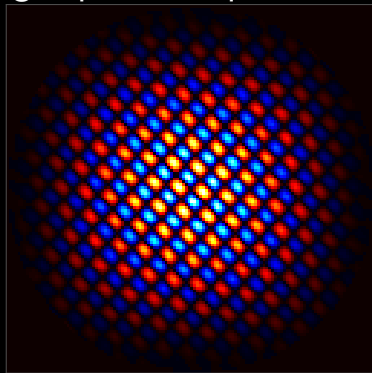
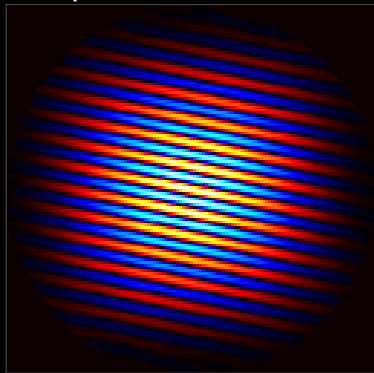
$p$ : number of pixels in reconstructed image

**We want to find  $x$  knowing  $A$  and  $y$**

# 1 Small $n$ : an ill-posed linear problem

$\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x}$  admits multiple solutions

- The sensing operator  $\mathbf{A}$  has a large null space: images that give null projections
- In particular it is blind to high spatial frequencies:



# 1 Small $n$ : an ill-posed linear problem

$\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x}$  admits multiple solutions

- The sensing operator  $\mathbf{A}$  has a large null space: images that give null projections
- In particular it is blind to high spatial frequencies:

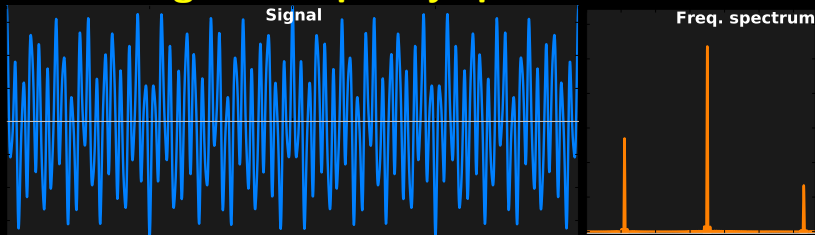
## Large number of projections

Ill-conditioned problem:

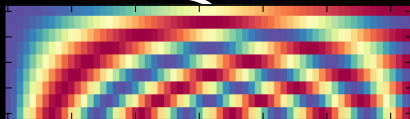
“short-sighted” rather than blind,  
 $\Rightarrow$  captures noise on those components

# 1 A toy example: spectral analysis

## Recovering the frequency spectrum

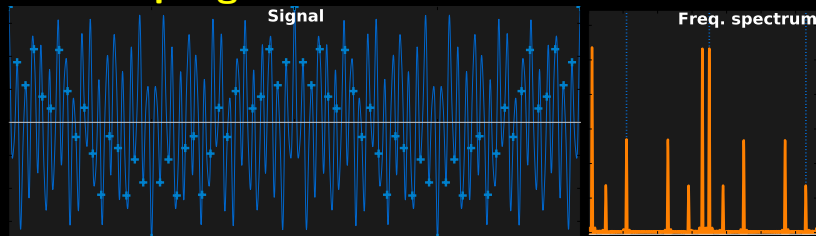


$$\text{signal} = \mathbf{A} \cdot \text{frequencies}$$

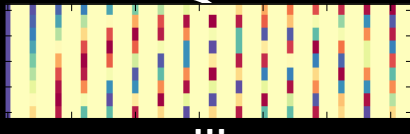


# 1 A toy example: spectral analysis

## Sub-sampling



$$\text{signal} = \mathbf{A} \cdot \text{frequencies}$$



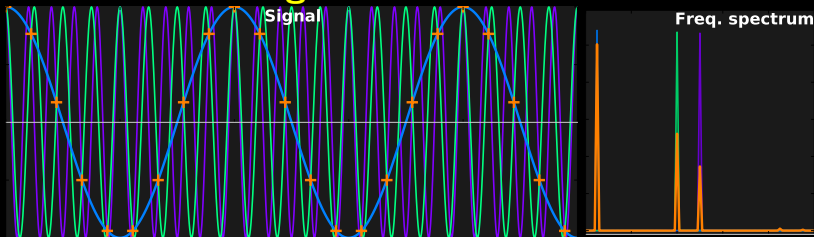
...

- Recovery problem becomes ill-posed



# 1 A toy example: spectral analysis

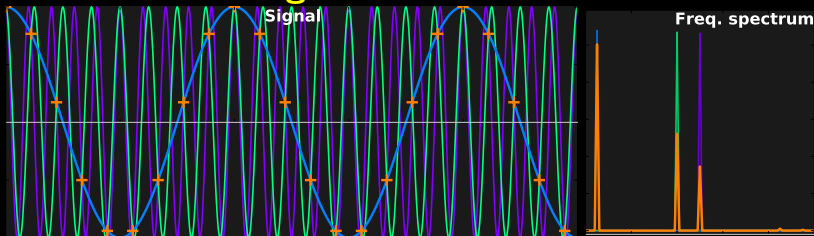
## Problem: aliasing



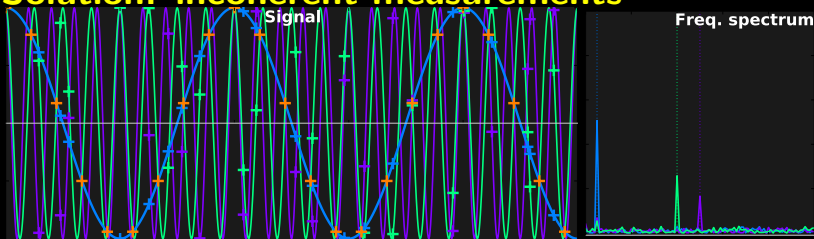
- Information in the null-space of  $\mathbf{A}$  is lost

# 1 A toy example: spectral analysis

## Problem: aliasing



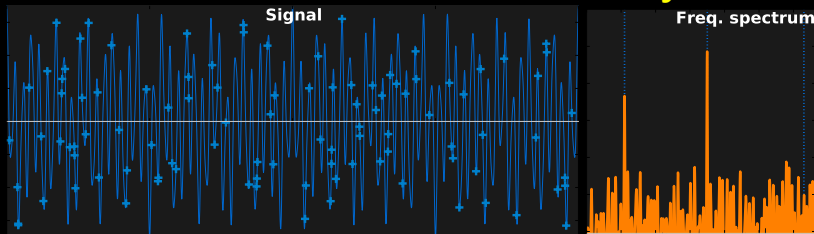
## Solution: incoherent measurements



■ i.e. careful choice of null-space of  $\mathbf{A}$

# 1 A toy example: spectral analysis

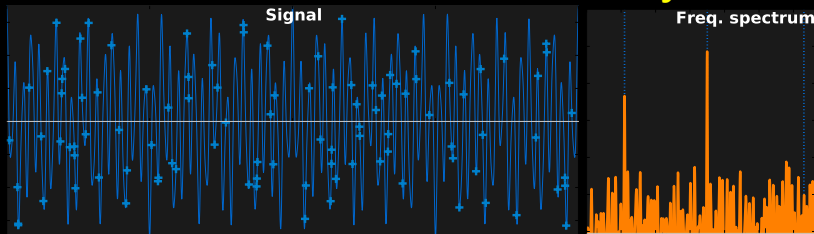
## Incoherent measurements, but scarcity of data



- The null-space of  $\mathbf{A}$  is spread out in frequency
- Not much data  $\Rightarrow$  large null-space  
= captures “noise”

# 1 A toy example: spectral analysis

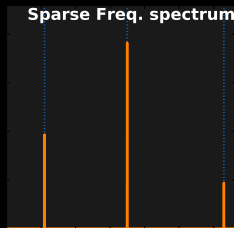
## Incoherent measurements, but scarcity of data



- The null-space of  $\mathbf{A}$  is spread out in frequency
- Not much data  $\Rightarrow$  large null-space  
= captures “noise”

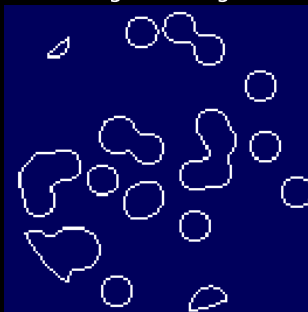
## Impose sparsity

- Find a small number of frequencies to explain the signal

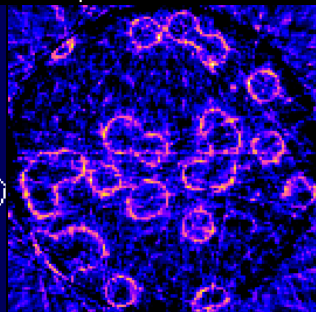


# 1 And for tomography reconstruction?

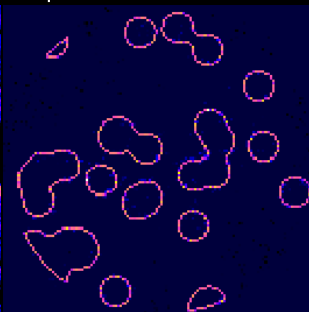
Original image



Non-sparse reconstruction



Sparse reconstruction

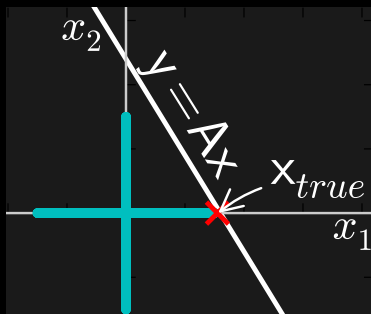


$128 \times 128$  pixels, 18 projections

[http://scikit-learn.org/stable/auto\\_examples/applications/plot\\_tomography\\_l1\\_reconstruction.html](http://scikit-learn.org/stable/auto_examples/applications/plot_tomography_l1_reconstruction.html)

# 1 Why does it work: a geometric explanation

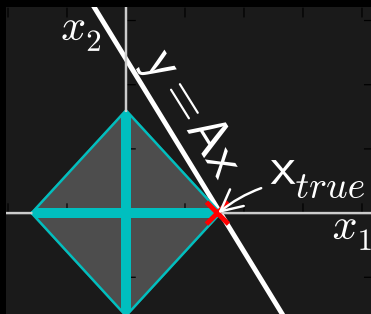
- Two coefficients of  $\mathbf{x}$  not in the null-space of  $\mathbf{A}$ :



- The sparsest solution is in the blue cross
- It corresponds to the true solution ( $\mathbf{x}_{true}$ ) if the slope is  $> 45^\circ$

# 1 Why does it work: a geometric explanation

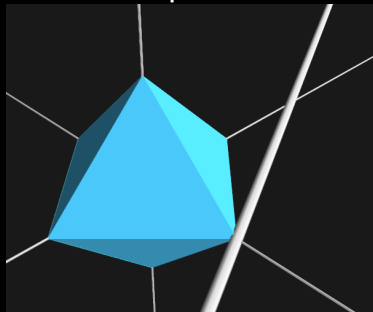
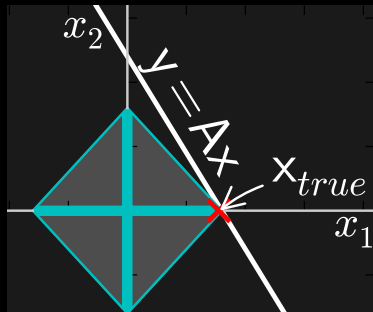
- Two coefficients of  $\mathbf{x}$  not in the null-space of  $\mathbf{A}$ :



- The sparsest solution is in the blue cross
- It corresponds to the true solution ( $\mathbf{x}_{true}$ ) if the slope is  $> 45^\circ$
- The cross can be replaced by its convex hull

# 1 Why does it work: a geometric explanation

- Two coefficients of  $\mathbf{x}$  not in the null-space of  $\mathbf{A}$ :



- The sparsest solution is in the blue cross
- It corresponds to the true solution ( $\mathbf{x}_{true}$ ) if the slope is  $> 45^\circ$
- In high dimension: large acceptable set



- Recovery of **sparse** signal
- Null space of sensing operator *incoherent* with sparse representation

⇒ **Excellent sparse recovery with little projections**

Minimum number of observations necessary:

$n_{\min} \sim k \log p$ , with  $k$ : number of non zeros

[Candes 2006]

**Rmk** Theory for *i.i.d.* samples

Related to “*compressive sensing*”

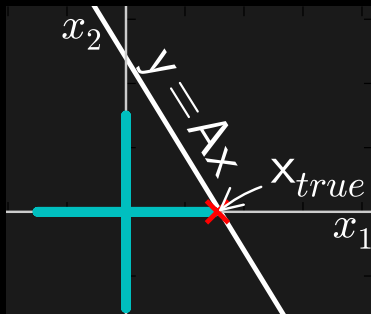
## 2 Mathematical formulation

- Variational formulation
- Introduction of noise

## 2 Maximizing the sparsity

- $\ell_0$  number of non-zeros

$$\min_{\mathbf{x}} \ell_0(\mathbf{x}) \quad s.t. \quad \mathbf{y} = \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x}$$



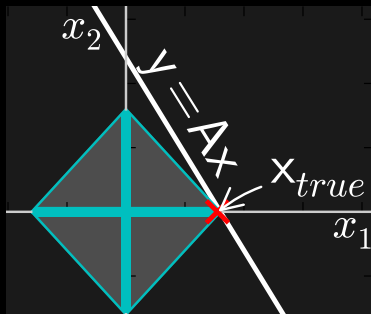
- “Matching pursuit” problem [Mallat, Zhang 1993]  
“Orthogonal matching pursuit” [Pati, et al 1993]

**Problem:** Non-convex optimization 😞

## 2 Maximizing the sparsity

■  $\ell_1(\mathbf{x}) = \sum_i |\mathbf{x}_i|$

$$\min_{\mathbf{x}} \ell_1(\mathbf{x}) \quad s.t. \quad \mathbf{y} = \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x}$$



■ “Basis pursuit”

[Chen, Donoho, Saunders 1998]

## 2 Modeling observation noise

$$\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x} + \mathbf{e} \quad \mathbf{e} = \text{observation noise}$$

- New formulation:

$$\min_{\mathbf{x}} \ell_1(\mathbf{x}) \quad s.t. \quad \cancel{\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x}} \quad \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x}\|_2^2 \leq \varepsilon^2$$

- Equivalent: “Lasso estimator” [Tibshirani 1996]

$$\min_{\mathbf{x}} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \lambda \ell_1(\mathbf{x})$$

## 2 Modeling observation noise

$$\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{e} \quad \mathbf{e} = \text{observation noise}$$

- New formulation:

$$\min_{\mathbf{x}} \ell_1(\mathbf{x}) \quad s.t. \quad \cancel{\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x}} \quad \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x}\|_2^2 \leq \varepsilon^2$$

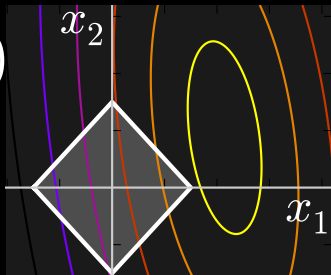
- Equivalent: “Lasso estimator”

[Tibshirani 1996]

$$\min_{\mathbf{x}} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \lambda \ell_1(\mathbf{x})$$

Data fit

Penalization



Rmk: kink in the  $\ell_1$  ball creates sparsity

## 2 Probabilistic modeling: Bayesian interpretation

$$\mathcal{P}(\mathbf{x}|\mathbf{y}) \propto \mathcal{P}(\mathbf{y}|\mathbf{x}) \mathcal{P}(\mathbf{x}) \quad (\star)$$

“Posterior”

Quantity of interest

Forward model

“Prior”

Expectations on  $\mathbf{x}$

■ Forward model:  $\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x} + \mathbf{e}$ ,  $\mathbf{e}$ : Gaussian noise  
 $\Rightarrow \mathcal{P}(\mathbf{y}|\mathbf{x}) \propto \exp -\frac{1}{2\sigma^2} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x}\|_2^2$

■ Prior: Laplacian  $\mathcal{P}(\mathbf{x}) \propto \exp -\frac{1}{\mu} \|\mathbf{x}\|_1$

Negated log of  $(\star)$ :  $\frac{1}{2\sigma^2} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \frac{1}{\mu} \ell_1(\mathbf{x})$

Maximum of posterior is Lasso estimate

Note that this picture is limited and the Lasso is not a good Bayesian estimator for the Laplace prior [Gribonval 2011].

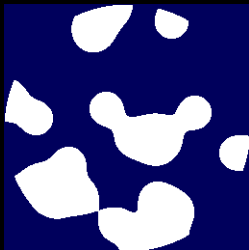
### **3 Choice of a sparse representation**

- Sparse in wavelet domain
- Total variation

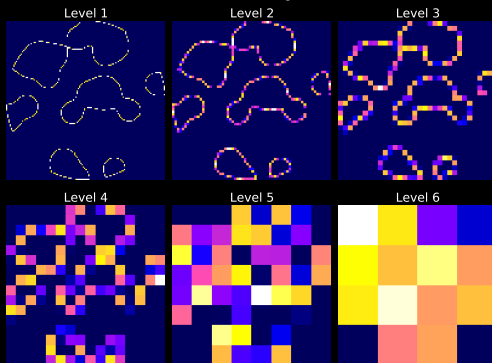


### 3 Sparsity in wavelet representation

Typical images  
are not sparse



Haar decomposition

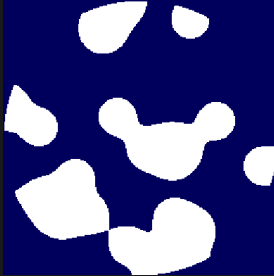


⇒ **Impose sparsity in Haar representation**

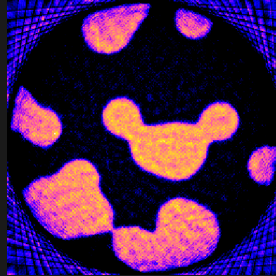
$\mathbf{A} \rightarrow \mathbf{A} \mathbf{H}$  where  $\mathbf{H}$  is the Haar transform

### 3 Sparsity in wavelet representation

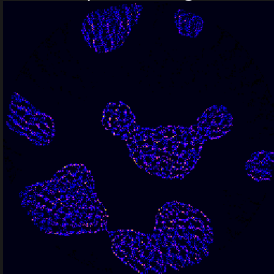
Original image



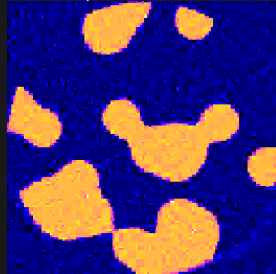
Non-sparse reconstruction



Sparse image



Sparse in Haar



### 3 Total variation

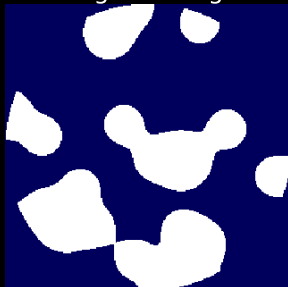
- Impose a sparse gradient

$$\min_{\mathbf{x}} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \lambda \sum_i \|(\nabla \mathbf{x})_i\|_2$$

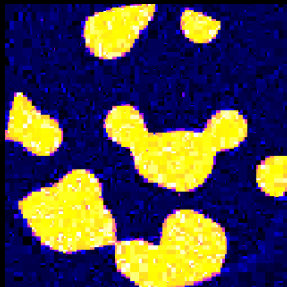
$\ell_{12}$  norm:  $\ell_1$  norm of the gradient magnitude

Sets  $\nabla_x$  and  $\nabla_y$  to zero jointly

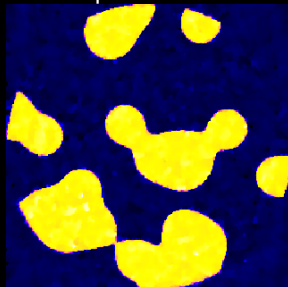
Original image



Haar wavelet



TV penalization



### 3 Total variation

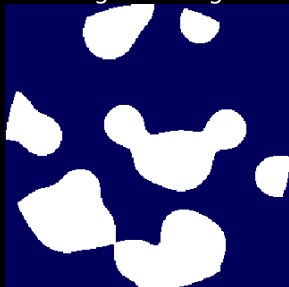
- Impose a sparse gradient

$$\min_{\mathbf{x}} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \lambda \sum_i \|(\nabla \mathbf{x})_i\|_2$$

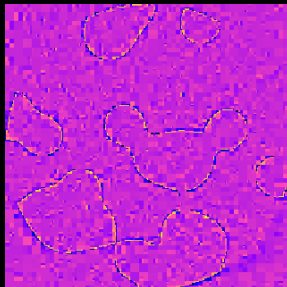
$\ell_{12}$  norm:  $\ell_1$  norm of the gradient magnitude

Sets  $\nabla_x$  and  $\nabla_y$  to zero jointly

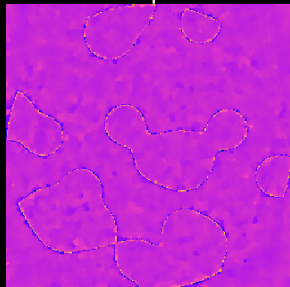
Original image



Error for Haar wavelet



Error for TV penalization

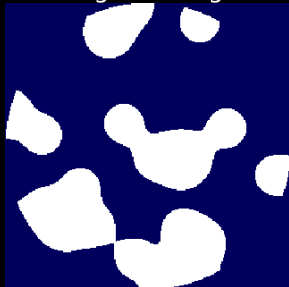


### 3 Total variation + interval

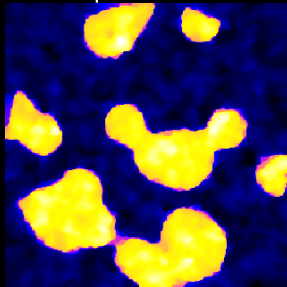
- Bound  $\mathbf{x}$  in  $[0, 1]$

$$\min_{\mathbf{x}} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \lambda \sum_i \|(\nabla \mathbf{x})_i\|_2 + \mathcal{I}([0, 1])$$

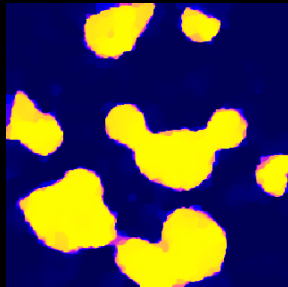
Original image



TV penalization



TV + interval



### 3 Total variation + interval

- Bound  $\mathbf{x}$  in  $[0, 1]$

$$\min_{\mathbf{x}} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A}\mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \lambda \sum_i \|(\nabla \mathbf{x})_i\|_2 + \mathcal{I}([0, 1])$$

Histograms:

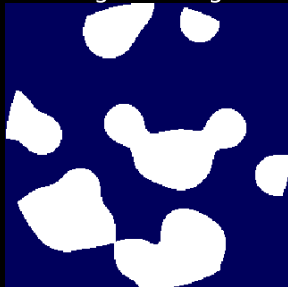


TV

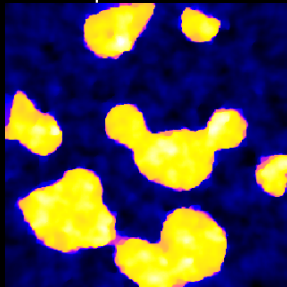
TV + interval

**Rmk:** Constraint does more than folding values outside of the range back in.

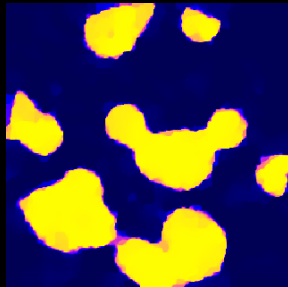
Original image



TV penalization



TV + interval

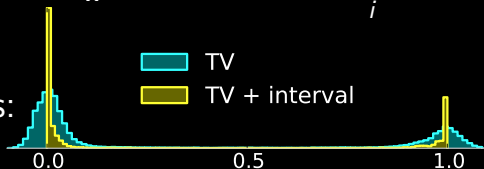


### 3 Total variation + interval

- Bound  $\mathbf{x}$  in  $[0, 1]$

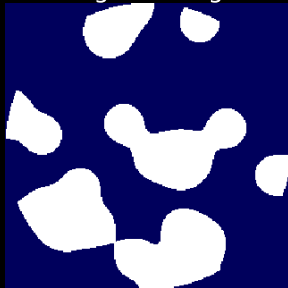
$$\min_{\mathbf{x}} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{Ax}\|_2^2 + \lambda \sum_i \|(\nabla \mathbf{x})_i\|_2 + \mathcal{I}([0, 1])$$

Histograms:

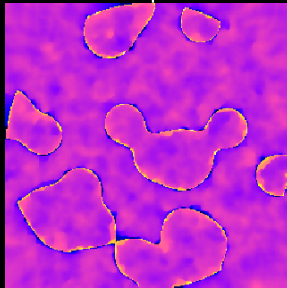


**Rmk:** Constraint does more than folding values outside of the range back in.

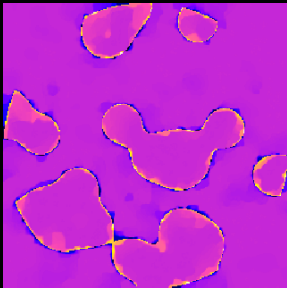
Original image



Error for TV penalization



Error for TV + interval



## Analysis vs synthesis

■ Wavelet basis  $\min \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A} \mathbf{H} \mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \|\mathbf{x}\|_1$

$\mathbf{H}$  Wavelet transform

■ Total variation  $\min \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \|\mathbf{D} \mathbf{x}\|_1$

$\mathbf{D}$  Spatial derivation operator ( $\nabla$ )



## Analysis vs synthesis

■ Wavelet basis  $\min \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A} \mathbf{H} \mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \|\mathbf{x}\|_1$

$\mathbf{H}$  Wavelet transform

**“synthesis” formulation**

■ Total variation  $\min \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \|\mathbf{D} \mathbf{x}\|_1$

$\mathbf{D}$  Spatial derivation operator ( $\nabla$ )

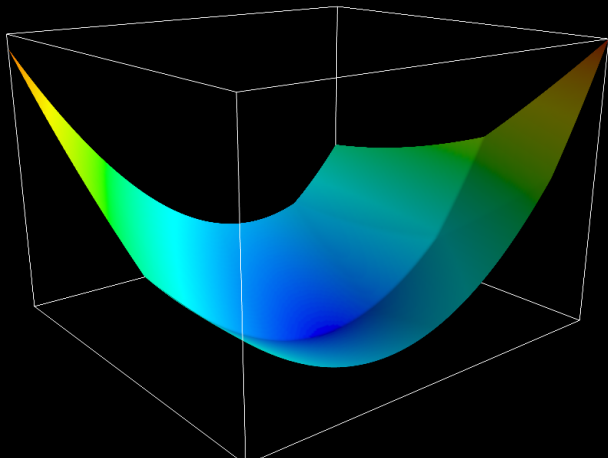
**“analysis” formulation**

Theory and algorithms easier for synthesis

Equivalence *iif*  $\mathbf{D}$  is invertible

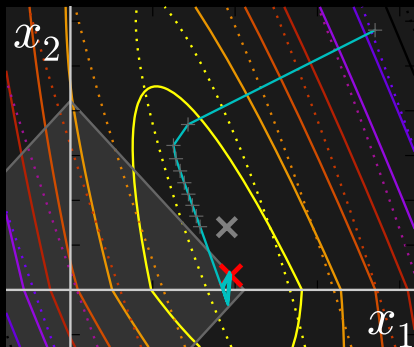
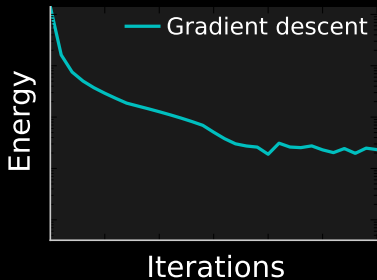
## 4 Optimization algorithms

- Non-smooth optimization  
⇒ “proximal operators”



## 4 Smooth optimization fails!

### Gradient descent



- Smooth optimization fails in non-smooth regions
- These are specifically the spots that interest us

## 4 Iterative Shrinkage-Thresholding Algorithm

- Settings:  $\min f + g$ ;  $f$  smooth,  $g$  non-smooth  
 $f$  and  $g$  convex,  $\nabla f$   $L$ -Lipschitz
- Typically  $f$  is the data fit term, and  $g$  the penalty

ex:    Lasso     $\frac{1}{2\sigma^2} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{A} \mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \frac{1}{\mu} \ell_1(\mathbf{x})$

## 4 Iterative Shrinkage-Thresholding Algorithm

- Settings:  $\min f + g$ ;  $f$  smooth,  $g$  non-smooth  
 $f$  and  $g$  convex,  $\nabla f$   $L$ -Lipschitz

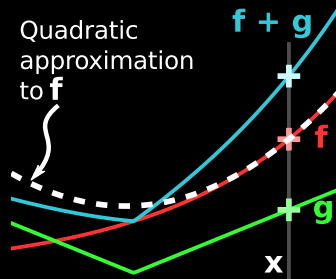
- Minimize successively:  
(quadratic approx of  $f$ ) +  $g$

$$f(\mathbf{x}) < f(\mathbf{y}) + \langle \mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y}, \nabla f(\mathbf{y}) \rangle + \frac{L}{2} \|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y}\|_2^2$$

**Proof:** ■ by convexity  $f(\mathbf{y}) \leq f(\mathbf{x}) + \nabla f(\mathbf{y}) (\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{x})$

■ in the second term:  $\nabla f(\mathbf{y}) \rightarrow \nabla f(\mathbf{x}) + (\nabla f(\mathbf{y}) - \nabla f(\mathbf{x}))$

■ upper bound last term with Lipschitz continuity of  $\nabla f$



$$\mathbf{x}_{k+1} = \underset{\mathbf{x}}{\operatorname{argmin}} \left( g(\mathbf{x}) + \frac{L}{2} \left\| \mathbf{x} - \left( \mathbf{x}_k - \frac{1}{L} \nabla f(\mathbf{x}_k) \right) \right\|_2^2 \right)$$

[Daubechies 2004]

## 4 Iterative Shrinkage-Thresholding Algorithm

**Step 1:** Gradient descent on  $f$

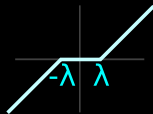
**Step 2:** Proximal operator of  $g$ :

$$\text{prox}_{\lambda g}(\mathbf{x}) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \underset{\mathbf{y}}{\operatorname{argmin}} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \lambda g(\mathbf{y})$$

- Generalization of Euclidean projection on convex set  $\{\mathbf{x}, g(\mathbf{x}) \leq 1\}$

**Rmk:** if  $g$  is the indicator function of a set  $S$ , the proximal operator is the Euclidean projection.

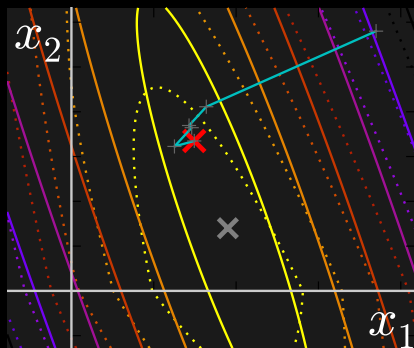
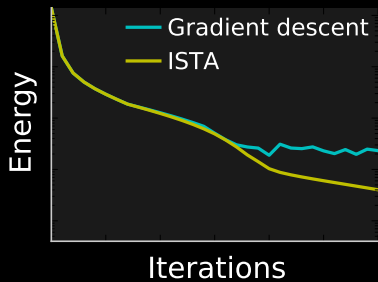
- $\text{prox}_{\lambda \ell_1}(\mathbf{x}) = \text{sign}(\mathbf{x}_i)(\mathbf{x}_i - \lambda)_+$   
“soft thresholding”



$$\mathbf{x}_{k+1} = \underset{\mathbf{x}}{\operatorname{argmin}} \left( g(\mathbf{x}) + \frac{L}{2} \left\| \mathbf{x} - \left( \mathbf{x}_k - \frac{1}{L} \nabla f(\mathbf{x}_k) \right) \right\|_2^2 \right)$$

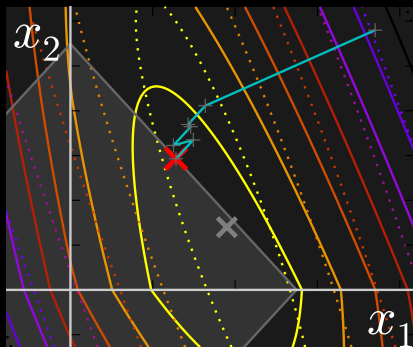
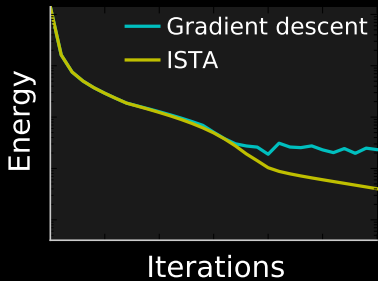
[Daubechies 2004]

## 4 Iterative Shrinkage-Thresholding Algorithm



Gradient descent step

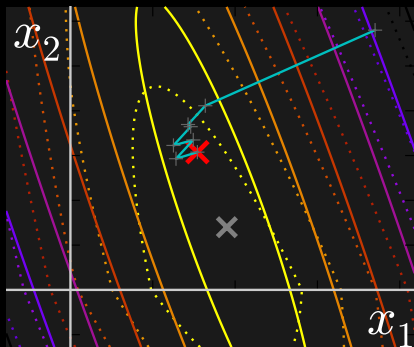
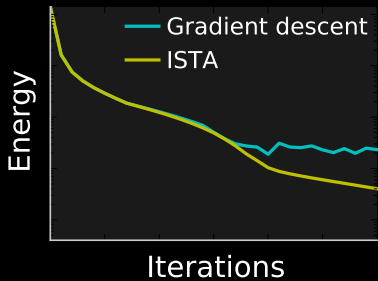
## 4 Iterative Shrinkage-Thresholding Algorithm



Projection on  $\ell_1$  ball

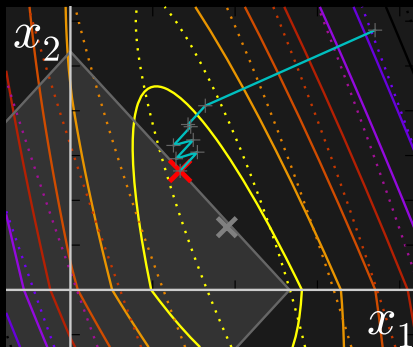
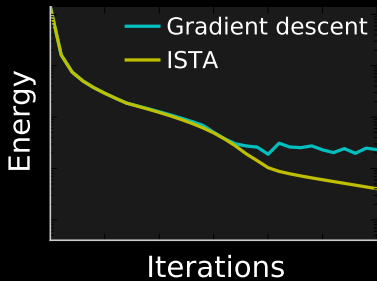


## 4 Iterative Shrinkage-Thresholding Algorithm



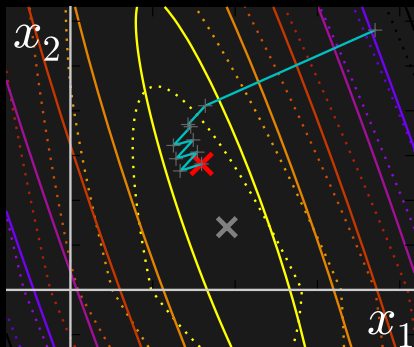
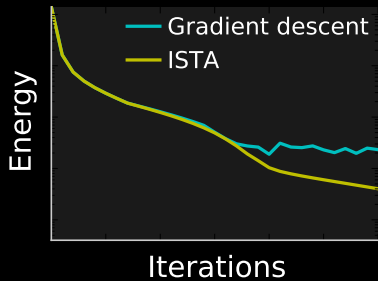
Gradient descent step

## 4 Iterative Shrinkage-Thresholding Algorithm



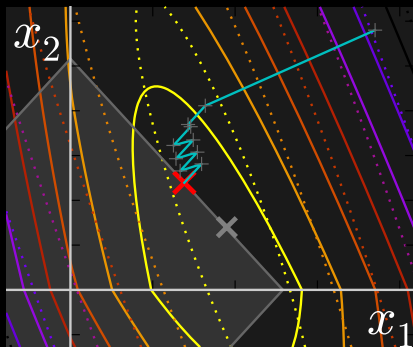
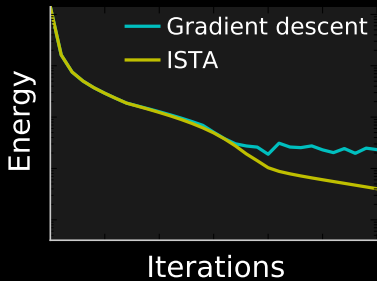
Projection on  $\ell_1$  ball

## 4 Iterative Shrinkage-Thresholding Algorithm



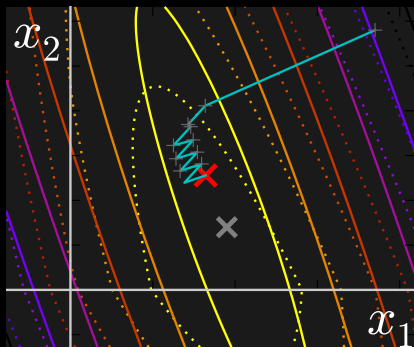
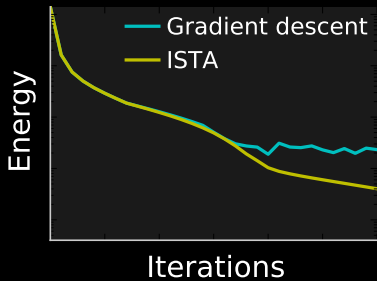
Gradient descent step

## 4 Iterative Shrinkage-Thresholding Algorithm



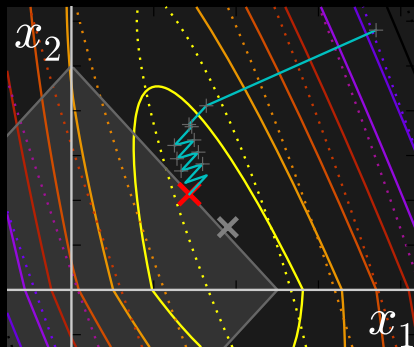
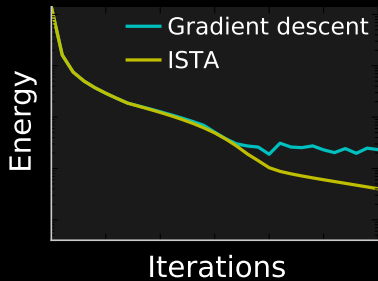
Projection on  $\ell_1$  ball

## 4 Iterative Shrinkage-Thresholding Algorithm



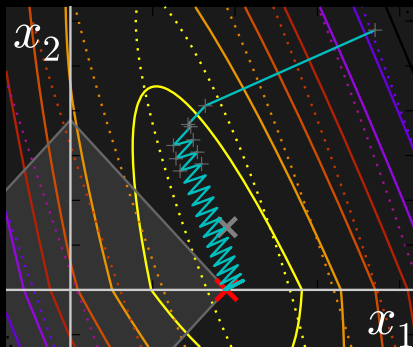
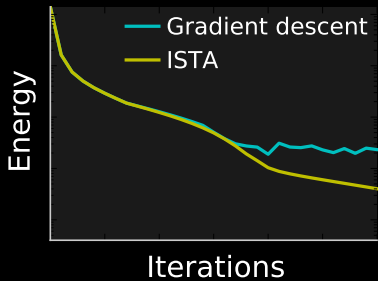
Gradient descent step

## 4 Iterative Shrinkage-Thresholding Algorithm



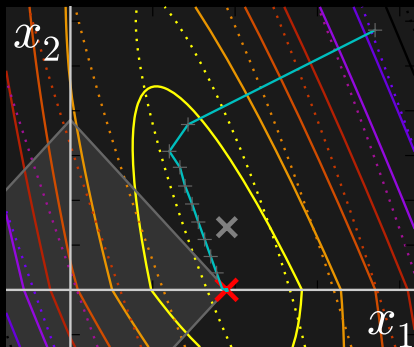
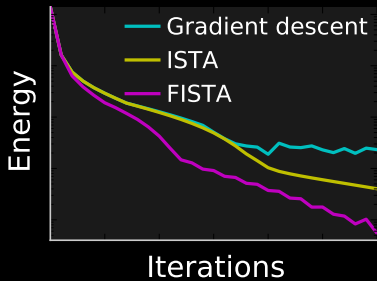
Projection on  $\ell_1$  ball

## 4 Iterative Shrinkage-Thresholding Algorithm



## 4 Fast Iterative Shrinkage-Thresholding Algorithm

### FISTA



■ As with conjugate gradient: add a memory term

$$\begin{aligned} \blacksquare d\mathbf{x}_{k+1} &= d\mathbf{x}_{k+1}^{ISTA} + \frac{t_k - 1}{t_{k+1}} (d\mathbf{x}_k - d\mathbf{x}_{k-1}) \\ t_1 &= 1, \quad t_{k+1} = \frac{1 + \sqrt{1 + 4t_k^2}}{2} \end{aligned}$$

$\Rightarrow \mathcal{O}(k^{-2})$  convergence

[Beck Teboulle 2009]



## 4 Proximal operator for total variation

Reformulate to smooth + non-smooth with a simple projection step and use FISTA: [\[Chambolle 2004\]](#)

$$\text{prox}_{\lambda \text{TV}} \mathbf{x} = \underset{\mathbf{x}}{\text{argmin}} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \lambda \sum_i \|(\nabla \mathbf{x})_i\|_2$$

## 4 Proximal operator for total variation

Reformulate to smooth + non-smooth with a simple projection step and use FISTA: [Chambolle 2004]

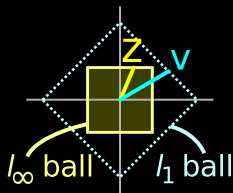
$$\begin{aligned}\text{prox}_{\lambda\text{TV}}\mathbf{x} &= \underset{\mathbf{x}}{\operatorname{argmin}} \|\mathbf{y} - \mathbf{x}\|_2^2 + \lambda \sum_i \|(\nabla\mathbf{x})_i\|_2 \\ &= \underset{\mathbf{z}, \|\mathbf{z}\|_\infty \leq 1}{\operatorname{argmax}} \|\lambda \operatorname{div} \mathbf{z} + \mathbf{y}\|_2^2\end{aligned}$$

**Proof:**

■ “dual norm”:  $\|\mathbf{v}\|_1 = \max_{\|\mathbf{z}\|_\infty \leq 1} \langle \mathbf{v}, \mathbf{z} \rangle$

■ div is the adjoint of  $\nabla$ :  $\langle \nabla\mathbf{v}, \mathbf{z} \rangle = \langle \mathbf{v}, -\operatorname{div} \mathbf{z} \rangle$

■ Swap min and max and solve for  $\mathbf{x}$

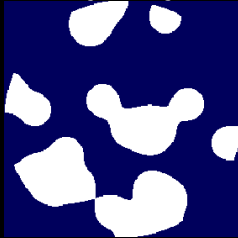


Duality: [Boyd 2004]

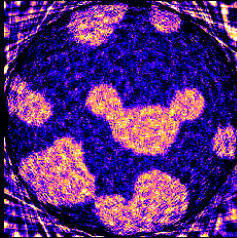
This proof: [Michel 2011]

# Sparsity for compressed tomography reconstruction

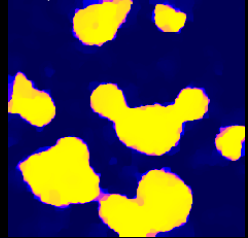
Original image



Non-sparse reconstruction

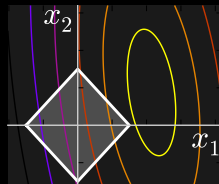


Sparse reconstruction



# Sparsity for compressed tomography reconstruction

- Add penalizations with kinks
- Choice of prior/sparse representation
- Non-smooth optimization (FISTA)



**Further discussion:** choice of prior/parameters

- Minimize reconstruction error from degraded data of gold-standard acquisitions
- Cross-validation: leave half of the projections and minimize projection error of reconstruction

Python code available:

<https://github.com/emmanuelle/tomo-tv>

# Bibliography (1/3)

- [Candes 2006] E. Candès, J. Romberg and T. Tao, *Robust uncertainty principles: Exact signal reconstruction from highly incomplete frequency information*, Trans Inf Theory, (52) 2006
- [Wainwright 2009] M. Wainwright, *Sharp Thresholds for High-Dimensional and Noisy Sparsity Recovery Using  $\ell_1$  constrained quadratic programming (Lasso)*, Trans Inf Theory, (55) 2009
- [Mallat, Zhang 1993] S. Mallat and Z. Zhang, *Matching pursuits with Time-Frequency dictionaries*, Trans Sign Proc (41) 1993
- [Pati, et al 1993] Y. Pati, R. Rezaiifar, P. Krishnaprasad, *Orthogonal matching pursuit: Recursive function approximation with applications to wavelet decomposition*, 27<sup>th</sup> Signals, Systems and Computers Conf 1993

## Bibliography (2/3)

- [Chen, Donoho, Saunders 1998] S. Chen, D. Donoho, M. Saunders, *Atomic decomposition by basis pursuit*, SIAM J Sci Computing (20) 1998
- [Tibshirani 1996] R. Tibshirani, *Regression shrinkage and selection via the lasso*, J Roy Stat Soc B, 1996
- [Gribonval 2011] R. Gribonval, *Should penalized least squares regression be interpreted as Maximum A Posteriori estimation?*, Trans Sig Proc, (59) 2011
- [Daubechies 2004] I. Daubechies, M. Defrise, C. De Mol, *An iterative thresholding algorithm for linear inverse problems with a sparsity constraint*, Comm Pure Appl Math, (57) 2004

## Bibliography (2/3)

- [Beck Teboulle 2009], A. Beck and M. Teboulle, *A fast iterative shrinkage-thresholding algorithm for linear inverse problems*, SIAM J Imaging Sciences, (2) 2009
- [Chambolle 2004], A. Chambolle, *An algorithm for total variation minimization and applications*, J Math imag vision, (20) 2004
- [Boyd 2004], S. Boyd and L. Vandenberghe, *Convex Optimization*, Cambridge University Press 2004  
— **Reference on convex optimization and duality**
- [Michel 2011], V. Michel *et al.*, *Total variation regularization for fMRI-based prediction of behaviour*, Trans Med Imag (30) 2011  
— **Proof of TV reformulation: appendix C**