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Alumnae Biography

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The Reptile Wing went through a transformative expansion and renovation to its 1930's WPA Exhibit Hall. As Exhibit Architect, Darby Curtis developed a design to de-mystify and educate the public about reptiles.

The design includes aquatic, desert, amphibian, invertebrate, and venomous and non-venomous snake exhibit areas, incorporating very specific - variously warm, hot, dry and wet - environments, successfully supporting three distinct user groups: the animals, the keepers, and public visitors. The exhibits emphasize bio-diversity, with interactive zones to learn about reptiles and their crucial role in our ecosystem. The Fear Zone follows a serpentine form which is reinforced by an architectural canopy suggesting a snake's anatomy lit along its spine. The main intent is to eliminate the fear of reptiles, and dispel cultural misconceptions and myths through education and providing opportunities to interact with specimens. The intent is tied to an educational experience, walking through the body of a snake and its relationship to humans and the environment.

AWARDS
The City of New York Design + Construction Excellence 2008: SI Zoo Reptile Wing
2004 Design Award, Staten Island AIA
NY Construction News Best of 2007 - Award of Merit: Cultural: SI Zoo Reptile Wing
2007 Andrew J. Thomas Pioneer in Housing Award to C+GA - AIA New York Chapter

PUBLICATIONS
Sunset Park School and Library