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X-ray Imaging Polarimetry with a 2.5 um Pixel CMOS Sensor for Visible Light at Room Temperature

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We demonstrate that a CMOS pixel sensor with a pixel size of 2.5 μ m can work as a photo-electron tracking X-ray polarimeter. Although it is designed for visible light by GPixel Inc., we succeed in detecting X-ray photons with an energy res- olution of 176 eV @5.9 keV (FWHM) at room temperature. This performance is remarkable considering that conventional X-ray CCD detectors need to be cooled down to $-100\,^{\circ}$ C to detect X-rays in the photon counting mode. We irradiate a polarized X-ray beam to this CMOS sensor with various rotation angles in SPring-8, the synchrotron radiation facility in Japan, to evaluate its polarimetry sensitivity. Modulation factors obtained from the number ratio of the double pixel events with different split directions are 7.63 \pm 0.07% and 15.5 \pm 0.4% at 12.4 keV and 24.8keV, respectively. These results show this CMOS sensor can measure X-ray polarization with the highest spatial resolution ever. We discuss possible applications for future missions of this type of sensors.

Topic

Future missions

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