

Washington University in St. Louis  
**Washington University Open Scholarship**

---

Women in the Design World: Work in Progress

Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts

---

9-7-2014

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

Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts

Follow this and additional works at: [https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/wia\\_profiles](https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/wia_profiles)

---

**Recommended Citation**

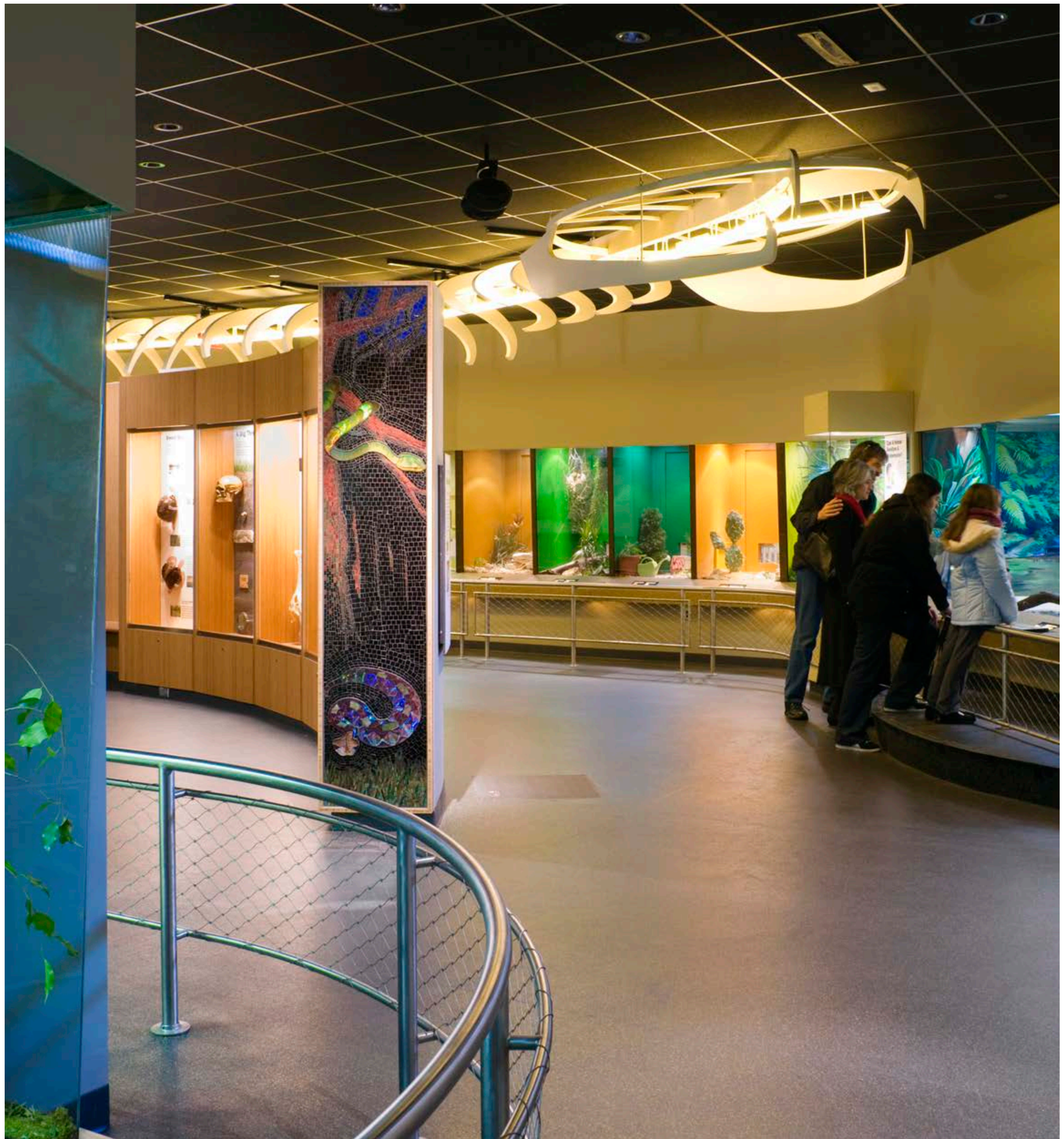
Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts, "Roberta Darby Curtis, AIA / Bachelor of Science, Architecture, 1982" (2014). *Women in the Design World: Work in Progress*. 14.  
[https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/wia\\_profiles/14](https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/wia_profiles/14)

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts at Washington University Open Scholarship. It has been accepted for inclusion in Women in the Design World: Work in Progress by an authorized administrator of Washington University Open Scholarship. For more information, please contact [digital@wumail.wustl.edu](mailto:digital@wumail.wustl.edu).

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 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 visitor is led on an educational experience, winding through the body of a snake and its relationship to humans and the environment.



Alumnae Biography

**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 Fellows and Preservation committees.

**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  
"And the Winning School Is – Smaller", Architecture View by Paul Goldberger, *The New York Times*.  
New Schools for New York, Plans and Precedents for Small Schools, Princeton Architectural Press