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Authors: Michael B. McLaughlin <mikebmcl@gmail.com>

Herb Sutter <hsutter@microsoft.com>
Jason Zink <jzink\_1@yahoo.com>

# A Proposal to Add 2D Graphics Rendering and Display to C++

# Revision 1

# I. Table of Contents

l.	Ί	able of Contents	1
II.	Ir	ntroduction	2
III.	N	Notivation and Scope	2
IV.	Ir	mpact on the Standard	3
V.	D	Design Decisions	3
	A.	Leveraging the Cairo API	4
		1. Reasoning	4
		2. Alternative: Synthesize a New API	4
		3. Alternative: Derive an API from the HTML5 canvas API and SVG Specification	5
		4. Implementer Decisions	5
	B.	Native Handles	5
		1. Reasoning	5
		2. Alternative: Codify Particular Platforms	5
		3. Alternative: Abstract Platform Groups	6
		4. Consequences	6
		5. Implementer Decisions	7
(	C.	Merger of the context type's functionality into the surface type	7
		1. Reasoning	7
		2. Alternative: Retain Separate context and surface Types	8
		3. Alternative: Have context be a Nested Child of surface	9

	4. Consequences	9
	5. Implementer Decisions	9
]	D. Use of move-only semantics and immutability	9
	1. Reasoning	9
	2. Alternative: Value Semantics	11
	3. Immutability and Move-Only Types	12
	4. Consequences	13
	5. Implementer Decisions	13
VI.	Mechanical Transformation Rules	13
VII.	Technical Specifications	14
1	A. <drawing> header synopsis</drawing>	14
VIII	I. Acknowledgments	30
IX.	Revision History	30
X.	References	31

## **II. Introduction**

The goal of this proposal is to define a 2D drawing API for the C++ programming language. This proposal is a revision of N3888, which was presented at the meeting of SG13 at the Issaquah meeting in February 2014. This proposal aims to provide a clean, modern C++ API that builds on the N3888 API and incorporates the feedback on it. [ *Note*: The N3888 API was a mechanical transformation of the <u>cairo graphics library</u>. Cairo is a comprehensive, <u>crossplatform</u>, <u>widely-used</u>, <u>mature</u> 2D graphics library written in C with an object-oriented style. – *end note* ]

# III. Motivation and Scope

Computer graphics first appeared in the 1950s. The first recognized video game, *Spacewar*, was created in 1961. Today, computer graphics are pervasive in modern life, and are even replacing console-style I/O for basic user interaction on many platforms. For example, a simple cout << "Hello, world!" statement doesn't do anything useful on many tablets and smartphones. We feel that C++ programmers should have a simple, standard way of displaying 2D graphics to users.

Application programmers write programs that often need to render or display basic 2D graphics. Some need to display images. Some need to create simple charts and graphs. Some need to display text beyond the capabilities offered by the C++ console. Many application types call for all three of these capabilities along with the ability to interact with them using keyboard, mouse, and (more and more) touch. Displaying 2D graphics can also make for a compelling educational

experience, since the beginning programmer can have rich visual feedback as a reward for their efforts.

Currently C++ programmers must either use platform-dependent technologies (such as Microsoft's Direct2D with Win32 API input, Apple's SpriteKit, or the X Window System's Xlib library), or else to take a dependency on a third-party cross-platform library (such as Qt, Cairo, GTK+, or SDL). While these are all fine technologies with their own merits (and drawbacks), modern developers should not need to look outside of standard C++ to perform 2D graphics operations which have been pervasive in computing since the mid-1980s.

The audience for this technology consists of developers who need to render or display 2D graphics, regardless of what type (games, business applications, or other). Though the implementation of the proposal require domain expertise, its proposed API aims to be easily understood (and thus easily used) by all levels of C++ programmers, from beginners through experts.

The scope of this proposal is limited to a 2D drawing API. User input to graphical surfaces is not included. The authors believe a standardized way of receiving such user input is important, but felt it would be better to focus on the 2D drawing API first. There are plans to draw up a separate proposal which will propose additional features such as the ability to capture and process keyboard, mouse, and touch input. When unified with this proposal, the result would finally offer C++ programmers a standard way to create basic interactive modern applications, thus vastly expanding the types of programs which can be written with standard C++.

# IV. Impact on the Standard

[ *Note:* At present this proposal is contemplated only as a technical specification. The discussion which follows assumes that the proposal could eventually be incorporated into the Standard. – *end note* ]

The proposal does not require changes to the core language. It makes use of some existing standard library functionality. It does not require any changes to the library functionality it uses. It can be implemented with C++11.

The technical specification presented below depends on the following standard library components:

- function
- string
- vector
- exception
- shared\_ptr

# V. Design Decisions

## A. Leveraging the Cairo API

#### 1. Reasoning

The use of cairo as a starting point allows several goals to be met. Cairo is a C graphics library that provides cross-platform support for advanced 2D drawing and is used in many well-known, widely-used software projects (e.g. Mozilla Firefox, Mono, GTK+). As such, it has demonstrated that it is portable, implementable, and useful. It has a mature API which, though written in C, is nonetheless object-oriented in its design and is even (mostly) const-correct. This allows cairo's C API to be transformed into a C++ API by application of a set of well-defined rules. This mechanical transformation is accomplished mostly through general purpose rules, with only a small number of narrowly tailored rules required to avoid situations where the general purpose rules alone would have rendered ill-formed C++ code.

Starting from a C API rather than a C++ API also provides the benefit of easier potential malleability. While the cairo API is designed in an object-oriented fashion, it accomplishes this through the C idiom of passing an explicit this pointer as the first argument to the relevant standalone functions along with indicative naming conventions. The fact that it is a C API makes it conceptually easier to consider and approve changes that reshape the API since such proposals would not involve changing the design of existing C++ classes, which would almost certainly need to be done if the starting point was a C++ library. Indeed, this proposal reshapes the original N3888 API in several critical ways, which are discussed later in this paper. [ *Note*: The changes affect form, not function. They do not step outside the bounds of cairo's functionality and as such they let us continue to rely on the cross-platform portability of cairo's functionality while letting us create a cleaner, more modern feeling C++ API. – *end note* ]

Taken as a whole, starting from cairo allows for the creation of a 2D C++ drawing library that is already known to be portable, implementable, and useful without the need to spend years drafting, implementing, and testing a library to make sure that it meets those criteria.

#### 2. Alternative: Synthesize a New API

An alternative design would be to <u>create a new API via a synthesis of existing 2D APIs</u>. This has the benefit of being able to avoid any perceived design flaws that existing APIs suffer from. Unfortunately this would not have implementation and usage experience. Further, doing so would not provide any guarantee that design flaws would not creep in.

This could be mitigated some by spending a long time designing the API and using it in real projects. But this is, itself, an argument for starting from an existing API which has already gone through that process. Any design flaws an existing API might have are likely to be known and can be corrected or at least mitigated.

If there were no suitable existing APIs or if other reasons existed that weighed against the propriety of using one, then synthesizing a new API would be a reasonable design decision. But in this case there are indeed existing APIs which are suitable, so a designing new API would be redundant at best.

#### 3. Alternative: Derive an API from the HTML5 canvas API and SVG Specification

An alternative design would be to create an API based upon the HTML5 canvas API that incorporates key concepts from the SVG specification. This has the benefit of being very familiar to programmers who are used to working with JavaScript. The downside of this alternative is that because SVG is designed primarily as a web-based technology, it has a number of complexities (e.g. CSS styling, HTML DOM integration, and its declarative, retained mode design) which go beyond the simple drawing API that is desired here. Additionally, there are indications that there are patents covering some aspects of the canvas API which could complicate licensing issues. [Note: See <a href="http://lists.whatwg.org/pipermail/whatwg-whatwg.org/2007-March/010129.html">http://lists.whatwg.org/pipermail/whatwg-whatwg.org/2007-March/010129.html</a> for details of the potential patents issue. — end note ]

Because of the existence of good C and C++ drawing APIs which provide similar functionality without the difficulties involved in creating an API from the canvas API and SVG specification, this alternative was not fully explored. There may be functionality in the SVG specification which does not exist in cairo that would be a desirable addition. This would be a good area for further exploration in future revisions.

#### 4. Implementer Decisions

Implementers will need to decide which underlying technology or technologies they will use to implement the API. There may be a strong temptation to use cairo itself, and this may be the correct decision for some implementations. But even in these cases working directly with the underlying rendering technologies that cairo uses is likely to produce better performance. Nonetheless, since the API only uses functionality that cairo provides, the use of cairo is feasible and could be the right choice for certain platforms.

#### **B.** Native Handles

#### 1. Reasoning

The use of native handles allows for access to platform-specific resources in order to use functionality which was not encapsulated in the standard. The concept has been used successfully in the C++ Standard Library's threading library. It avoids the need to standardize the specifics of any particular platform's implementation of the underlying concepts. It also allows for any future platforms to expose their own non-standard functionality in a standards-compliant way without requiring any revision of the standard.

#### 2. Alternative: Codify Particular Platforms

An alternative design would be to standardize the existing functionality of each of the platforms on which C++ is used. This design suffers severe drawbacks. Even excluding freestanding implementations, there are a large number of existing platforms, all of which have multiple versions and many of which have variants that run on different CPU architectures. The effect of codifying existing functionality would be to take a snapshot in time of all of these platforms. Platforms would need to remain conformant to that snapshot unless and until the committee modified the snapshot or else break compatibility with the standard.

This system would be extremely brittle as a result. It would potentially involve the committee in making subjective decisions as to which platforms should be included. It would also make it impossible for new platforms (or even new versions of existing platforms) to be standards compliant until such time as the standard was modified to recognize the additional platform, version, or variant.

#### 3. Alternative: Abstract Platform Groups

Another alternative design would be to attempt to create platform groups, slotting each individual platform into an artificial grouping based upon which functionality it supports. This system is not as brittle as codifying individual platforms at first glance, but it nonetheless suffers brittleness and creates dependencies on specific (groups of) platforms, which the Standard normally avoids.

To understand this alternative, it is important to know that modern consumer GPUs have been optimized to render 3D triangles extremely fast. As a result, modern 2D graphics rendering is typically a façade that hides the use of 3D triangles that form geometries representing the 2D shapes. These are assigned a color either via texture mapping or by the use of procedurally-generated colors (e.g. a solid color, where the same value is returned regardless of the inputs, or a linear gradient, where the value returned is interpolated from two values dependent on the inputs). The end result is that modern 2D graphics are really just a specialized form of 3D graphics, one which uses an orthoscopic projection matrix to create the appearance of being 2D.

Since current commoditized GPUs normally support Microsoft's Direct3D API or else the Khronos Group's OpenGL API or its OpenGL ES API (frequently all three, with the decision of which is used dependent upon the platform which is making use of the hardware), it would seem feasible divide the world up into one group for each of those three specifications. However these specifications evolve and change over time in API breaking ways (viz. Direct3D 9 vs. Direct3D 10) and new specifications appear (e.g. AMD's Mantle API) while older ones can fall out of use (e.g. 3dfx's Glide API).

While it is unlikely that any changes would occur which would require an implementer to completely break compatibility before the committee had a chance to modify the standard, it would still place a burden to act upon the committee, one which native handles do not. It also fails to account for specialty hardware or for the use of existing hardware with a freestanding implementation which may choose to implement only a subset of the functionality of one of those specifications or which may choose to create its own custom hardware interface in order to comply with engineering constraints.

The native handle concept does not have these drawbacks and provides a result that is at least as good since the only use for publicly exposing a native handle is to expose functionality that is, by definition, platform-dependent.

#### 4. Consequences

The use of a native handle provides a clear separation of portable and non-portable code. Its use by an implementation is perfectly fine and even expected in order for the implementation to provide access to a native resource. There is no user expectation that use of a native handle will be portable to any platform other than the set of platforms that the implementer contemplated.

In an ideal world, the library would be able to provide all functionality that users require such that they would never need a mechanism such as a native handle. Unfortunately it is impractical to attempt to contemplate every possible requirement that users have and it is possible that some platforms may have desirable functionality (either now or in the future) that cannot be reasonably simulated on other platforms.

Providing users with access to a native handle such that they can access otherwise unexposed functionality gives users the opportunity to write code that is significantly more portable than wholly platform-dependent code would be. This is a positive achievement in terms of programmer productivity and the potential value of the user's labors.

## 5. Implementer Decisions

The choice of type for each native handle type is left to the implementer. Implementers should note that a native handle need not be a one-to-one mapping to an underlying type; it could be a struct that provides access to several native objects, for example, or a struct containing an enum type identifier and a union of the different types if several different possible types would make sense. Further, implementers need not provide any native handles. If they feel that their users will have no need of them, they can choose not to provide them; this proposal simply allows for their existence and creates a standard typedef name for the type, some\_class::native\_handle\_type, and a signature for the member function to retrieve it, some\_class::native\_handle\_type some\_class::native\_handle().

## C. Merger of the context type's functionality into the surface type

#### 1. Reasoning

The surface type exists as a representation of an object that will be drawn to (a "render target" in graphics parlance). This object might be tied to a display surface, it might be block of memory with no connection to a display system, or it might even be a file or some sort of output port. What defines it from the user's perspective is that drawing operations are performed upon it.

The context type in N3888 had no way of setting a different, existing surface as its target once it was created, nor could any way of doing so easily be added since cairo itself has no such functionality. [ Note: The push\_group / pop\_group functionality might seem to accomplish this but push\_group does not take a surface object as a parameter because cairo does not support that. As such, push\_group cannot be modified to take an existing surface without abandoning cairo. That would be ill-advised since a major benefit of leveraging cairo is using it as a measure of what operations can be done in a portable way. — end note ]

To analogize to the real world, the surface is like a sheet of paper, a pattern is like a rubber stamp, a pattern used for masking is like a stencil, a stroke operation is like tracing, etc. The context in this analogy is... the person's hands? That's a reasonable fit, but a person can switch

to another piece of paper and start drawing there; our context object could not do that nor could it be modified to do it without going outside the bounds of operations that cairo supports.

So the context type was just a collection of functionality designed to operate on a specific surface, to store the necessary state to do so, and in some cases to create that state. It makes more sense to move those drawing operations and that state data to the surface type itself, since it will ultimately need to be applied there anyway. [ *Note*: Microsoft's Direct2D uses this interface, though recent revision have added an interface that mirrors the Direct3D interface, presumably to make it more familiar to Direct3D users. — *end note* ] The state data that a context created, objects of type path, are now immutable objects that are generated by a factory class (see below).

For these reasons, along with the negatives of the following contemplated alternatives, the context type was eliminated and its functionality was merged into the surface type.

## 2. Alternative: Retain Separate context and surface Types

The initial design adopted cairo's separate context and surface model. It did so because it was a mechanical transformation of the cairo API into a C++ API. We now have a chance to examine this interface decision *de novo* and see if it makes sense.

Historically, graphics APIs have adopted the model of using a drawing context. In early graphical computing, this was undoubtedly a memory saving mechanism since it allowed for sharing and reuse of resources by the graphical subsystem without user involvement and without significant backend overhead. But we should ask ourselves whether having a separate context is worthwhile for modern computing devices.

As mentioned above, in cairo a context can only ever draw to one non-memory surface. Further, it can only draw to memory surfaces through the push\_group / pop\_group interface. This interface does not allow the user to provide an existing memory surface but instead creates one on its own and delivers it to the user (or renders it onto the underlying surface) when the pop\_group functionality is invoked. As such it is a one-way mechanism. Each surface must have its own context if you wish to draw to it.

Given that, the context is effectively bound to one surface for its entire life. It is concerned only with that surface and exists only to serve that surface. Having it as a separate type, when in reality it exists only to operate on a specific surface, seems to be an overzealous decoupling of functionality. Drawing functionality operates on a surface and the state data for those operations must be associated with the surface when the drawing operation occurs. As such, the functionality and state data more properly belong with the surface, rather than with a seemingly free, but in reality bound, context object.

Using cairo as a guide for cross-platform capabilities makes sense, but we are not obligated to retain its structure where the structure is orthogonal to portability (as it is here). A surface object exists primarily to be drawn on and a context object existed exclusively to draw on a specific surface. Since we are only standardizing the interface (and not the implementation), it seems

more logical to eliminate the context object and divide up its functionality in ways that better reflect what that functionality is doing.

#### 3. Alternative: Have context be a Nested Child of surface

Rather than eliminating the context type, it could have been made a nested child object of its surface. This would allow for the separation of surface functionality and drawing functionality.

It turns out, though, that there really isn't much in the way of surface-specific functionality. Most of the limited number of surface functions concern themselves with ways of accessing and manipulating a surface's data outside of the normal drawing functionality. There are a few functions that deal with sharing the surface with other APIs, a couple to allow for data manipulation and recording (e.g. saving the surface's contents to an image file), and a few to provide the user with the (minimal) information that a surface discloses about itself.

Because the surface type has very little of its own functionality and because drawing functionality is so intimately bound with the surface it operates on, it seems reasonable to merge the two rather than create a separate child object type that must then be accessed in some way (probably via an accessor function that returns a shared\_ptr) so as to prevent hidden aliasing and other insidious problems that come from separating an object's functionality (i.e. drawing to a surface) from the object itself.

#### 4. Consequences

The surface type is now the central type in the library. In the event of a successful merger of an input mechanism proposal, the surface type would likely require additional modifications to accommodate user input. This should not present a problem, but it may be worth revisiting the composition of the surface type at that time if it seems that the type might become unwieldy as a result of the new functionality.

## 5. Implementer Decisions

There are no implementer decisions related to this design decision that go beyond the ordinary scope of implementing any API. For rendering technologies that do use a separate context object, implementers should not face any insoluble problems related to having the API present functionality from the context and the render target as a single interface.

## D. Use of move-only semantics and immutability

## 1. Reasoning

#### **Background: GPU Resources and Usage Patterns**

The following cairo types use internal reference counting managed via explicit \_reference/\_destroy/\_get\_reference\_count APIs:

- cairo t
- cairo\_font\_face\_t

- cairo\_scaled\_font\_t
- cairo\_device\_t
- cairo\_surface\_t
- cairo\_pattern\_t
- cairo\_region\_t [ *Note*: Not retained in the proposed API as it was unused. *end note* ]

What these types have in common is that they (typically) own GPU resources.

#### A key point is that **GPU resources are expensive to copy**.

- Moving data between the CPU and GPU (especially from the GPU to the CPU) is often expensive in terms of processing time due to synchronization requirements. Modern GPUs are highly parallel devices; a CPU can stall for quite a bit of time waiting for a GPU to respond to a request (especially if the request is to read data that the GPU is actively using). Additionally, GPU resources such as surfaces, patterns, and fonts typically take up large amounts of memory (a 32-bit RGBA bitmap image that is 1920px x 1080px takes up over 8000 KB) such that even when the data transfer operation commences, many more cycles must be spent moving all of that data.
- Typical usage patterns of GPUs for graphics applications involve the creation of and loading of GPU resources followed by their use and manipulation by the GPU with only minimal direction from the CPU. Indeed, many resources are never manipulated such that making them immutable is practical (which then allows for optimizations that otherwise would be impossible).
- GPU hardware and drivers are optimized to move data from the CPU to certain types of GPU buffer objects on a regular basis. This facilitates useful computation by the GPU and the rendering of dynamic graphical scenes. If too much data is moving from the CPU to the GPU, though, the GPU can wind up stalling while waiting for data it needs to complete computation or rendering operations that it has been instructed to perform. If data needs to move in the other direction, stalls are much more likely since moving data from the GPU to the CPU is far less likely to be an optimized transaction.

For these reasons, it is uncommon for GPU resources to be deep copied. Applications typically reuse the same resources again and again for improved performance and minimization of memory consumption and rarely manipulate GPU resources except for render targets, which is usually a heavily optimized use case.

### **GPU Resource Management in Various Technologies**

Many existing APIs use reference counting to manage the lifetime of GPU resources.

• In Microsoft's DirectX graphics, Microsoft's COM technology is used to provide lifetime management of GPU resources. Normal usage involves reusing the same COM objects and increasing and decreasing the reference count of those COM objects as interfaces to them are obtained and released. There are special interface methods for creating deep copies of these resources (i.e. copies that result in two separate, identical objects on the GPU). Usage of these methods is not common in graphics rendering.

• In the Khronos Group's OpenGL graphics technology, GPU resources are identified by "names", which are integral values that are obtained from the OpenGL context and bound to resources of the appropriate type. Normal usage involves passing an OpenGL name around to various parts of the application which need to use the resource associated with the name. Applications must track usage carefully and only instruct the OpenGL context to delete the name when all parts of the application are finished with it (otherwise unexpected behavior will result). OpenGL contains functions that allow the user to create GPU resources and other functions that will copy data from other GPU resources to them.

Cairo supports a wide variety of back-ends. Some are hardware accelerated while others are entirely software-based. As previously mentioned, cairo uses explicit reference counting for resources that would typically be owned by the GPU in a hardware accelerated back-end. Cairo provides functions for accessing some GPU data, such as surfaces, and other functions for creating resources from that data, thus providing the ability to create deep copies of certain types of GPU resources. Other resources such as the cairo context and patterns have no such support. The user would need to create a new resource of the same type and proceed to set the appropriate state for the resource until it matched the original resource.

#### The Problem

Because cairo is a C API which uses explicit reference counting and pass-by-pointer parameters, its users do not have direct access to its objects. Indeed, because C does not have class types, the question of what type of semantics cairo's objects should have is inapplicable.

The cairo aggregate types have value semantics, so preserving that is straightforward. But for non-aggregate types, what is the correct/best way to represent an explicitly reference counted C type in C++?

The decision to remove the explicit and manual \_reference/\_destroy reference counting functions is not expected to be contentious (and did not prove to be so in the discussions of N3888).

N3888 contemplated an expanded role of shared ownership semantics. The general consensus (even, ultimately, among the authors) was that shared ownership semantics was unneeded.

In this proposal, most of the types that own GPU resources are immutable; those which must be mutable have move-only semantics. The reasons why are discussed below.

#### 2. Alternative: Value Semantics

One alternative is to make these types be copyable value types. This is considered undesirable for performance reasons.

Value semantics are simple to work with:

```
X \times 1;
auto \times 2 = \times 1;
```

For types that own a GPU resource, however, value semantics would require making copies of the GPU resource, which is expensive in both time (stalling) and space (easily several MB or more per copy).

As discussed above, the great detriment of value semantics with graphics programming is the high cost of copying GPU resources both in terms of memory and in CPU and GPU cycles. It is not per se fatal, but it requires very careful design to avoid needless copying. A design goal for this library is that it be simple and useful, something that can enchant beginners in introductory courses and encourage them to continue studying C++ and computer programming (while also being useful for existing C++ programmers without requiring them to become expert in the inner workings of graphics hardware). As such, a design that would require expert knowledge to obtain efficient use of computing resources should be avoided when there is a simpler design that frees users from the need to have expert level knowledge.

#### 3. Immutability and Move-Only Types

[ *Note*: This is a continuation of the Reasoning section. – *end note* ]

Further thought was given to this problem and a solution arose. Many of the types that own GPU resources never need to be changed once they are created. As such, it was relatively simple to make these types immutable. Once they became immutable, their inner workings were covered by the "as-if" rule such that they can have value semantics without the requirement that a deep copy to be created.

Users may wish (or need) to construct these immutable objects in multiple steps. They may also find it convenient to be able to construct an object that is similar to one they have already created. This was the motive behind the \*\_builder types. These types are mutable and copyable. They are not meant to own GPU resources and are not capable of being used in the rendering pipeline. They are factory classes that generate the immutable objects that are intended to own GPU resources. They do so based on their state at the time the immutable object is created and any subsequent state change to the builder object will not reflect back into the previously created immutable objects (if any). This approach was taken with both the path and pattern types, reflecting the likelihood that the former would probably be the owner of vertex and index buffer resources while the latter would likely be the owner of texture resources. The text rendering types that are likely to own GPU resources (e.g. font\_face, font\_options, scaled\_font) are also immutable.

Because of how they are used, certain GPU resource owning types cannot be immutable. Specifically surfaces must be mutable in order to accomplish any drawing. It also helps to have image surfaces be mutable so that they can serve as render targets. As such, the surface type and the image\_surface type are move-only types. This makes it impossible to unintentionally create a deep copy of one of these resources while keeping open options such as putting one of these objects into a shared\_ptr if that fits the user's needs. The context type from N3888 was merged into the surface type, but would have also been a mutable, move-only type if it had stayed separate. The device type is also a move-only type, reflecting its role as a high-level interface to the graphics subsystem.

#### 4. Consequences

There currently is no direct way of building a pattern that draws using the contents of a surface. This has been mitigated with the addition of drawing methods that take a const reference to a surface and execute the drawing operation while preserving drawing state (i.e. retaining and restoring any existing pattern that was in use). This should bypass the possibility that a user might accidentally have a surface bound as a source while the surface is the target of another rendering operation; a surface is move-only and can only be bound as a source for the duration of one of these synchronous drawing functions.

#### 5. Implementer Decisions

Implementers will need to decide what rendering technologies to use. They will need to decide whether they will make use of hardware acceleration and whether to provide software fallbacks in the event that there is no suitable GPU. They will also need to decide how to handle an attempt to modify a resource that is in use as a source object in a rendering operation. The library API tries to avoid these circumstances, but a sufficiently determined user will likely be able to construct a situation in which this sort of illegal instruction could occur. Given differences between current rendering technologies and likely differences in future technologies, it seemed best to make such behavior implementation-defined rather than demanding any specific result.

## VI. Mechanical Transformation Rules

The original mechanical transformation rules are documented in N3888. They were used to transform the cairo graphics library's C API into a C++ API. This met the design objective of starting from "an existing successful library already in wide use" as set forth in N3791 – Lightweight Drawing Library. The rules may be updated at some point to reflect changes made to the proposed API, but the authors feel that the rules have substantially served their purpose such that updates to them are a lower priority than developing and refining the proposal.

See the <a href="cairo">cairo</a> API manual</a> for version 1.12.16 (stable link: <a href="https://web.archive.org/web/20130831050514/http://cairographics.org/manual/">https://web.archive.org/web/20130831050514/http://cairographics.org/manual/</a>) for the semantics of the library's functionality. Note that differences now exist between the behavior of cairo 1.12.16 and the behavior of the proposal (to whit, the function font\_options surface::get\_font\_options()) returns a font\_options object that represents the actual font options that would be used to render text to the surface given the current state of the surface, which differs from the results given by cairo\_get\_font\_options and by cairo\_surface\_get\_font\_options). The authors recognize the importance of properly documenting the proposed library's semantics and consider it a very high priority.

Note that the following items are incorporated from the cairo 1.12.16 API (as documented in the cairo API manual link above):

- All items under the Drawing topic (e.g. cairo\_t, Paths, cairo\_pattern\_t, etc.);
- cairo\_font\_face\_t and cairo\_scaled\_font\_t from the Fonts topic;
- cairo\_device\_t, cairo\_surface\_t, Image Surfaces, PNG Support from the Surfaces topic; and

• All items under the Utilities topic.

# **VII. Technical Specifications**

The semantics of each type and function below are as specified in <a href="The cairo API Documentation">The cairo API Documentation</a>
<a href="The version 1.12.16">- Version 1.12.16</a> for the pre-transformed original. Note that <a href="font\_options">font\_options</a>
<a href="The semantics">Surface::get\_font\_options</a>
<a href="The persions">()</a> has the semantics documented in the Mechanical Transformation Rules section above rather than those found in the cairo documentation. [ *Note*: It is the authors' intention to provide proper API documentation with the next major revision of this proposal. — <a href="majorevent-api and-options">end note</a> ]

## A. <drawing> header synopsis

```
namespace std {
  namespace experimental {
    namespace drawing {
      inline namespace v1 {
        enum class status {
          success,
          no memory,
          invalid restore,
          invalid pop group,
          no current point,
          invalid matrix,
          invalid status,
          null pointer,
          invalid string,
          invalid path data,
          read error,
          write error,
          surface finished,
          surface type mismatch,
          pattern type mismatch,
          invalid content,
          invalid format,
          invalid visual,
          file not found,
          invalid_dash,
          invalid dsc comment,
          invalid index,
          clip not representable,
          temp file error,
          invalid stride,
          font type mismatch,
          user font immutable,
          user font error,
          negative count,
          invalid clusters,
          invalid slant,
          invalid weight,
          invalid size,
          user_font_not implemented,
```

```
device type mismatch,
  device error,
  invalid mesh construction,
  device_finished,
  last_status
};
enum class antialias {
  default antialias,
 none,
 gray,
 subpixel,
 fast,
 good,
 best
};
enum class content {
 color,
 alpha,
  color alpha
};
enum class fill rule {
 winding,
  even odd
};
enum class line cap {
 butt,
 round,
  square
enum class line_join {
 miter,
 round,
 bevel
};
enum class compositing_operator {
 clear,
 source,
  over,
  in,
  out,
  atop,
  dest,
  dest_over,
  dest in,
  dest out,
  dest atop,
  xor_compositing_operator,
  add,
```

```
saturate,
 multiply,
  screen,
  overlay,
  darken,
  lighten,
  color dodge,
  color burn,
  hard light,
  soft_light,
  difference,
  exclusion,
  hsl hue,
 hsl_saturation,
 hsl color,
 hsl luminosity
};
enum class format {
 invalid,
  argb32,
  rgb24,
  a8,
  a1,
  rgb16_565,
  rgb30
};
enum class path data type {
 move to,
 line to,
 curve to,
 arc,
 arc_negative,
 new_sub_path,
 close_path
};
enum class extend {
 none,
 repeat,
 reflect,
 pad,
  default extend = none
enum class filter {
 fast,
  good,
 best,
 nearest,
 bilinear,
  gaussian,
  default_filter = good
```

```
};
enum class pattern_type {
 solid_color,
  surface,
  linear,
 radial,
 mesh,
  raster source
};
enum class font_slant {
 normal,
  italic,
  oblique
};
enum class font_weight {
 normal,
 bold
};
enum class subpixel order {
  default subpixel order,
 rgb,
 bgr,
 vrqb,
  vbgr
};
enum class hint style {
  default hint style,
  none,
 slight,
 medium,
  full
};
enum class hint metrics {
  default_hint_metrics,
  off,
  on
};
namespace text cluster flags {
  enum text_cluster_flags : int {
   none = 0x0,
   backward = 0x1
  };
};
struct rectangle {
  double x;
  double y;
```

```
double width;
  double height;
} ;
struct rgba color {
  double r;
  double g;
  double b;
  double a:
};
struct point {
  double x;
  double v;
  point operator+=(const point& rhs);
  point operator+=(double rhs);
  point operator = (const point& rhs);
  point operator = (double rhs);
  point operator*=(const point& rhs);
  point operator*=(double rhs);
  point operator/=(const point& rhs);
 point operator/=(double rhs);
};
point operator+(const point& lhs);
point operator+(const point& lhs, const point& rhs);
point operator+(const point& lhs, double rhs);
point operator-(const point& lhs);
point operator-(const point& lhs, const point& rhs);
point operator-(const point& lhs, double rhs);
point operator*(const point& lhs, const point& rhs);
point operator*(const point& lhs, double rhs);
point operator/(const point& lhs, const point& rhs);
point operator/(const point& lhs, double rhs);
struct glyph {
  unsigned long index;
  double x;
  double y;
};
struct text cluster {
  int num bytes;
  int num glyphs;
};
struct font extents {
  double ascent;
  double descent;
  double height;
  double max x advance;
  double max y advance;
};
```

```
struct text extents {
  double x bearing;
  double y bearing;
  double width;
  double height;
  double x advance;
  double y advance;
};
struct matrix {
 double xx;
  double yx;
  double xy;
  double yy;
  double x0;
  double y0;
  static matrix init identity();
  static matrix init translate(const point& value);
  static matrix init scale (const point& value);
  static matrix init rotate(double radians);
 void translate(const point& value);
  void scale(const point& value);
 void rotate(double radians);
 void invert();
 void transform distance(point& dist);
 void transform point(point& pt);
 matrix operator*=(const matrix& rhs);
};
matrix operator*(const matrix& lhs, const matrix& rhs);
union path data
 struct {
   path data type type;
   int length;
  } header;
 point point;
 double value;
};
class path {
public:
  typedef implementation-defined native_handle_type; // Exposition
 path() = delete;
 path (const path builder& pb);
 path(const path& other);
  path& operator=(const path& other);
  path(path&& other);
```

```
path& operator=(path&& other);
  ::std::vector<path data> get data() const;
  const ::std::vector<path data>& get data ref() const;
  void get path extents(point& pt0, point& pt1) const;
};
class path builder {
public:
 path builder();
 path builder(const path builder& other);
 path builder& operator=(const path builder& other);
  path builder(path builder&& other);
  path builder& operator=(path builder&& other);
  path get path() const;
 path get path flat() const;
  void append path(const path& p);
  void append path(const path builder& p);
  bool has current point();
  point get current point();
  void new sub path();
  void close path();
  void arc(const point& center, double radius, double angle1,
    double angle2);
  void arc negative (const point& center, double radius,
    double angle1, double angle2);
  void curve to (const point& pt0, const point& pt1,
   const point& pt2);
  void line to(const point& pt);
  void move to(const point& pt);
  void rectangle(const rectangle& rect);
  void rel curve to (const point& dpt0, const point& dpt1,
    const point& dpt2);
  void rel line to(const point& dpt);
  void rel move to(const point& dpt);
  ::std::vector<path data> get data() const;
  const ::std::vector<path data>& get data ref() const;
  ::std::vector<path_data>& get_data_ref();
 void get path_extents(point& pt0, point& pt1) const;
};
class drawing exception : public exception {
public:
  drawing exception() noexcept;
  explicit drawing exception(status s) noexcept;
  virtual ~drawing exception() noexcept;
  drawing exception (const drawing exception & rhs) noexcept;
  drawing exception& operator=(
    const drawing exception& rhs) noexcept;
```

```
virtual const char* what() const noexcept;
 status get status() const noexcept;
};
class device {
public:
  typedef implementation-defined native handle type; // Exposition
  native handle type native handle() const; // Exposition
  device() = delete;
  device(const device&) = delete;
  device& operator=(const device&) = delete;
  device (device & & other);
  device& operator=(device&& other);
  explicit device(native_handle_type nh); // Exposition
  void flush();
  void acquire();
 void release();
};
// Forward declaration.
class font options;
class font options builder {
public:
  font options builder();
  font options builder(const font options builder&);
  font options builder& operator=(const font options builder&);
  font options builder(font options builder&& other);
  font options builder& operator=(font options builder&& other);
  font options get font options() const;
  void set antialias(antialias a);
  antialias get antialias() const;
  void set subpixel order(subpixel order so);
  subpixel order get subpixel order() const;
  void set hint style(hint style hs);
  hint style get hint style() const;
  void set hint metrics(hint metrics hm);
 hint_metrics get_hint_metrics() const;
};
class font options {
public:
  typedef implementation-defined native handle_type; // Exposition
  native handle type native handle() const; // Exposition
  font options(const font options&);
  font options& operator=(const font options&);
  font options(font options&& other);
  font options& operator=(font options&& other);
  font options (antialias a, subpixel order so, hint style hs,
    hint metrics hm);
```

```
explicit font options (native handle type nh); // Exposition
  antialias get antialias() const;
  subpixel order get subpixel order() const;
  hint style get hint style() const;
  hint metrics get hint metrics() const;
};
class font face {
public:
  typedef implementation-defined native handle type; // Exposition
  native handle type native handle() const; // Exposition
  font face() = delete;
  font face(const font face&);
  font face& operator=(const font face&);
  font face(font face&& other);
  font face& operator=(font face&& other);
  explicit font face(native handle type nh); // Exposition
 virtual ~font face();
};
class scaled font {
public:
  typedef implementation-defined native handle type; // Exposition
  native handle type native handle() const; // Exposition
  scaled font() = delete;
  scaled font(const scaled font&);
  scaled font& operator=(const scaled font&);
  scaled font (scaled font && other);
  scaled font& operator=(scaled font&& other);
  explicit scaled font(native handle type nh); // Exposition
  scaled font (const font face& ff, const matrix& fm,
    const matrix& ctm, const font options& fo);
  font extents get extents() const;
  text_extents get_text_extents(const ::std::string& utf8) const;
  text extents get_glyph_extents(
    const ::std::vector<glyph>& glyphs) const;
  ::std::vector<glyph> text to glyphs(double x, double y,
    const ::std::string& utf8) const;
  ::std::vector<glyph> text to glyphs(double x, double y,
    const ::std::string& utf8,
    ::std::vector<text cluster>& clusters,
    text cluster flags::text cluster flags& clFlags) const;
};
class toy font face : public font face {
public:
  toy font face() = delete;
```

```
toy font face (const toy font face&);
  toy font face& operator=(const toy font face&);
  toy font face (const ::std::string& family, font slant slant,
    font weight weight);
  toy font face(toy font face&& other);
  toy font face& operator=(toy font face&& other);
  ::std::string get family() const;
  font slant get slant() const;
  font weight get weight() const;
};
class pattern {
public:
  typedef implementation-defined native handle type; // Exposition
  native handle type native handle() const; // Exposition
  pattern() = delete;
 pattern(const pattern&);
 pattern& operator=(const pattern&);
  pattern(pattern&& other);
 pattern& operator=(pattern&& other);
  ~pattern();
 pattern type get type() const;
};
class solid color pattern builder {
 pattern type Pattern type;
 extend Extend;
 filter Filter;
  matrix Matrix;
  rgba_color _Color;
public:
  solid color pattern builder(const solid color pattern builder&);
  solid color pattern builder& operator=(
    const solid color pattern builder&);
  solid color pattern builder (
    solid color pattern builder&& other);
  solid color pattern builder& operator=(
    solid color pattern builder&& other);
  solid color pattern builder (const rgba color& color);
  pattern get pattern();
  void set extend(extend e);
  extend get extend();
  void set filter(filter f);
  filter get filter();
  void set matrix(const matrix& m);
  matrix get matrix();
  rgba_color get_rgba();
```

```
void set rgba(const rgba color& color);
  double get red();
  void set red(double red);
  double get_green();
  void set green(double green);
  double get blue();
  void set blue(double blue);
  double get alpha();
  void set alpha(double alpha);
};
class linear_pattern_builder {
public:
  linear pattern builder() = delete;
  linear pattern builder(const linear pattern builder&);
  linear pattern builder& operator=(
    const linear pattern builder&);
  linear pattern builder(linear pattern builder&& other);
  linear pattern builder& operator=(
    linear_pattern builder&& other);
  linear pattern builder(const point& pt0, const point& pt1);
  pattern get pattern();
  void set extend(extend extend);
  extend get extend();
  void set filter(filter filter);
  filter get filter();
  void set matrix(const matrix& matrix);
  matrix get matrix();
  void add color stop rgba (double offset,
    const rgba color& color);
  int get color stop count();
  void get color stop rgba(int index, double& offset,
    rgba color& color);
  void set color stop rgba(int index, double offset,
    const rgba color& color);
  void get linear points(point& pt0, point& pt1);
  void set linear points(const point& pt0, const point& pt1);
};
class radial pattern builder {
public:
  radial pattern builder() = delete;
  radial pattern builder(const radial pattern builder&);
  radial pattern builder& operator=(
    const radial pattern builder&);
  radial pattern builder (radial pattern builder && other);
  radial pattern builder& operator=(
    radial pattern builder&& other);
  radial pattern builder (const point& center0, double radius0,
    const point& center1, double radius1);
```

```
pattern get pattern();
  void set extend(extend extend);
  extend get extend();
  void set filter(filter filter);
  filter get filter();
  void set matrix(const matrix& matrix);
 matrix get matrix();
  void add color stop rgba (double offset,
    const rgba color& color);
  int get color stop count();
  void get color stop rgba(int index, double& offset,
    rgba color& color);
  void set color stop rgba(int index, double offset,
    const rgba color& color);
  void get radial circles (point& center0, double& radius0,
    point& center1, double& radius1);
  void set radial circles (const point& center0, double radius0,
    const point& center1, double radius1);
};
class mesh pattern builder {
public:
 mesh pattern builder();
 mesh pattern builder (const mesh pattern builder &);
 mesh pattern builder& operator=(const mesh pattern builder&);
 mesh pattern builder (mesh pattern builder & & other);
 mesh pattern builder& operator=(mesh pattern builder&& other);
  pattern get pattern();
  void set extend(extend extend);
  extend get extend();
  void set filter(filter filter);
  filter get filter();
  void set matrix(const matrix& matrix);
 matrix get matrix();
  void begin patch();
  void begin edit patch(unsigned int patch num);
  void end patch();
  void move to(const point& pt);
  void line to(const point& pt);
  void curve to (const point& pt0, const point& pt1,
    const point& pt2);
  void set control point(unsigned int point num, const point& pt);
  void set corner color rgba (unsigned int corner num,
    const rgba color& color);
  void get patch count(unsigned int& count);
  path get path (unsigned int patch num);
  path builder get path builder (unsigned int patch num);
  point get control point (unsigned int patch num,
    unsigned int point num);
```

```
rgba color get corner color rgba (unsigned int patch num,
    unsigned int corner num);
};
class raster source pattern_builder {
public:
  raster source pattern builder() = delete;
  raster source pattern builder(
    const raster source pattern builder&);
  raster source pattern builder& operator=(
    const raster source pattern builder&);
  raster_source_pattern_builder(
    raster source pattern builder&& other);
  raster source pattern builder& operator=(
    raster source pattern builder&& other);
  raster source pattern builder (void* user data, content content,
    int width, int height);
  pattern get pattern();
  void set extend(extend extend);
  extend get extend();
  void set filter(filter filter);
  filter get filter();
  void set matrix(const matrix& matrix);
  matrix get matrix();
  void set callback data(void* data);
  void* get callback data();
  void set acquire(
    ::std::function<surface(void* callback data, surface& target,
      const rectangle& extents)> acquire fn,
    ::std::function<void(void* callback data,
      surface& surface)> release fn
    );
  void get acquire(
    ::std::function<surface(void* callback data, surface& target,
      const rectangle& extents)>& acquire fn,
    ::std::function<void(void* callback data,
      surface& surface)>& release fn
    );
};
class surface {
public:
  surface() = delete;
  typedef implementation-defined native handle type; // Exposition
  native handle type native handle() const; // Exposition
  surface(const surface&) = delete;
  surface& operator=(const surface&) = delete;
  surface(surface&& other);
  surface& operator=(surface&& other);
```

```
explicit surface(native handle type nh); // Exposition
          surface(format fmt, int width, int height);
          // create similar
          surface(const surface& other, content content, int width, int
height);
          // create for rectangle
          surface(const surface& target, const rectangle& rect);
          virtual ~surface();
          void finish();
          void flush();
          ::std::shared ptr<device> get device();
          content get_content();
          void mark dirty();
          void mark dirty rectangle(const rectangle& rect);
          void set device offset(const point& offset);
          void get device offset(point& offset);
          void write to png(const ::std::string& filename);
          image_surface map_to image(const rectangle& extents);
          void unmap image(image surface& image);
          bool has surface resource() const;
          void save();
          void restore();
          void push group();
          void push group with content(content c);
          surface pop group();
          void pop_group_to_source();
          void set pattern();
          void set pattern(const pattern& source);
          pattern get pattern();
          void set antialias(antialias a);
          antialias get_antialias();
          void set dash();
          void set dash(const ::std::vector<double>& dashes,
            double offset);
          int get dash count();
          void get dash(::std::vector<double>& dashes, double& offset);
          void set fill rule(fill rule fr);
          fill rule get fill rule();
          void set line cap(line cap lc);
          line cap get line cap();
```

```
void set line join(line join lj);
line join get line join();
void set line width(double width);
double get line width();
void set miter limit(double limit);
double get miter limit();
void set_compositing_operator(compositing_operator co);
compositing operator get compositing operator();
void set tolerance(double tolerance);
double get tolerance();
void clip();
void clip extents(point& pt0, point& pt1);
bool in_clip(const point& pt);
void reset clip();
::std::vector<rectangle> copy clip rectangle list();
void fill();
void fill(const surface& s);
void fill extents(point& pt0, point& pt1);
bool in fill(const point& pt);
void mask(const pattern& pttn);
void mask(const surface& surface);
void mask(const surface& surface, const point& origin);
void paint();
void paint(const surface& s);
void paint with alpha(double alpha);
void paint with alpha(const surface& s, double alpha);
void stroke();
void stroke(const surface& s);
void stroke extents(point& pt0, point& pt1);
bool in stroke(const point& pt);
void set path();
void set path(const path& p);
// Transformations
void translate(const point& value);
void scale(const point& value);
void rotate(double angle);
void transform(const matrix& matrix);
void set matrix(const matrix& matrix);
void get matrix(matrix& matrix);
void identity matrix();
void user to device(point& pt);
void user to device distance(point& dpt);
```

```
void device to user(point& pt);
 void device to user distance(point& dpt);
 // Text
 void select font face(const ::std::string& family,
    font slant slant, font weight weight);
 void set font size(double size);
 void set font matrix(const matrix& matrix);
 void get font matrix(matrix& matrix);
 void set font options(const font options& options);
 font options get font options();
 void set font face(font face& font face);
 font face get font face();
 void set scaled font(const scaled font& scaled font);
 scaled font get scaled font();
 void show text(const ::std::string& utf8);
 void show glyphs(const ::std::vector<glyph>& glyphs);
 void show_text_glyphs(const ::std::string& utf8,
    const ::std::vector<glyph>& glyphs,
    const ::std::vector<text cluster>& clusters,
   text cluster flags::text cluster flags cluster flags);
 void font extents(font extents& extents);
 void text extents(const ::std::string& utf8,
    text extents& extents);
 void glyph extents(const ::std::vector<glyph>& glyphs,
    ::std::experimental::drawing::text extents& extents);
};
class image surface : public surface {
public:
 image surface() = delete;
 image surface(const image surface&) = delete;
 image surface& operator=(const image surface&) = delete;
 image surface(image surface&& other);
  image surface& operator=(image surface&& other);
 image surface(surface::native handle type nh,
    surface::native handle type map of); // Exposition
 image surface(format format, int width, int height);
  image surface (vector < unsigned char > & data, format format,
    int width, int height, int stride);
 image surface(surface& other, format format, int width,
    int height);
  image surface(const ::std::string& filename);
 void set data(::std::vector<unsigned char>& data);
 ::std::vector<unsigned char> get data();
 format get format();
 int get width();
 int get_height();
 int get stride();
};
int format stride for width (format format, int width);
```

```
// Parameters are exposition
    surface make_surface(surface::native_handle_type nh);
    // Parameters are exposition
        surface make_surface(format format, int width, int height);
    }
}
```

# VIII. Acknowledgments

The authors of this paper would like to acknowledge and thank the following individuals and groups:

- The cairo graphics library community
- Andrew Bell
- Beman Dawes
- Gunnar Sletta
- Behdad Esfahbod

# IX. Revision History

#### **Revision 1:**

- Removed path creation from the context type. The path type is now an immutable class type with a path builder type used for creating path objects.
- Removed transformation rules; they are available in N3888 for reference.
- Eliminated shared ownership semantics and replaced it with a combination of immutable types and mutable, move-only types. Most immutable types have corresponding mutable factory types. The reasoning is set forth under Design Decisions.
- Noted difference in semantics for surface::get\_font\_options from cairo's cairo get font options and cairo surface get font options functions.
- The context type has been eliminated and its functionality has been merged into the surface type. The reasoning is set forth under Design Decisions.
- The pattern type has become an immutable type with no derived types. Its former derived types are now pattern builder types without any inheritance (e.g. solid\_color\_pattern became solid\_color\_pattern\_builder and the gradient pattern type was eliminated with its functionality being put directly into the linear pattern builder and radial pattern builder types).
- Eliminated rectangle\_int type and replaced usages of it with use of the rectangle type; replaced int parameters with double parameters where it made since. The reasoning is set forth under Design Decisions.

- Added a point POD type that represents a 2D coordinate value. Replaced instances of double x, double y parameters (and similar combinations) with appropriate usage of the point type.
- Eliminated the matrix type's multiply member function and replaced it with suitable overloads of the \* and \*= operators.
- Eliminated the matrix::init function as needless duplication of existing language functionality (e.g. braced initialization). Converted the remaining init\_\* member functions into static factory member functions to make them useful when a temporary matrix value is needed (e.g. as an argument to a function that takes a const matrix& parameter).
- Added missing functionality to scaled font type.
- Simplified surface type by removing PNG stream writing functionality and mime functionality.
- Simplified image surface type by removing create from PNG stream functionality.
- Removed user\_data\_key type and eliminated user data functionality from types that had it for simplicity and because it didn't seem to serve a valuable purpose (especially in the form it was in).
- Removed finish and status member functions from the device type. The finish function did not seem to have any good use cases and eliminating it made the status function unnecessary.
- Removed region\_overlap and region types; they were not used by any current functionality.
- Eliminated type rectangle list in favor of vector<rectangle>.
- Converted surface::get\_device to return a shared\_ptr<device> object rather than a device object. device is a move-only type and thus multiple copies of the same device object should not be possible (but would have been without this change).
- Placed API within inline namespace v1 to allow for proper versioning.
- Added rgba color type to represent unsigned normal RGBA color values.

#### X. References

N3791 – Lightweight Drawing Library

N3825 – SG13 Graphics Discussion Minutes, 2013-11-21

The cairo API Documentation - Version 1.12.16

N3888 - A Proposal to Add 2D Graphics Rendering and Display to C++