

Communing with *Nature*

While the delegates to *Nature's* Boston conference explore the human genome, DNA manipulation dominates the exhibit area.

It burst on the scene a few months ago and is already stealing into laboratories across the United States — Applied Biosystems' **automated DNA sequencer**, the model 370A (Reader Service No. 100). Based on a non-radioactive chemistry developed at the California Institute of Technology, the

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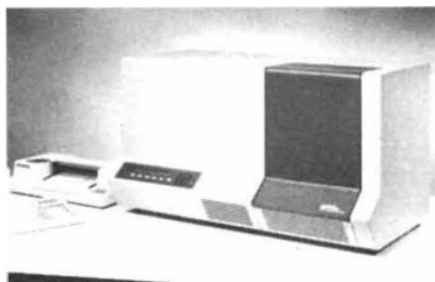


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370A harbours a laser scanner that recognizes four fluorescent dye labels, thereby permitting single-lane detection. The chromophores, sorted by size in a polyacrylamide gel, generate signals that the 370A digitizes and sends to its data system. AB says a template of 300 to 400 bases can typically be sequenced in 8 to 10 hrs. The \$89,500 (US) system will be on display in booths 25 and 26.

On the flip side of DNA sequencing, International Biotechnologies Inc expects to bring forth its **Personal Synthesizer** by late '86 or early '87 (Reader Service No. 101). IBI has armed its instrument with a battery of self-diagnostic monitors for fluid flow, coupling efficiencies, valve function and gas pressures. In the diagnostic mode, the company claims, the \$10,000 (US) synthesizer can both determine the source of problems and suggest ways to remedy the malfunctions. IBI will be in booth 50 at the conference.

A **fluorometer** that can quantify DNA in concentrations as low as 10 ng per ml will be part of Hoefer's display at booth 44 (Reader Service No. 102). The TKO 100, which uses a mercury lamp light source filtered to 365 nm and a photodetector filtered to read 460 nm emitted light, measures the fluorescence produced by DNA



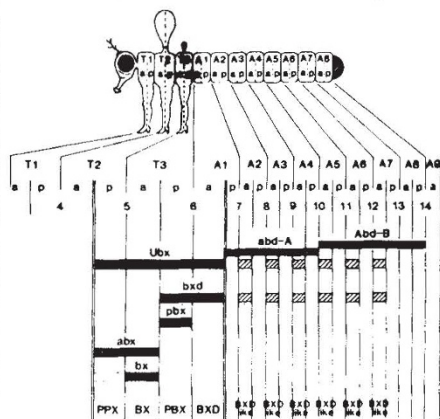
The TKO 100: zero, calibrate, and quantify.

mixed with the fluorochrome Hoechst 33258. The instrument comes with one cuvette and a \$1,200 (US) price tag.

Lofstrand Labs' **molecular cloning service** can assume the chore of producing genomic libraries and mRNA probes from tissue culture samples (Reader Service No. 103). Starting with the customer's culture cells or clinical specimens, the company prepares cDNA libraries from mRNA at a cost of \$3,000 (US) and will subclone portions of isolated genes into Riboprobe vectors to produce RNA probes. Lofstrand will also construct genomic libraries for \$1,000 (US). More information on these and other services will be on hand in Lofstrand's booth 61.

Specializing in the field of DNA probes and monoclonal antibody reagents for **cancer research**, Oncogene Science Inc plans to introduce a cDNA probe for studies involving human leukemia cells with the Philadelphia translocation (Reader Service No. 104). According to OSI the probe, called bcr (Pr-2), detects the chimeric *phl/abl* mRNA characteristic of such cells and is suitable for Northern and Southern hybridizations. The company, in booth 55 at the *Nature* conference, charges \$150 (US) for 2.5 µg of probe.

The information and expertise concentrated at Cold Spring Harbor's symposia often become transcribed into textual form, and the laboratory will have many such texts available for the browsing in booth 69 (Reader Service No. 105). The



Development matures into an analytical science. 50th anniversary of CSH's symposia on quantitative biology, for example, has resulted in *Molecular Biology of Development*, volume 50 in the series. This particular edition sells for \$140 (US) in cloth and \$70 (US) in paper. An assortment of textbooks, laboratory manuals and other reference books will be at CSH's booth. □

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