Roberta Darby Curtis, AIA / Bachelor of Science, Architecture, 1982

Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts

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Alumnae Biography

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STATEN ISLAND ZOO | CARL F. KAUFFELD HALL OF REPTILES
EXHIBIT ARCHITECT
2007

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 reenforced by an architectural canopy suggesting a snake’s anatomy. It along its spine. The main intent is to eliminate the fear of reptiles, and dispell cultural misconceptions and myths through education and providing opportunities to interact with specimens. The visitor is led on an educational experience, wending 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
New Schools for New York, Plans and precedents for Small Schools, Princeton Architectural Press

BIOGRAPHY
Roberta Darby Curtis, AIA is the founding partner of Curtis + Ginsberg Architects LLP, providing award winning architectural services for over 24 years in the New York tri-state area. C+GA specializes in providing quality sustainable design where the needs of the client, the environment, and the community, from building users to the community at large, take priority. Responsible for design and management of the firm, the practice covers educational, institutional, commercial, residential and urban design projects. Darby has also taught architecture to school students through Learning by Design of the AIA NY Chapter; and served on the Municipal Art Society’s fellows and Preservation committees.

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