

# Human Sequencer

Alexandre Quessy

Les productions Quessy

<http://alexandre.quessy.net>

Montréal, Québec, Canada

+1 514-522-9376

[alexandre@quessy.net](mailto:alexandre@quessy.net)

## Biographical information

Alexandre Quessy is dedicated to creating collaborative interfaces for musical and video art using free software such as Pure Data. Working for Serge Proulx at Université du Québec à Montréal, where he studies communications, he is concerned about the uses of new media. His background in classical music and computer science makes him a passionate creator of new musical interactive concepts. He is currently much interested into electronics and tangible interfaces. He regularly gives workshops about such topics in Canada.

## Description of Piece

This audio game is an interactive installation for collective musical creation. The challenge is to create together as a group interesting rhythmic patterns in a giant sequencer controlled by the visitors' feet on the floor. The virtual playback head moves in a left-to-right motion on the mat. The music is generated with voices singing the scat, a vocal jazz improvisation technique using nonsense words. This work proposes to the anonymous passers to create transitory interactions by collaboration and laughter.

The notes are chosen from chords in progressions that are found in jazz standards. The people that take part in this tangible drum machine do not hear a sound when they step or jump on the mat. Sounds are heard when the playback heads trigger their position. Therefore, this audio game is suited for creating rhythmic pattern through collaboration rather than through personal interactivity or competition. This can seem a bit deceptive at first, but it needs a little practice and listening to be mastered.

This installation uses *free/libre* software. The hardware consists in a 10 feet sided square mat which has 8 by 8 aluminium paper switches to detect human steps.