Suspended from the ceiling of an old factory building, four thousand test tubes hang from a net in a spiral formation while Petri dishes are lined up on the floor of the dark room. The laboratory containers are glowing a greenish yellow color, thanks to a flourescent sodium solution and black light.

The installation is about genetic codes. The artist, Helga Griffiths, calls her 8-meter-high work “Identity Analysis”. Recently shown at the Galerie des Kulturvereins Wacker Fabrik (The Wacker Factory Cultural Association) near Darmstadt, Germany, a serial line code depicts this so-called ‘genetic fingerprint’. Physical shape, abilities and hereditary human diseases are all contained within this code, which scientists are busy trying to decipher. Griffiths was always fascinated by codes in communication, whether sign language, Braille, Morse code, birds’ songs, or the signs and symbols used in the world of fashion and advertising. “With this work, I am now entering into the human realm”, explains the artist.

Visitors can “enter” the installation by walking around it, becoming part of the experiment itself. They can see the human body as some kind of room where experimental scientific research is being performed. Here, glass does not only symbolize the body as a “transparent room” or a “storehouse” of information, but it also shows the beauty and fragility of the human body in a thoroughly mechanized world. Owing to the enthusiastic response from both the general public and the art critics, this original installation will be shown again at the “ART Frankfurt” from April 28 through May 1, 2001.