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Automatically Process Your Operations in Bulk With Coroutines

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About me

- Professional software engineer
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Presentation

- The Problem
- The Idea
- Coroutines in C++20
- The Implementation
- Benchmark

Presentation

Code on github: github.com/MakersF/cppcon-2021-corobatch

Bulk operations tend to be better than single operations

Bulk operation: processing multiple actions or data (a batch) at once

- networking
- file I/O
- memory allocation
- GPU draw calls
- ...

Common property:

cost = FixedCost + O(#operation/data)

Networking latency

round trip ≫ data transfer

Write disk

disk seek >> data write

DB table scan

loading data in memory \gg conditions to check per row

What's better?

Multiple aspect

- throughput
- latency
- others: rate limit, cost, ...

Different properties are important in different situations

Use case:

"Send a notification to a group of users, respecting their preferences"

Bulk operations

- fetching preferences
- sending notifications

Signature

```
vector<UserPrefs> getUserPrefs(vector<UserId> userIds);
vector<bool> sendNotifs(vector<EmailAddress> addresses);
```

```
for(const User& user : users) {
  const UserPrefs prefs = getUserPrefs({user.id}).at(0);
  if (prefs.wantsEmailNotification) {
    sendNotifs({prefs.notificationEmail});
  }
}
```

But batching is important!

```
remove_if(preferences.begin(), preference.end(),
      [](auto& pref) { return !pref.wantsEmailNotification;});
```

```
vector<UserId> userIds;
transform(users.begin(), users.end(),
          back_inserter(userIds),
          [](auto& user) { return user.id; });
vector<UserPrefs> preferences = getUserPrefs(userIds);
remove_if(preferences.begin(), preference.end(),
          [](auto& pref) { return !pref.wantsEmailNotification;});
vector<EmailAddress> emails;
transform(preferences.begin(), preference.end(),
          back_inserter(emails),
          [](auto& pref) { return pref.notificationEmail; });
sendNotification(emails);
```

Readability

Code is different

- requires effort
- extra memory
- cannot use const

Benchmark

Simulation

- 10ms delay per call
- 50us delay per item
- 100 users
- 50 emails to send

Benchmark

Test	Time (us)	Iterations	Baseline
No Batching	1'552'542	13	49.99
Manual Batching	31'055	492	-

A 50x difference

Questions?

Can we keep

- the readability of the first version, and
- the batching behaviour of the second?

What if we could gather all the parameters passed to the function?

```
for(const User& user : users) {
  const UserPrefs prefs = getUserPrefs({user.id}).at(0);
  if (prefs.wantsEmailNotification) {
    sendNotifs({prefs.notificationEmail});
  }
}
```

Imagine we have 4 users

```
for(const User& user : users) {
  const UserPrefs prefs = getUserPrefs({user.id}).at(0);
  if (prefs.wantsEmailNotification) {
    sendNotifs({prefs.notificationEmail});
  }
}
```

```
for(user : users) {
  prefs = getUserPrefs(user.id);
  if (prefs.notify) {
    sendNotification(prefs.email);
  }
}
```

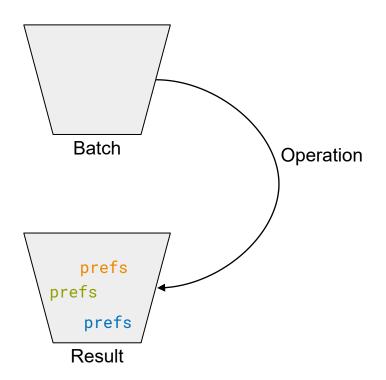
```
User 1
User 2
User 3
User n
```

```
prefs = getUserPrefs(user.id);
if (prefs.notify) {
  sendNotification(prefs.email);
prefs = getUserPrefs(user.id);
if (prefs.notify) {
  sendNotification(prefs.email);
prefs = getUserPrefs(user.id);
if (prefs.notify) {
  sendNotification(prefs.email);
```

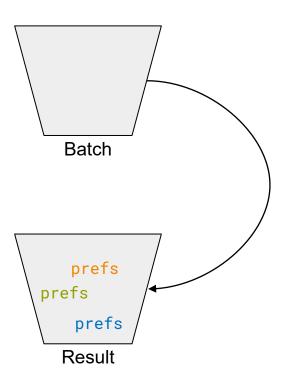
•••

```
prefs = getUserPrefs(user.id);
if (prefs.notify) {
   sendNotification(prefs.email);
}
```

```
prefs = getUserPrefs(user.id);
              if (prefs.notify) {
User 1
                sendNotification(prefs.email);
              prefs = getUserPrefs(user.id);
              if (prefs.notify) {
User 2
                sendNotification(prefs.email);
              prefs = getUserPrefs(user.id);
              if (prefs.notify) {
User 3
                sendNotification(prefs.email);
```



```
prefs = getUserPrefs(user.id);
              if (prefs.notify) {
User 1
                sendNotification(prefs.email);
              prefs = getUserPrefs(user.id);
              if (prefs.notify) {
User 2
                sendNotification(prefs.email);
              prefs = getUserPrefs(user.id);
              if (prefs.notify) {
User 3
                sendNotification(prefs.email);
```



- 1. Execute until a batch operation
- 2. Record the argument, and stop
- 3. If not enough arguments, go to point 1
- 4. Execute the batch operation
- 5. Resume the stopped executions with the results

What do we need?

- Suspend execution
- Resume execution

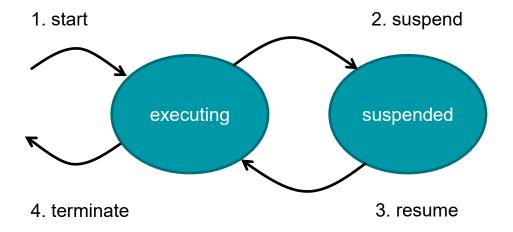
Coroutines allow us to do exactly that

Questions?

Coroutines

Coroutines

Resumable functions



Coroutines in C++

How does a coroutine look like?

```
task my_coro() {
   cout << "foo begin\n";
   co_await async_operation();
   co_return;
}</pre>
```

Coroutines in C++

To be a coroutine a function must

- use one of: co_await, co_yield and co_return
- return a type which satisfies the requirements for coroutines

Coroutines in C++ - promise

Requirements for the return type

- Must contain a nested type called promise_type
- return_type::promise_type must implement several functions

The body is rewritten

```
promise_type promise;
 co_await promise.initial_suspend();
 try {
    [function-body]
 } catch (...) {
   promise.unhandled_exception();
final_suspend:
 co_await promise.final_suspend();
```

Let's build a valid coroutine return type

```
struct task {
  struct promise_type {

  };
};
```

When my_coro is invoked, the compiler

- 1. creates the coroutine state
- 2. instantiates task::promise_type
- 3. calls get_return_object

```
struct task {
  struct promise_type {
    task get_return_object();
  };
};
```

It calls initial_suspend() and co_awaits the result

```
struct task {
  struct promise_type {
    task get_return_object();
    Awaitable initial_suspend();
};
```

What happens in co_await awaitable?

The compiler inserts calls to awaitable methods

```
struct Awaitable {
};
```

```
First, it calls await_ready()
true → immediately resumes the coroutine
false → suspends the coroutine
struct Awaitable {
  bool await_ready();
```

After suspending the coroutine, it calls await_suspend()

Should schedule the coroutine to be resumed

```
struct Awaitable {
  bool await_ready();
  auto await_suspend(std::coroutine_handle<>);
};
```

Once resumed, it calls await_resume()

The co_await expression evaluates to the returned object

```
struct Awaitable {
  bool await_ready();
  auto await_suspend(std::coroutine_handle<>);
  T await_resume();
};
```

What is the std::coroutine_handle we saw a few times?

A handle

- a not owning pointer
- controls the coroutine

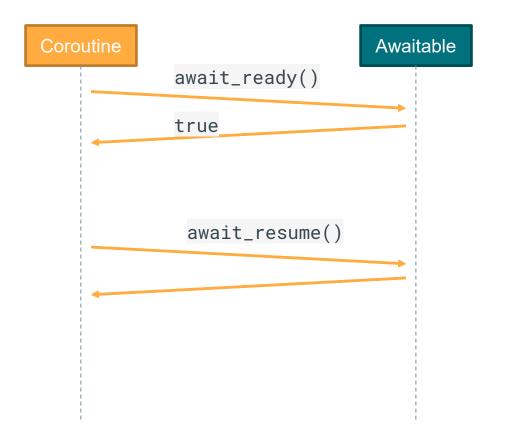
```
    std::coroutine_handle<> methods
    resume(): resume the associated coroutine
    destroy(): destroy the associated coroutine
```

```
struct coroutine_handle<> {
  void resume();
  void destroy();
};
```

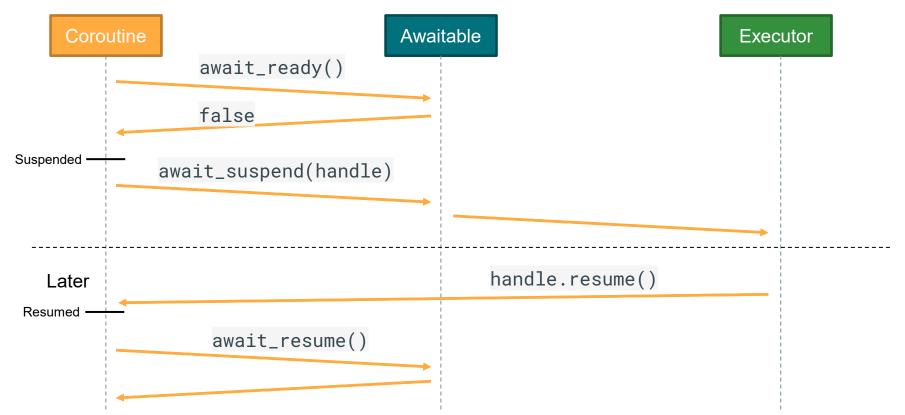
```
std::coroutine_handleepromise_type> additional methods
```

- promise(): returns the associated promise
- from_promise(): creates a handle from the promise

```
struct coroutine_handlepromise_type> {
  void resume();
  void destroy();
  promise_type& promise();
  static coroutine_handlepromise_type> from_promise(promise_type&);
};
```







Back to the promise type!

```
struct task {
  struct promise_type {
    task get_return_object();
    Awaitable initial_suspend();
};
```

How to return values

```
co_return expr; → return_value(expr)
```

```
struct task {
  struct promise_type {
    task get_return_object();
    Awaitable initial_suspend();
    void return_value(T);
};
```

```
co_return; → return_void()
```

```
struct task {
  struct promise_type {
    task get_return_object();
    Awaitable initial_suspend();
    void return_void();
};
```

Uncaught exceptions → uncaught_exception()

```
struct task {
  struct promise_type {
    task get_return_object();
    Awaitable initial_suspend();
    void return_void();
    void uncaught_exception();
};
```

Finally, final_suspend() is called and co_awaited

```
struct task {
  struct promise_type {
    task get_return_object();
    Awaitable initial_suspend();
    void return_void();
    void uncaught_exception();
    Awaitable final_suspend() noexcept;
  };
};
```

Coroutines in C++

We know everything to implement the idea!

Questions?

We learned how to

- suspend execution
- resume execution

- 1. Transform the loop body in a coroutine
- 2. Use await to interrupt execution, store the argument
- 3. Execute the batch when ready
- 4. Resume execution with the result

Before

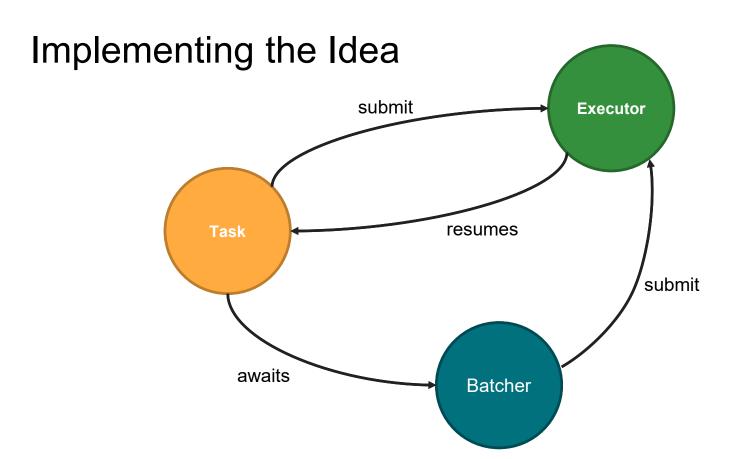
```
for(const User& user : users) {
  const UserPrefs prefs = getUserPrefs({user.id}).at(0);
  if (prefs.wantsEmailNotification) {
    sendNotifs({prefs.notificationEmail});
  }
}
```

After

```
task sendEmail(const User& user) {
  const UserPrefs prefs = co_await getUserPrefs(user.id);
  if (prefs.wantsEmailNotification) {
    co_await sendNotifs(prefs.notificationEmail);
  }
}
```

We'll need

- 1. a task
- 2. an executor
- 3. a batcher



```
Executor e;
Batcher<...> getUserPrefs{...};
Batcher<...> sendNotifs{...};
auto sendEmail = [&](const User& user) -> task {
for(auto& user : users) {
  e.submit(sendEmail(user));
e.run_available();
```

Let's look at the task

```
struct task {
};
```

It must have a promise_type

```
struct task {
  struct promise_type { ... };
  using Handle = coroutine_handlepromise_type>
```

Similar to a unique_ptr
Owns the coroutine_handle

```
struct task {
  struct promise_type { ... };
  using Handle = coroutine_handlepromise_type>
  explicit task(Handle ptr) : ptr_(ptr) {}
  ...

private:
  Handle ptr_;
};
```

It's only moveable

```
struct task {
    ...

task(const task&) = delete;
task(task&& t) noexcept
    : ptr_(exchange(t.ptr_, nullptr)) {}

...
};
```

Has RAII semantic

```
struct task {
    ...
    ~task() {
        if (ptr_) ptr_.destroy();
    }
    ...
};
```

Exposes the coroutine_handle

```
struct task {
    ...

Handle release() && {
    return exchange(ptr_, nullptr);
    }
};
```

Let's look at the promise_type

```
struct task::promise_type {
};
```

We immediately return when the coroutine is called

```
struct task::promise_type {
  suspend_always initial_suspend() { return {}; }
};
```

We don't suspend when the coroutine terminates

```
struct task::promise_type {
  suspend_always initial_suspend() { return {}; }
  suspend_never final_suspend() noexcept { return {}; }
};
```

Ignore exceptions

```
struct task::promise_type {
  suspend_always initial_suspend() { return {}; }
  suspend_never final_suspend() noexcept { return {}; }
  void unhandled_exception() { terminate(); }
};
```

We do nothing when we return

```
struct task::promise_type {
  suspend_always initial_suspend() { return {}; }
  suspend_never final_suspend() noexcept { return {}; }
  void unhandled_exception() { terminate(); }
  void return_void() {}
};
```

Let's look at how to implement get_return_object()

```
struct task::promise_type {
  suspend_always initial_suspend() { return {}; }
  suspend_never final_suspend() noexcept { return {}; }
  void unhandled_exception() { terminate(); }
  void return_void() {}
  task get_return_object();
};
```

A reminder

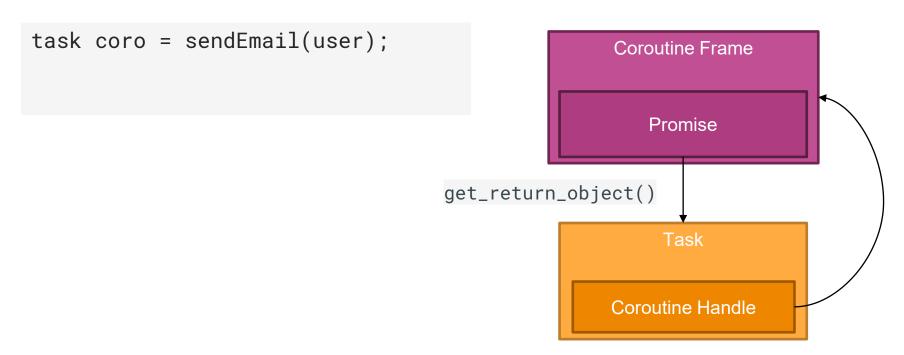
```
struct std::coroutine_handlepromise_type> {
  void resume();
  void destroy();
  promise_type & promise();
  static coroutine_handlepromise_type> from_promise(promise_type&);
};
```

```
task get_return_object() {
  Handle handle = Handle::from_promise(*this);
  return task(handle);
}
```

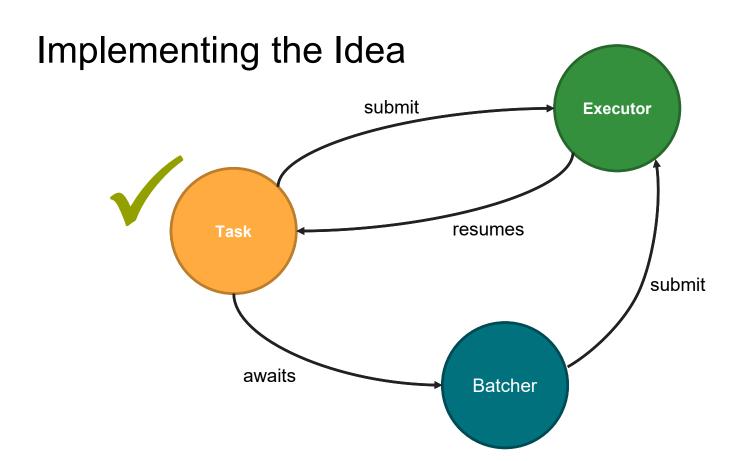
Our task is complete!

We can now write

```
task sendEmail(const User& user) {
   co_return;
}
```



Questions?



We need something to execute the tasks

We need something to execute the tasks

Let's create an Executor

```
struct Executor {
};
```

Supports

- submit coroutines
- execute pending coroutines

Stores pending coroutine_handles

```
struct Executor {

deque<coroutine_handle<>> pending_;
};
```

Submitting coroutines

```
struct Executor {
  deque<coroutine_handle<>> pending_;
```

Can submit a task

```
struct Executor {
 void submit(task t) {
    auto handle = move(t).release();
    pending_.push_back(handle);
 deque<coroutine_handle<>> pending_;
```

And arbitrary coroutines

```
struct Executor {
 void submit(task t) {
    auto handle = move(t).release();
    pending_.push_back(handle);
 void submit(vector<coroutine_handle<>> coros) {
    // insert at the end
  deque<coroutine_handle<>> pending_;
```

Executing coroutines

```
struct Executor {
  deque<coroutine_handle<>> pending_;
```

Pull the first coroutine

```
struct Executor {
  optional<coroutine_handle<>> pop_next_coro() {
    if( pending_.empty() ) return nullopt;
    auto first = pending_.front();
    pending_.pop_front();
    return first;
  deque<coroutine_handle<>> pending_;
```

Pull the first coroutine

```
struct Executor {
 optional<coroutine_handle<>> pop_next_coro();
 void run_available() {
   for(auto next = pop_next_coro(); next; next = pop_next_coro()) {
     next->resume();
 deque<coroutine_handle<>> pending_;
```

Summary

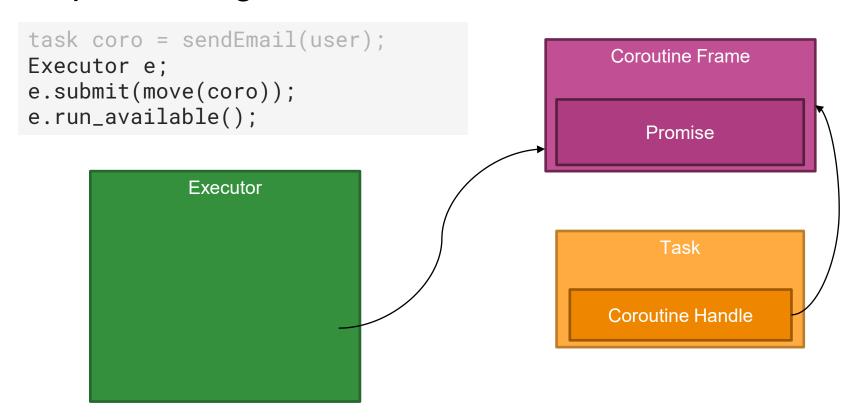
```
struct Executor {
  void submit(task t);
  void submit(vector<coroutine_handle<>> coros);

  optional<coroutine_handle<>> pop_next_coro();
  void run_available();
};
```

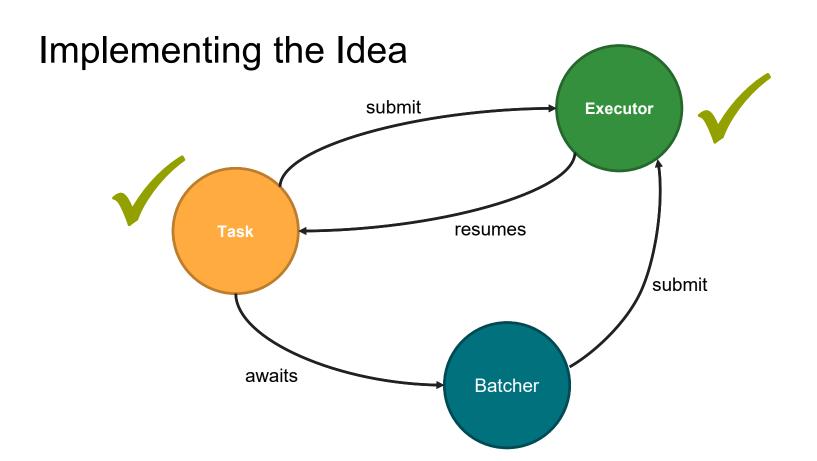
Our Executor is complete!

We can now write

```
Executor e;
e.submit(sendEmail(user));
e.run_available();
```



Questions?



Let's support co_await now!

```
task sendEmail(const User& user) {
  const UserPrefs prefs = co_await getUserPrefs(user.id);
}
```

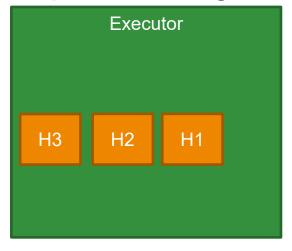
```
co_await must be called on an awaitable
```

getUserPrefs(user.id) must return an awaitable

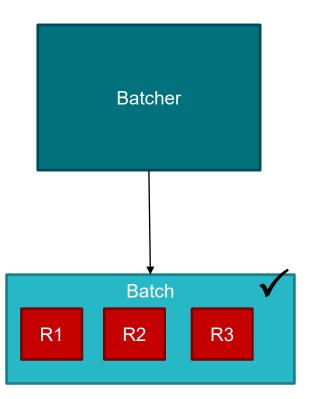
```
task sendEmail(const User& user) {
  const UserPrefs prefs = co_await getUserPrefs(user.id);
}
```

Let's create a wrapper type: Batcher

- intercepts the calls to getUserPrefs(user.id)
- stores the arguments
- executes the function
- resumes the coroutines



Executing



Needs to know the input and return type

```
template < class T, class R>
struct Batcher {

};
```

Stores

the executor

```
template < class T, class R>
struct Batcher {
    ...
    Executor& ex_;
};
```

Stores

- the executor
- the function

```
template < class T, class R>
struct Batcher {
    ...
    Executor& ex_;
    function < vector < R > (vector < T > ) > op_;
}:
```

Stores

- the executor
- the function and whether to execute it

```
template<class T, class R>
struct Batcher {
    ...
    Executor& ex_;
    function<vector<R>(vector<T>)> op_;
    function<bool(const vector<T>&)> should_exec_;
}:
```

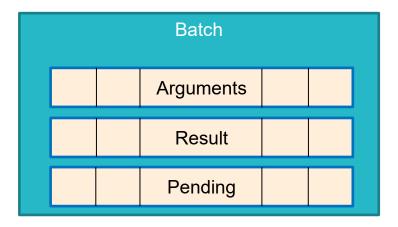
Stores

- the executor
- the function and whether to execute it
- the current batch

```
template < class T, class R>
struct Batcher {
    ...
    Executor& ex_;
    function < vector < R > (vector < T > ) > op_;
    function < bool(const vector < T > & ) > should_exec_;
    struct Batch { ... };
    shared_ptr < Batch > current_batch_;
};
```

Let's look at the Batch

```
struct Batcher::Batch {
};
```

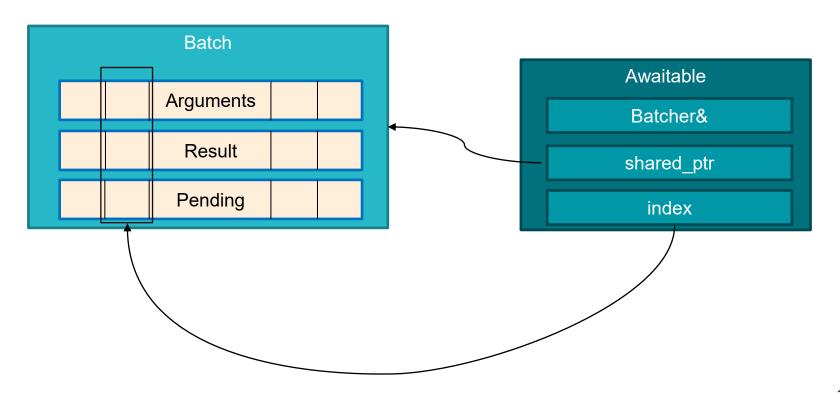


```
struct Batcher::Batch {
  vector<T> arguments;
  vector<R> result;
  vector<coroutine_handle<>> pending;
};
```

Batcher is callable and returns an awaitable object

```
template < class T, class R >
struct Batcher {
   struct Awaitable { ... };

   Awaitable operator()(T arg);
   ...
} ...
```



```
struct Batcher::Awaitable {

   Batcher& batcher_;
   shared_ptr<Batch> batch_;
   size_t index_ = -1;
};
```

How is the Awaitable constructed?

```
template < class T, class R>
struct Batcher {

Awaitable operator()(T arg) {
   current_batch_->args.push_back(arg);
   size_t index = current_batch_->args_.size() - 1;
   return Awaitable {*this, current_batch_, index};
};

...
};
```

Awaitable needs to implement the special methods

Let's do that!

Check if it's ready

```
struct Batcher::Awaitable {
  bool await_ready() {
    return batcher_.maybe_execute();
  }
}
```

Get the result once ready

```
struct Batcher::Awaitable {
  bool await_ready();
  R await_resume() {
    return batch_->results.at(index_);
  }
}
```

Suspend

```
struct Batcher::Awaitable {
  bool await_ready();
  R await_resume();
  void await_suspend(coroutine_handle<> h) {
    batch_->pending_.push_back(h);
  }
...
};
```

Suspend

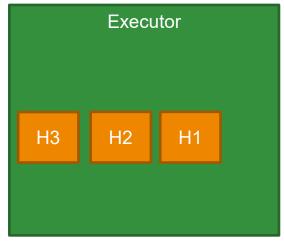
```
struct Batcher::Awaitable {
  bool await_ready();
  R await_resume();
  coroutine_handle<> await_suspend(coroutine_handle<> h) {
    batch_->pending_.push_back(h);
    auto maybe_coro = batch_.executor_.pop_next_coro();
    return maybe_coro.value_or(std::noop_coroutine());
}
...
};
```

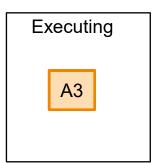
Only thing left: maybe_execute()

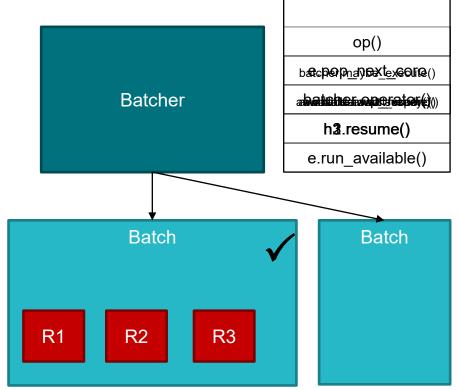
```
template<class T, class R>
struct Batcher {
  bool maybe_execute() {
    if( !should_exec_(batch_->args) ) return false;
    batch_->results = op_(batch_->args);
    executor_.submit(batch_->pending);
    batch_ = make_shared<Batch>();
    return true;
}
```

Batcher is complete!

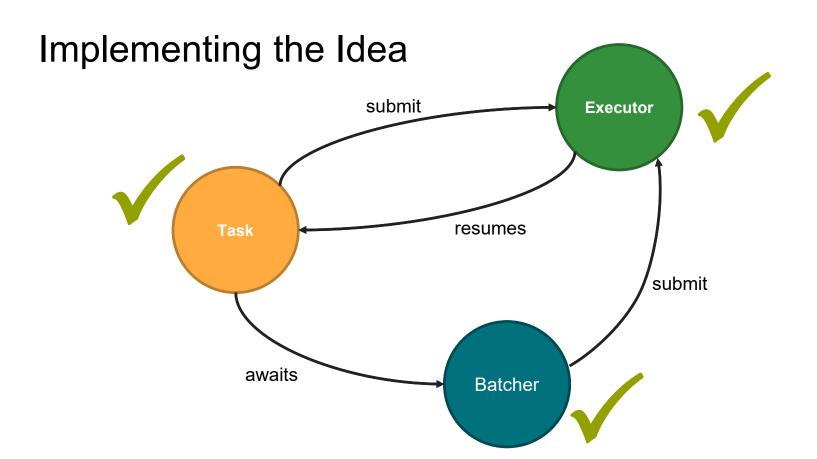
```
Executor e;
Batcher<User, UserPref> getPrefs{e, getUserPrefs, size_eq(10)};
auto sendEmail = [&](const User& user) -> task {
  const UserPrefs prefs = co_await getPrefs(user.id);
};
```







Stack



Questions?

Putting all together

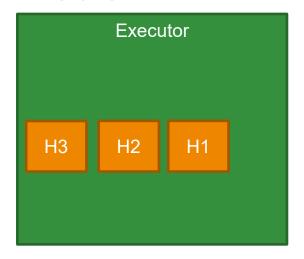
Putting all together

```
Executor e;
Batcher<...> getUserPrefs{...};
Batcher<...> sendNotifs{...};
auto sendEmail = [&](const User& user) -> task {
 const UserPrefs prefs = co_await getUserPrefs(user.id);
 if (prefs.wantsEmailNotification) {
   co_await sendNotifs(prefs.notificationEmail);
for(auto& user : users) {
  e.submit(sendEmail(user));
e.run_available();
```

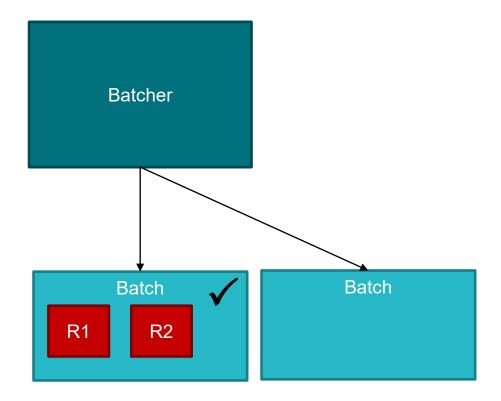
What if we finish the available coroutines before completing?

Example

- Batching with no limit
- Batching limit not a perfect divisor of the initial vector



Executing



Result

- the executor has no pending coroutines
- the batch has pending coroutines

Some tasks do not complete

Force the batch execution

```
template<class T, class R>
struct Batcher {
  bool maybe_execute(bool force = false) {
    bool exec = force || should_exec_(batch_->args);
    if( !exec ) return false;
    batch_->results = op_(batch_->args);
    executor_.submit(batch_->pending);
    batch_ = make_shared<Batch>();
    return true:
```

When do we stop calling force?

When do we stop calling force?

When all tasks completed

Let's keep track of the tasks

```
struct Executor {
  void submit(task t) {
    counter_++;
    auto handle = move(t).release();
    handle.promise().counter_ = &counter_;
    pending_.push_back(handle);
}

size_t counter_ = 0;
};
```

Decrease the counter when a task completes

```
struct task::promise_type {
  void return_void() {
    *counter -= 1;
  }
  size_t* counter_;
};
```

Return whether all tasks completed

```
struct Executor {
  bool run_available() {
    for(auto next = pop_next_coro(); next; next = pop_next_coro()) {
       next.resume();
    }
    return counter_ == 0;
}
```

```
Executor e;
Batcher<...> getUserPrefs{...};
Batcher<...> sendNotifs{...};
auto sendEmail = [&](const User& user) -> task {...};
for(auto& user : users) {
  e.submit(sendEmail(user));
while(e.run_available()) {
  getUserPrefs.maybe_execute(true);
  sendNotifs.maybe_execute(true);
```

We are calling maybe_execute() on every batcher

It's unnecessary

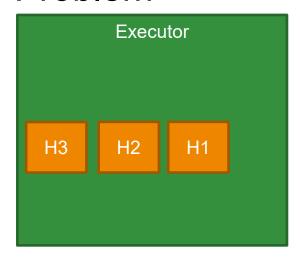
Execute only the first maybe_execute()

Skip the execution if no args

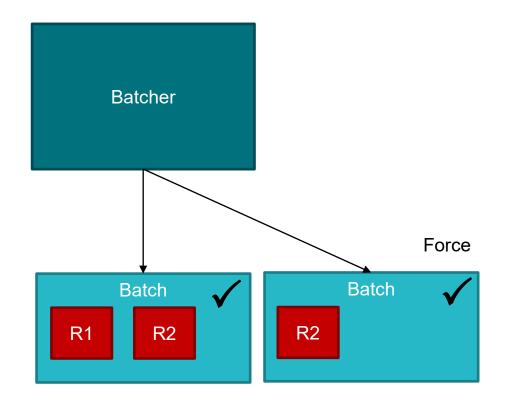
```
template<class T, class R>
struct Batcher {
  bool maybe_execute(bool force = false) {
    bool exec = force || should_exec_(batch_->args);
    if( !exec || batch_->args.empty() ) return false;
    batch_->results = op_(batch_->args);
    executor_.submit(batch_->pending);
    batch_ = make_shared<Batch>();
    return true;
```

Execute only the first Batcher

```
while(e.run_available()) {
   getUserPrefs.maybe_execute(true) ||
    sendNotifs.maybe_execute(true);
}
```



Executing



Final Solution

```
Executor e;
Batcher<...> getUserPrefs{...};
Batcher<...> sendNotifs{...};
auto sendEmail = [&](const User& user) -> task {
 const UserPrefs prefs = co_await getUserPrefs(user.id);
 if (prefs.wantsEmailNotification) {
   co_await sendNotifs(prefs.notificationEmail);
for(auto& user : users) { e.submit(sendEmail(user)); }
run_to_completion(e, getUserPrefs, sendNotifs);
```

Questions?

We implemented the task, an executor and a Batcher with coroutines We can now automatically batch our operations

How does it compare to manual batching?

Manual Batching

```
for(const User& user : users) {
  const UserPrefs prefs =
    getUserPrefs({user.id}).at(0);
  if (prefs.wantsEmailNotification) {
    sendNotifs({prefs.notificationEmail});
  }
}
```

```
vector<UserId> userIds;
transform(users.begin(), users.end(),
  back_inserter(userIds),
  [](auto& user) { return user.id; });
vector<UserPrefs> preferences =
  getUserPrefs(userIds);
remove_if(preferences.begin(),
  preference.end(),
  [](auto& pref) {
    return !pref.wantsEmailNotification;});
vector<EmailAddress> emails:
transform(preferences.begin(),
  preference.end(),
  back_inserter(emails),
  [](auto& pref) {
    return pref.notificationEmail; });
sendNotification(emails);
```

Coro Batching

```
for(const User& user : users) {
  const UserPrefs prefs =
    getUserPrefs({user.id}).at(0);
  if (prefs.wantsEmailNotification) {
    sendNotifs({prefs.notificationEmail});
  }
}
```

```
Executor e:
Batcher<...> getUserPrefs{...};
Batcher<...> sendNotifs{...};
auto sendEmail = [&](const User& user)->task {
  const UserPrefs prefs =
    co_await getUserPrefs(user.id);
  if (prefs.wantsEmailNotification) {
    co_await sendNotifs(
      prefs.notificationEmail);
for(auto& user : users) {
  e.submit(sendEmail(user));
run_to_completion(e, getUserPrefs, sendNotifs);
```

Is performance comparable?

Simulation

- 10 ms delay per call
- 50 us delay per item processed (100 users, 50 email sent)

Test	Time (us)	Iterations	Baseline
No Batching	1'552'542	13	49.99
Manual Batching	31'055	492	-
Coro Batching	27'748	564	0.89

Overhead?

Simulation without delays

Test	Time (ns)	Iterations	Baseline
No Batching	17'004	446'422	1.61
Manual Batching	10'586	655'351	-
Coro Batching	30'490	224'300	2.88

Overhead?

Simulation without delays

Test	Time (ns)	Iterations	Baseline
No Batching	17'004	446'422	1.61
Manual Batching	10'586	655'351	-
Coro Batching	30'490	224'300	2.88
Coro Batching (Opt)	12'546	548'914	1.18

Conclusion

Conclusion

A new point on the performance ← readability trade-off

Learned

- Main customization points of coroutines
- Coroutines can be used for more than just async programming
- Coroutines are powerful, but at times complicated

Conclusion

Find the full implementation at

github.com/MakersF/cppcon-2021-corobatch

Library exploring the concept

github.com/MakersF/corobatch

Thank you!

Useful Material

- Lewis Baker <u>lewissbaker.github.io/</u>
- Dawid Pilarski <u>blog.panicsoftware.com</u>
- Gor Nishanov "Nano-coroutines to the Rescue!"