

# 1 Introduction

The Sound Effects Player is a component of ShowControl, a project to automate the production of live stage plays. Sound Effects Player makes sounds at appropriate times in the performance.

There are two aspects to the use of the Sound Effects Player. The sound designer must create the sounds, and the sound effects operator must play them during the performance. The Sound Effects Player tries to make the latter job as simple as possible, at the cost of making the sound designer's job complex. This document is intended to support the sound designer by describing how to create sounds for the Sound Effects Player.

## 1.1 Installation

The Sound Effects Player is installed in the traditional GNU/Linux fashion: acquire the kit, place it in a subdirectory, install the prerequisite packages, then

```
./configure --prefix=/usr
make
sudo make install
```

The prerequisite packages for Fedora are gcc, intltool, gstreamer1-devel, gstreamer-plugins-base-devel, gtk3-devel, gtk-doc and libtime. Other distributions of GNU/Linux may have other names for these packages. See the .spec file for details.

## 1.2 Sample Application

There is a MAN page for Sound Effects Player which provides more detail, but briefly you must provide the Sound Effects Player with a file which describes how the stage play is to be automated. The distribution kit contains a sample subdirectory which plays a single sound with no operator interaction, then exits. You can verify that you have installed the Sound Effects Player successfully by running the sample application:

```
cd sample
./run_sample.sh
```

You should hear a 440 Hz sine wave that lasts 12 seconds and fades up and down during that time. We will examine each of the files in this subdirectory to see how they work together to make this sound. Here is the list of files and a brief description of their meaning:

File name	Description
440Hz.wav	3 seconds of a 440Hz sine wave, 8000 samples per second, 8 bits per sample
Makefile	Used by the build software

File name	Description
Makefile.am	Used by the build software
Makefile.in	Used by the build software
run_sample.sh	Program to run the sample application, marked executable
Sample_cues.xml	Dummy file which would contain the cues if this were a complete ShowControl project
Sample_equipment.xml	Pointer to the sounds and sound_sequence files; in a complete ShowControl project this file would also contain information about other equipment
Sample_project.xml	The top-level ShowControl project file
Sample_script.xml	Dummy file which would contain the script if this were a complete ShowControl project
Sample_sound_sequence.xml	The procedure for presenting sounds to the sound effects operator
Sample_sounds.xml	The sounds to be presented

The file `run_sample.sh` invokes `sound_effects_player` to play the sound specified by `Sample_project.xml`. `Sample_project.xml` consists mostly of comments explaining what each part does. You can read them to get more background on the ShowControl project, but here we are concerned just about the sound effects, so we only need to note that the equipment is described in the file `Sample_equipment.xml`. `Sample_equipment.xml`, in its sound effects section, refers to two other files: `Sample_sounds.xml` and `Sample_sound_sequence.xml`. These are the two files we will use to illustrate how to create sound effects for your live stage play. You should, of course, create files of your own for your play, but you can use the sample files to get started.

### 1.2.1 Sample\_sounds.xml

The sounds XML file, in the sample application called `Sample_sounds.xml`, contains the information about each sound. Here is the `Sample_sounds.xml` file. The letters at the right margin are callouts referenced in the paragraphs below.

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<show_control>
<!-- The sample production uses this sound. -->
  <sounds>
```

```

<version>1.0</version>

<!-- a sine wave at 440Hz, which is A in octave 6. -->
<sound>
  <!-- The internal sequencer references sounds by name. -->
  <name>440Hz</name>
  <!-- the WAV file contains the waveform for the sound -->
  <wav_file_name>440Hz.wav</wav_file_name>
  <!-- volume ramps up from 0 to attack level in attack duration time -->
  <attack_duration_time>2.000000000</attack_duration_time>
  <attack_level>1.00</attack_level>
  <!-- after reaching attack level, volume ramps down to sustain level
        in decay time -->
  <decay_duration_time>1.000000000</decay_duration_time>
  <sustain_level>0.5</sustain_level>
  <!-- release starts on external signal or when reaching the
        release start time -->
  <release_start_time>10.000000000</release_start_time>
  <!-- upon release, volume ramps down to 0 in release duration time -->
  <release_duration_time>2.000000000</release_duration_time>
  <!-- sound loops between loop times; from=0 means no looping -->
  <loop_from_time>1.000000000</loop_from_time>
  <loop_to_time>0.000000000</loop_to_time>
  <!-- automatically stop looping after loop_limit loops -->
  <loop_limit>0</loop_limit>
  <!-- start at start_time offset in the wave file -->
  <start_time>0.000000000</start_time>
  <!-- attenuate the full-volume sound in the WAV file by
        designer_volume_level -->
  <designer_volume_level>1.00</designer_volume_level>
  <!-- pan mono sound or balance stereo sound by designer_pan -->
  <designer_pan>0.00</designer_pan>
  <!-- if no internal sequencer, MIDI program and note numbers to activate
        from an external sequencer -->
  <MIDI_program_number>0</MIDI_program_number>
  <MIDI_note_number>69</MIDI_note_number>
  <!-- if no internal sequencer, OSC name to activate from an external
        sequencer -->
  <OSC_name></OSC_name>
  <!-- if no internal sequencer, function key to activate by sound
        effects operator -->
  <function_key></function_key>
</sound>

<routing></routing>
</sounds>
</show_control>

```

A  
B  
C  
D  
E  
F  
G  
H  
I  
J  
K

The sample application contains only one sound, which it calls 440Hz at A. Each sound refers to a WAV file which gets played when required. See B. In the simplest case the WAV file is just played once at full volume, but the Sound Effects Player can also repeat a portion of the sound, and can apply an amplitude envelope to it. In the Sample\_sounds.xml file you see that the 440Hz sine wave spends two seconds (C), reaching full volume (D), one second (E) decaying to half volume (F), then, if it

hasn't been stopped by the sound effects operator, it stops itself after playing for 10 seconds (G).

When it is stopped its volume decreases to 0 in two seconds (H). To see how the operator can stop a sound early, run `run_sample.sh` again but this time, instead of letting it finish by itself, click on the Stop button in cluster 0 and observe that the total run time is now less than 12 seconds.

The sample sound also saves memory and disk space by looping. If you examine the file `440Hz.WAV` you will see that it is only three seconds long. The information in the `<sound></sound>` block specifies that the first second (I), (J) of the WAV file is to be repeated indefinitely until the sound is released (K). The sound is released when it has been playing for 10 seconds (G) or when the sound effects operator presses the Stop button.

If you examine the `440Hz.WAV` file you will see that it has only 8 bits per sample, and only 8,000 samples per second. That is enough for a simple sine wave. The sound effects player uses the Gstreamer structure to accept sample rates from 6,000 to 96,000 samples per second, using formats S8, U8 (8 bits per sample), LE16 (16 bits per sample), S32LE, F32LE (32 bits per sample) and F64LE (64 bits per sample).

I use audacity to prepare WAV files for the Sound Effects Player. It provides all the flexibility I need, but is simple to use. Other tools are also available: I have used `espeak` and `sox` to prepare spoken words, for example.

## 1.2.2 Sample\_sound\_sequence.xml

The sound sequence XML file, in the sample application called `Sample_sound_sequence.xml`, presents the sounds to the sound effects operator. Some parts of a live stage play can be handled by sequential processing: simply making the next sound when the time comes to make it. Some parts, however, are best handled by presenting the sound effects operator with a selection of sounds which he triggers in response to activities on the stage. The sound effects player combines these methods in a very flexible way.

The `Sample_sound_sequence.xml` file simply plays the `440Hz` sound without waiting for the operator. Here it is:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<show_control>
```

```
  <!-- The sequence items for the sample production. -->
```

```
  <sound_sequence>
    <version>1.0</version>
```

```
    <sequence_item>
      <name>start_of_sequence</name>
      <type>start_sequence</type>
      <next>A6</next>
    </sequence_item>
```

L  
M

```

<sequence_item>
  <name>A6</name>
  <type>start_sound</type>
  <sound_name>440Hz</sound_name>
  <MIDI_note_number>69</MIDI_note_number>
  <cluster_number>0</cluster_number>
  <tag>A6</tag>
  <text_to_display>A in octave 6</text_to_display>
  <importance>1</importance>
</sequence_item>

</sound_sequence>
</show_control>

```

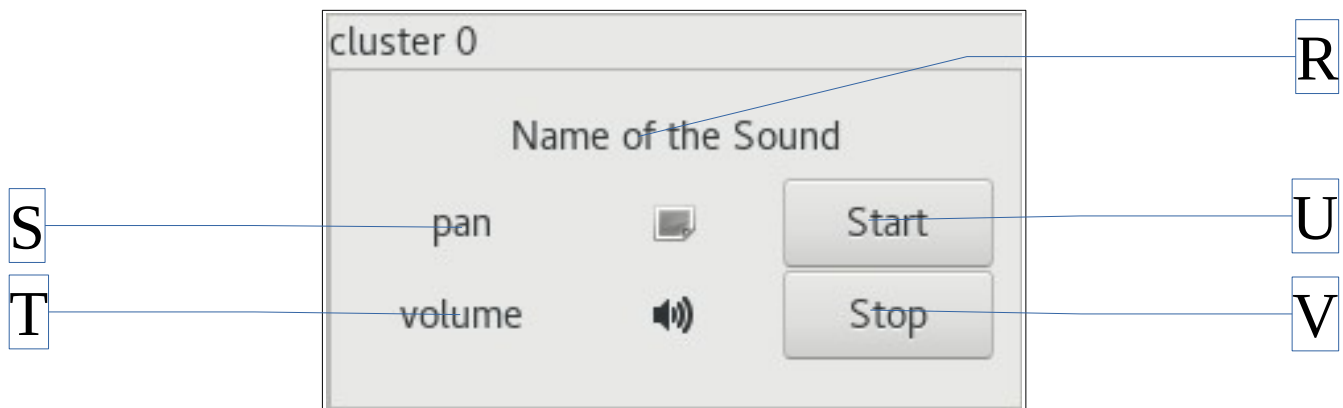
N  
O  
P  
Q

A sound sequence file, in this sample program called `Sample_sound_sequence.xml`, contains sequence items. Each item performs a function when executed by the Sound Effects Player. Every sequence item has a name, a type and whatever other information that it needs to carry out its function. The sample sequence consists of just two sequence items: a `start_sequence` and a `start_sound`.

`Start_sequence` (L) is where the Sound Effects Player starts. It then moves to the sequence item named in the `<next></next>` block (M), in this case A6. The sequence item named A6 (N) starts playing the sound named 440Hz (O), which we saw in `Sample_sounds.xml` (A). It specifies that the sound effects operator is to have control of the sound using cluster number 0 (P), and the text to display to the sound effects operator is “A in octave 6” (Q). This sequence item does not specify what the Sound Effects Player is to do when the sound finishes playing, so the Sound Effects Player exits.

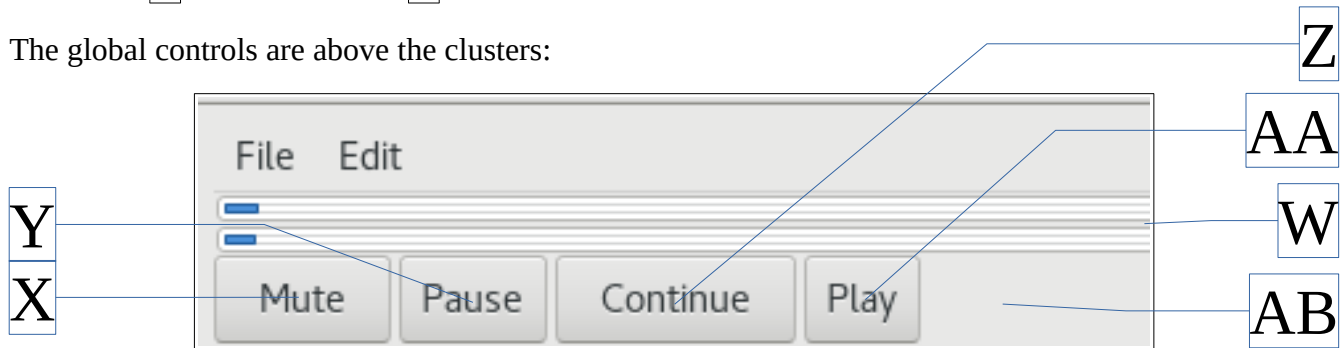
## 2 Clusters

The sample application lets the sound effects operator control its sound using cluster 0. The Sound Effects Player displays 16 clusters, numbered 0 through 15. A cluster looks like this:



The text area across the top of the cluster (R) is controlled by the sequence item (Q). The four controls beneath are for panning the sound through the stereo field (S), adjusting its volume (T), starting it (U) and stopping it (V).

The global controls are above the clusters:



Above the buttons are horizontal bars that show how loud each channel is sounding (W). From left to right, the buttons silence the output (X), pause the sound (Y), continue from a pause (Z) and continue from an Operator Wait (AA). To the right of the Play button is a text area (AB) which is filled in by the Operator Wait. We will see the Operator Wait sequence item in the next section.

### 3 Example\_01

To illustrate more of the capabilities of the Sound Effects Player we need a more complex example. Navigate to subdirectory example\_01 and you will find file run\_example\_01.sh. Running this file executes the sound effects player, giving it Example\_01\_project.xml as its parameter. Type “./run\_example\_01.sh” to see what this project does.

Notice that it plays the 440Hz tone, then waits for you to press a key. The text to the right of the Play button (AB) is “Press a Start key to hear a number, Play to exit”. Each of the clusters has some text in its display area (R) which invites you to press the Start button (U) and describes what you will hear when you do. Press some of the Start buttons to hear a synthesized voice saying numbers between one and sixteen. Notice that the text area over the cluster changes while the voice is speaking. When you have had enough, press the Play button in the global controls (AA) to cause the Sound Effects Player to exit.

The XML files in the example\_01 subdirectory are structured very much like the files in the sample subdirectory, so we only need to be concerned with files example\_01\_sounds.xml and example\_01\_sound\_sequences.xml. Example\_01\_sounds.xml contains, in addition to the 440Hz sound, sixteen sounds that look like this:

```
<sound>
  <!-- The internal sequencer references sounds by name. -->
  <name>1</name>
```

```

    <!-- the WAV file contains the waveform for the sound -->
    <wav_file_name>01.wav</wav_file_name>
</sound>

```

Each block associates a sound name with a WAV file name, and lets all of the other sound parameters default. The default values play the sound once, at full volume.

Example\_01\_sound\_sequence.xml starts like this:

```

<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<show_control>

  <!-- The sequence items for the example_01 production.  -->

  <sound_sequence>
    <version>1.0</version>

    <sequence_item>
      <name>start_of_sequence</name>
      <type>start_sequence</type>
      <next>A6</next>
    </sequence_item>

    <sequence_item>
      <name>A6</name>
      <type>start_sound</type>
      <sound_name>440Hz</sound_name>
      <MIDI_note_number>69</MIDI_note_number>
      <cluster_number>0</cluster_number>
      <tag>A6</tag>
      <text_to_display>A in octave 6</text_to_display>
      <importance>1</importance>
      <next_completion>populate</next_completion>
    </sequence_item>

    <sequence_item>
      <name>populate</name>
      <type>offer_sound</type>
      <next_to_start>play_00</next_to_start>
      <cluster_number>0</cluster_number>
      <tag>1</tag>
      <text_to_display>press to play "one"</text_to_display>
      <next>pop_01</next>
    </sequence_item>

    <sequence_item>
      <name>play_00</name>
      <type>start_sound</type>
      <sound_name>1</sound_name>
      <cluster_number>0</cluster_number>
      <tag>1</tag>
      <text_to_display>one</text_to_display>
      <importance>1</importance>
    </sequence_item>

```

AC  
AD  
AE  
AH  
AG  
AF  
AI  
AJ  
AK  
AL  
AM

The beginning is just like Sample\_sound\_sequence.xml (L through Q), but notice the new field at AC. The <next\_completion>populate</next\_completion> field causes the Sound Effects Player to execute the populate sequence item when the sound being played has completed.

The sequence item named populate (AD) is an offer\_sound (AE). It puts some text (AF) on the text area (R) of cluster 0 (AG) and tells the Sound Effects Editor to execute sequence item play\_00 (AH) when the sound effects operator pushes the Start button on cluster 0 (U). It then immediately goes on to execute sequence item pop\_01 (AI) which does the same thing for cluster 1, and so on through cluster 15.

Pushing the Start button on cluster 0 causes the Sound Effects Player to execute sequence item play\_00 (AJ). This is a start\_sound sequence item (AK) which plays sound 1 (AL) and changes the text on cluster 0's text area (AM). Reading through the remainder of Example\_01\_sound\_sequence.xml you will see that the same happens for clusters 1 through 15.

Further down in file Example\_01\_sound\_sequence.xml we see this:

```

<sequence_item>
  <name>pop_15</name>
  <type>offer_sound</type>
  <next_to_start>play_15</next_to_start>
  <cluster_number>15</cluster_number>
  <tag>16</tag>
  <text_to_display>press to play "sixteen"</text_to_display>
  <next>do_wait</next>
</sequence_item>
<sequence_item>
  <name>play_15</name>
  <type>start_sound</type>
  <sound_name>16</sound_name>
  <cluster_number>15</cluster_number>
  <tag>16</tag>
  <text_to_display>sixteen</text_to_display>
  <importance>1</importance>
</sequence_item>
<sequence_item>
  <name>do_wait</name>
  <type>operator_wait</type>
  <text_to_display>Press a Start key to hear a number, Play to
exit</text_to_display>
  <next_play>clean_01</next_play>
</sequence_item>
<sequence_item>
  <name>clean_01</name>
  <type>cease_offering_sound</type>
  <tag>1</tag>

```

Labels and their corresponding XML elements:

- AU: <next\_to\_start>play\_15</next\_to\_start>
- AN: <next>do\_wait</next>
- AO: <text\_to\_display>sixteen</text\_to\_display>
- AP: <text\_to\_display>Press a Start key to hear a number, Play to exit</text\_to\_display>
- AQ: <next\_play>clean\_01</next\_play>
- AR: <name>clean\_01</name>
- AS: <type>cease\_offering\_sound</type>



```
<next>clean_02</next>
</sequence_item>
```

AT

The fifteenth offer\_sound branches to do\_wait (AN). Do\_wait (AO) is an Operator\_wait sequence item which displays “Press a Start key to hear a number, Play to exit” (AP). When the sound effects operator presses the Play button, the Sound Effects Editor executes the clean\_01 sequence item (AQ). The clean\_01 sequence item (AR) is a cease\_offering\_sound which specifies that the sound offered with a tag of 1 (AS) should be canceled. It then branches to clean\_02 (AT) which does the same for tag 2, and so on to tag 16.

Each of the offer\_sound sequence items contains a tag (AU), which is used by cease\_offering\_sound to terminate the offering.

At the bottom of file Example\_01\_sound\_sequence.xml we find this:

```
<sequence_item>
  <name>clean_16</name>
  <type>cease_offering_sound</type>
  <tag>16</tag>
  <next>exiting</next>
</sequence_item>
```

AV

AW

```
<sequence_item>
  <name>exiting</name>
  <type>wait</type>
  <time_to_wait>2.0</time_to_wait>
  <text_to_display>exiting...</text_to_display>
</sequence_item>
```

AX

AY

AZ

```
</sound_sequence>
</show_control>
```

The last of the cease\_offering\_sound sequence items branches to sequence item exiting (AV). The exiting sequence item (AW) is a wait (AX) which delays for 2 seconds (AY) while it displays “exiting...” to the sound effects operator (AZ). It has no <next></next> block, so when it is complete there are no sequence items in execution, and no sounds being offered on clusters. When that happens, the Sound Effects Editor exits.

## 4 Example\_02

Example 2 is in subdirectory example\_02. It has two sounds:

- car, the sound of a car engine starting, idling, then shutting down
- circular\_saw, the sound of a circular saw starting, cutting, then stopping

The file `Example_02_sound_sequence.xml` simply offers the two sounds. The interesting file is `Example_02_sounds.xml`, which looks like this:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<show_control>
<!-- The example_02 production uses these sounds. -->
  <sounds>
    <version>1.0</version>

    <sound>
      <name>circular_saw</name>
      <wav_file_name>circular_saw.wav</wav_file_name>
      <!-- The saw runs until the sound effects operator
        presses the Stop key. -->
      <loop_from_time>2.5</loop_from_time>
      <loop_to_time>2.45</loop_to_time>
      <loop_limit>0</loop_limit>
      <release_duration_time>∞</release_duration_time>
    </sound>

    <sound>
      <name>car</name>
      <wav_file_name>car.wav</wav_file_name>
      <!-- The car runs until the sound effects operator
        presses the Stop key. -->
      <loop_from_time>11.01925</loop_from_time>
      <loop_to_time>10.00227</loop_to_time>
      <loop_limit>0</loop_limit>
      <release_duration_time>∞</release_duration_time>
    </sound>

    <routing></routing>
  </sounds>
</show_control>
```

Cars and saws are complex sounds: they don't just go silent when they stop, but have a shutdown sound. For a live stage play we want to make the sound until the script calls upon it to stop, which will be a variable length of time depending upon the actor. Thus we play the start of the sound, repeat the middle of the sound until time to stop, and finally play the end of the sound. This is done by setting the `<loop_to_time></loop_to_time>` and the `<loop_from_time></loop_from_time>` fields to the beginning and ending of the middle part of the sound. Also, we set `<loop_limit></loop_limit>` to 0, meaning loop until the Stop button is pushed, and `<release_duration_time></release_duration_time>` to infinity (∞) so that the envelope does not ramp the volume down after the stop button has been activated.

The tricky part of such a sound is finding good loop points. To avoid a click at the transition, choose points where the waveform crosses 0 and is headed in the same direction, either increasing or decreasing. I use Audacity for this, zooming in until I can see individual samples.

Another problem is the repetition. You don't want a 1-second sound to be repeated many times unless it is a very simple sound, like a hum. The audience will quickly become annoyed. To mask the

repetition you can use a second sound which repeats at a different interval. Try playing the car and the saw together, to see how the repetition is less noticeable with both running.

## 5 Example\_03

Example 3 is in subdirectory example\_03. It illustrates how to divide sound effects into two groups: those which are used routinely in the theater, and those which are constructed especially for this production. The files in this subdirectory are as follows:

File name	Description
background_music.wav	The background music for the play, stereo, 8 bits per sample, 6000 samples per second.
Example_03_cues.xml	The special cues for this production
Example_03_equipment.xml	The special equipment for this production: references Example_03_sounds.xml and Example_03_sound_sequence.xml
Example_03_project.xml	The project file for this production: references Theater_equipment.xml, Example_03_equipment.xml
Example_03_script.xml	A dummy script file for this production
Example_03_sound_sequence.xml	The special sound sequences for this production—see below
Example_03_sounds.xml	The special sounds for this production—see below
full_ring.wav	The sound of a telephone ringing once, lasts 6 seconds
Makefile	Used by the build system
Makefile.am	Used by the build system
Makefile.in	Used by the build system
run_example_03.xml	Program to run Sound Effects Player for this production
Theater_cues.xml	The regular cues for this theater
Theater_equipment.xml	The regular equipment used in this theater: references Theater_sounds.xml and Theater_sound_sequence.xml
Theater_sound_sequence.xml	The regular sound sequences for this theater—see below
Theater_sounds.xml	The regular sounds for this theater—see below

When the Sound Effects Player runs, it reads Example\_03\_project.xml, and from it loads the sounds and sound sequences in Theater\_sounds.xml, Example\_03\_sounds.xml, Theater\_sound\_ssequence.xml and Example\_03\_sound\_sequence.xml.

## 5.1 Theater\_sounds.xml

The file Theater\_sounds.xml looks like this:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<show_control>
<!-- these sounds are common to many shows in the theater. -->
<sounds>
  <version>1.0</version>

  <!-- The ring and ringout sounds are used for a telephone. -->
  <sound>
    <name>ring</name>
    <wav_file_name>full_ring.wav</wav_file_name>
    <attack_duration_time>0.000000000</attack_duration_time>
    <attack_level>1.00</attack_level>
    <decay_duration_time>0.000000000</decay_duration_time>
    <sustain_level>1.00</sustain_level>
    <release_start_time>2.995000000</release_start_time>
    <release_duration_time>0.010000000</release_duration_time>
    <loop_from_time>0.000000000</loop_from_time>
    <loop_to_time>0.000000000</loop_to_time>
    <loop_limit>0</loop_limit>
    <start_time>0.000000000</start_time>
    <designer_volume_level>1.00</designer_volume_level>
    <designer_pan>0.00</designer_pan>
    <MIDI_program_number></MIDI_program_number>
    <MIDI_note_number></MIDI_note_number>
    <function_key></function_key>
  </sound>

  <sound>
    <name>ringout</name>
    <wav_file_name>full_ring.wav</wav_file_name>
    <attack_duration_time>0.010000000</attack_duration_time>
    <attack_level>1.00</attack_level>
    <decay_duration_time>0.000000000</decay_duration_time>
    <sustain_level>1.00</sustain_level>
    <release_start_time>0.000000000</release_start_time>
    <release_duration_time>∞</release_duration_time>
    <loop_from_time>0.000000000</loop_from_time>
    <loop_to_time>0.000000000</loop_to_time>
    <loop_limit>0</loop_limit>
    <start_time>2.995000000</start_time>
    <designer_volume_level>1.00</designer_volume_level>
    <designer_pan>0.00</designer_pan>
    <MIDI_program_number></MIDI_program_number>
    <MIDI_note_number></MIDI_note_number>
    <function_key></function_key>
```

```

    </sound>

    <routing></routing>
  </sounds>
</show_control>

```

The two sounds, ring and ringout, refer to the same WAV file, full\_ring.wav, but in different ways. Ring plays the first 2.995 seconds of the file, then fades out to silence over the next 0.01 seconds. Ringout plays starting at 2.995 seconds, but it fades in from silence in the first 0.01 seconds. Notice that the ringout sound has <release\_duration\_time></release\_duration\_time> set to infinity.

## 5.2 Theater\_sound\_sequence.xml

The file Theater\_sound\_sequence.xml looks like this:

```

<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<show_control>

  <!-- These sound sequence items are common to many shows in the theater.  -->

  <sound_sequence>
    <version>1.0</version>

    <sequence_item>
      <name>telephone-ring</name>
      <type>start_sound</type>
      <sound_name>ring</sound_name>
      <cluster_number>0</cluster_number>
      <tag>telephone-ring</tag>
      <text_to_display>Telephone ring</text_to_display>
      <importance>2</importance>
      <next_release_started>telephone-ring-5</next_release_started>
      <next_termination>telephone-ring-7</next_termination>
    </sequence_item>

    <sequence_item>
      <name>telephone-ring-5</name>
      <type>start_sound</type>
      <sound_name>ringout</sound_name>
      <cluster_number>0</cluster_number>
      <tag>telephone-ring</tag>
      <text_to_display>Telephone ring pause</text_to_display>
      <importance>2</importance>
      <next_completion>telephone-ring-6</next_completion>
      <next_termination>telephone-ring-8</next_termination>
    </sequence_item>

    <sequence_item>
      <name>telephone-ring-6</name>
      <type>start_sound</type>
      <sound_name>ring</sound_name>
      <cluster_number>0</cluster_number>
      <tag>telephone-ring</tag>
      <text_to_display>Telephone ring</text_to_display>

```

```
<importance>2</importance>
<next_release_started>telephone-ring-5</next_release_started>
<next_termination>telephone-ring-7</next_termination>
</sequence_item>

<sequence_item>
  <name>telephone-ring-7</name>
  <type>start_sound</type>
  <sound_name>ringout</sound_name>
  <cluster_number>0</cluster_number>
  <tag>telephone-ring</tag>
  <text_to_display>Telephone ring end</text_to_display>
  <importance>2</importance>
</sequence_item>

<sequence_item>
  <name>telephone-ring-8</name>
  <type>wait</type>
  <time_to_wait>1</time_to_wait>
</sequence_item>

</sound_sequence>
</show_control>
```

These sequence items permit the sound effects operator to make the sound of a ringing telephone. If the actor picks up the telephone handset during a ring, the ring stops, but it does not go silent immediately: it takes a few seconds to fade out.

The process starts with the telephone-ring sequence item. It starts playing the ring sound. If the sound is not stopped by the sound effects operator it perform the sequence item named in `<next_release_started></next_release_started>` when the release point of the ring sound is reached. That sequence item, telephone-ring-5, plays the ringout sound. Recall from above that the ring sounds ends with 0.01 seconds of fade out starting at 2.995 seconds, whereas the ringout sound starts with 0.01 seconds of fade in starting at 2.995 seconds. The effect then is to play the full\_ring.wav file unmodified.

If the ringout sound is not stopped by the sound effects operator it executes telephone-ring-6, which plays the ring sound again. As before, if the sound effects operator does not stop the sound it executes telephone-ring-5. The result is that the audience hears the telephone bell every six seconds.

If the sound effects operator stops the sound between rings, the ringout sound continues until it finishes because it has `<release_duration_time></release duration_time>` set to infinity. Instead of executing sequence item telephone-ring-5 it executes telephone-ring-7, which waits 1 second and does nothing further.

If the sound effects operator stops the sound during a ring, either telephone-ring or telephone-ring-6 will execute sequence item telephone-ring-7. The ring sound fades to silence from whatever it was playing when the sound effects operator pressed the stop button, and the ringout sound fades in from

silence. The result is that the audience hears the ring sound stop short, but still hears the bell sound fade out to silence.

### 5.3 Example\_03\_sounds.xml

The file Example\_03\_sounds.xml has just one sound: the background music.

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<show_control>

  <!-- This is the one special sound used by Example_03.  -->
  <sounds>
    <version>1.0</version>

    <!-- The background sound is played from curtain open
         to curtain close.  -->
    <sound>
      <name>background music</name>
      <wav_file_name>background_music.wav</wav_file_name>
      <designer_volume_level>0.33</designer_volume_level>
      <designer_pan>0.00</designer_pan>
    </sound>

    <routing></routing>
  </sounds>
</show_control>
```

The music is played quietly because <designer\_volume\_level></designer\_volume\_level> is set to 0.33.

### 5.4 Example\_03\_sound\_sequence.xml

The file Example\_03\_sound\_sequence.xml contains the special sound sequence for the production, and calls upon sequence items in Theater\_sound\_sequence.xml for the regular sounds made in this theater. It looks like this:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<show_control>

  <!-- This sound sequence is unique to Example_03.  These sequence items
       are available to the sound_effect_player's internal sequencer along
       with the sequence items in Theater_sound_sequence.xml.  -->

  <sound_sequence>
    <version>1.0</version>

    <sequence_item>
      <name>start_of_sequence</name>
      <type>start_sequence</type>
      <next>wait_for_curtain</next>
    </sequence_item>

    <sequence_item>
      <name>wait_for_curtain</name>
```

```
<type>operator_wait</type>
<text_to_display>Press Play when the curtain opens</text_to_display>
<next_play>scene_01</next_play>
</sequence_item>

<sequence_item>
  <name>scene_01</name>
  <type>start_sound</type>
  <sound_name>background music</sound_name>
  <cluster_number>15</cluster_number>
  <text_to_display>background music</text_to_display>
  <tag>background music</tag>
  <next_starts>offer_telephone</next_starts>
</sequence_item>

<sequence_item>
  <name>offer_telephone</name>
  <type>offer_sound</type>
  <next_to_start>telephone-ring</next_to_start>
  <cluster_number>0</cluster_number>
  <text_to_display>Telephone ring</text_to_display>
  <tag>telephone-ring</tag>
  <next>wait for end of scene 1</next>
</sequence_item>

<sequence_item>
  <name>wait for end of scene 1</name>
  <type>operator_wait</type>
  <text_to_display>Press Play when the curtain closes</text_to_display>
  <next_play>end of scene 1</next_play>
</sequence_item>

<sequence_item>
  <name>end of scene 1</name>
  <type>cease_offering_sound</type>
  <tag>telephone-ring</tag>
  <next>stop_telephone</next>
</sequence_item>

<sequence_item>
  <name>stop_telephone</name>
  <type>stop_sound</type>
  <tag>telephone-ring</tag>
  <next>stop_background</next>
</sequence_item>

<sequence_item>
  <name>stop_background</name>
  <type>stop_sound</type>
  <tag>background music</tag>
</sequence_item>

</sound_sequence>
</show_control>
```



When the Sound Effects Player is run, it looks for a `start_of_sequence` sequence item to tell it how to start. Here the `start_of_sequence` item executes `wait_for_curtain`. This is an `operator_wait` sequence item which tells the sound effects operator to press Play when the curtain opens, and when he does executes `scene_01`. `Scene_01` plays the background music using cluster 15 and, when it starts playing, executes `offer_telephone`. `Offer_telephone` does an `offer_sound` on cluster 0 of `telephone-ring` and executes wait for end of scene 1. Wait for end of scene 1 tells the sound effects operator to press the Play button when the curtain closes. When he does, the sequence ceases offering the `telephone-ring` sound on cluster 0, stops the telephone from ringing, if it is, and stops the background music.

Notice that sequence item `telephone-ring` does not appear in this file; it is taken from file `Theater_sound_sequence.xml`.

## 6 Sounds

These are the fields in a sound, with an description of each. The amplitude envelope uses attack, decay, sustain and release, abbreviated ADSR.

Field Name	description
<code>name</code>	The name of the sound, for reference from sequencer items.
<code>wav_file_name</code>	The name of the WAV file that contains the samples for this sound. This WAV file man be mono or stereo, 6000 to 96000 samples per second, 8 (S8 or U8), 16 (S16LE), 32 (S32LE or F32LE) or 64 (F64LE) bits per sample. If the file path is not absolute it is considered relative to the location of the file that references it. Internally the samples are converted to F32LE at 96000 samples per second.
<code>attack_duration_time</code>	The time to fade the sound in from silence, in seconds. Default is 0.0.
<code>attack_level</code>	The level that the sound will reach when the attack is complete. Default is 1.0, which is the full volume described in the WAV file.
<code>decay_duration_time</code>	The time to fade the sound from the attack peak down to the sustain level, in seconds. Default is 0.0.
<code>sustain_level</code>	The level to reach at the end of the decay. Default is 1.0, which is the full volume described in the WAV file.
<code>release_start_time</code>	The amount of time after which to start the release process, in seconds, which will trigger an action in the sequencer and begin to fade the sound out to silence. Default is 0.0, which means there is no time at which the release

Field Name	description
	is automatically initiated, but it can still be initiated by the sound effects operator.
release_duration_time	The amount of time to fade the sound out to silence, in seconds. Default is 0.0, which stops the sound immediately. If the value is infinity ("∞") the sound does not fade at all.
loop_from_time	The time, in seconds, at which to stop playing the WAV file and start instead playing at the loop_to_time. Default is 0.0, which means not to do any looping.
loop_to_time	The time, in seconds, at which to start playing the WAV file after having reached loop_from_time. Default is 0.0, which means play the WAV file from its beginning after hitting loop_from_time.
loop_limit	The number of times to pass through the loop. Default is 0, which means loop indefinitely. Looping will be terminated if the sound effects operator stops the sound.
max_duration_time	The maximum amount of time, in seconds, to load from the WAV file. This can be useful for infinite sources. Default is 0.0, which means no limit.
start_time	The time, in seconds, at which to start playing the WAV file. Default is 0.0, which means play the WAV file from its beginning.
designer_volume_level	WAV files are generally made as loud as possible without distortion, to minimize noise. This parameter lets you quiet the WAV file before it is mixed with other sounds. Default is 1.0, which performs no quieting.
designer_pan	For monophonic WAV files, positions the sound in the stereo field. For stereo WAV files, acts as a balance control, moving the sound towards the right or left speaker. -1.0 is full left, 0.0 is center, and +1.0 is full right.
MIDI_program_number	not implemented
MIDI_note_number	not implemented
function_key	not implemented
omit_panning	do not allow the sound effects operator to pan this sound. Default is False.

Field Name	description

In addition, there are provisions for multi-channel sounds: a sound can have many channels and you can decide which speakers to send them to.

## 7 Sequence items

All sequence items have a name and a type. The name is used to refer to the sequence item from other sequence items. The type describes what each sequence item does. Each sequence item also has other fields, described below.

### 7.1 start\_sequence

There may be only one of these in a sequence. When the Sound Effects Player starts, it looks for this sequence item to determine how to begin executing the sequence.

#### 7.1.1 next

The sequence item to execute next.

### 7.2 start\_sound

Start playing a sound, letting the sound effects operator control it from a specified cluster.

#### 7.2.1 sound\_name

The sound to play, as named in the in the Sounds section above.

#### 7.2.2 cluster\_number

Which cluster the sound effects operator will use to control this sound.

#### 7.2.3 tag

A name by which to refer to this sound in stop\_sound.

#### 7.2.4 next\_starts

The sequence item to execute when the sound starts to play.

### **7.2.5 next\_completion**

The sequence item to execute when the sound finishes playing and was not terminated early

### **7.2.6 next\_termination**

The sequence item to execute when the sound finishes playing and was terminated early.

### **7.2.7 next\_release\_started**

The sequence item to execute when the sound enters the release portion of its amplitude envelope. If the sound was terminated early this sequence item is not executed; instead the next\_termination sequence item is executed when the sound is complete.

## **7.3 stop\_sound**

Stop a playing all sounds with the specified tag.

### **7.3.1 tag**

The tag value of the playing sounds to stop.

### **7.3.2 next**

When all sounds have been issued their stop commands, execute this sequence item.

## **7.4 wait**

Wait for the specified number of seconds, displaying a message to the operator.

### **7.4.1 time\_to\_wait**

The number of seconds to wait.

### **7.4.2 next\_completion**

The sequence item to execute when the wait is complete.

### **7.4.3 next**

The sequence item to execute when the wait begins.

## **7.5 offer\_sound**

Allow the sound effects operator to play a sound by pressing the Start button on a cluster. The sound is controlled by the cluster. When it finishes the offer remains.

### **7.5.1 cluster**

The number of the cluster that will contain this offer.

### **7.5.2 tag**

The tag used in `cease_offering_sound` to remove this offer.

### **7.5.3 Q\_number**

The name used to activate this sound from another computer.

### **7.5.4 next\_to\_start**

The sequence item to execute when the sound effects operator presses the Start button on the designated cluster.

### **7.5.5 text\_to\_display**

The message to show the sound effects operator at the top of the designated cluster.

### **7.5.6 next**

The sequence item to execute once the offer has been made.

## **7.6 cease\_offering\_sound**

Stop allowing the sound effects operator to make a particular sound.

### **7.6.1 tag**

The tag value of the `offer_sound` sequence items to cancel.

### **7.6.2 next**

The sequence item to execute when the offerings have been removed.

## **7.7 operator\_wait**

Wait for the sound effects operator to press the Play button.

### **7.7.1 text\_to\_display**

The message to display to the operator until he pushes the Play button.

### **7.7.2 next\_play**

The sequence item to execute when the operator pushes the Play button.

### **7.7.3      next**

The sequence item to execute as soon as we start waiting.