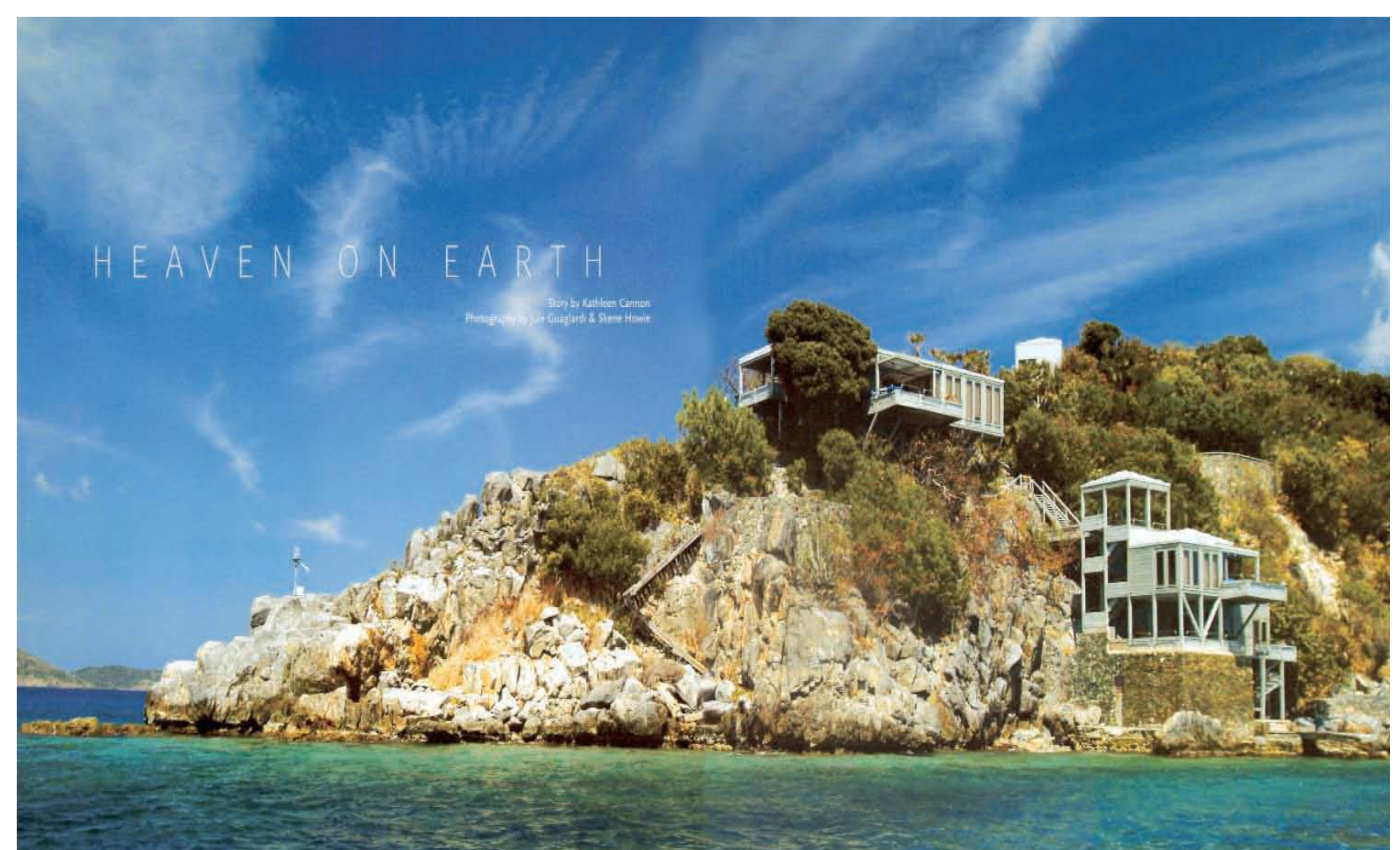


# HEAVEN ON EARTH

Story by Kathleen Carrion  
Photography by John Guagliardi & Skene Howie



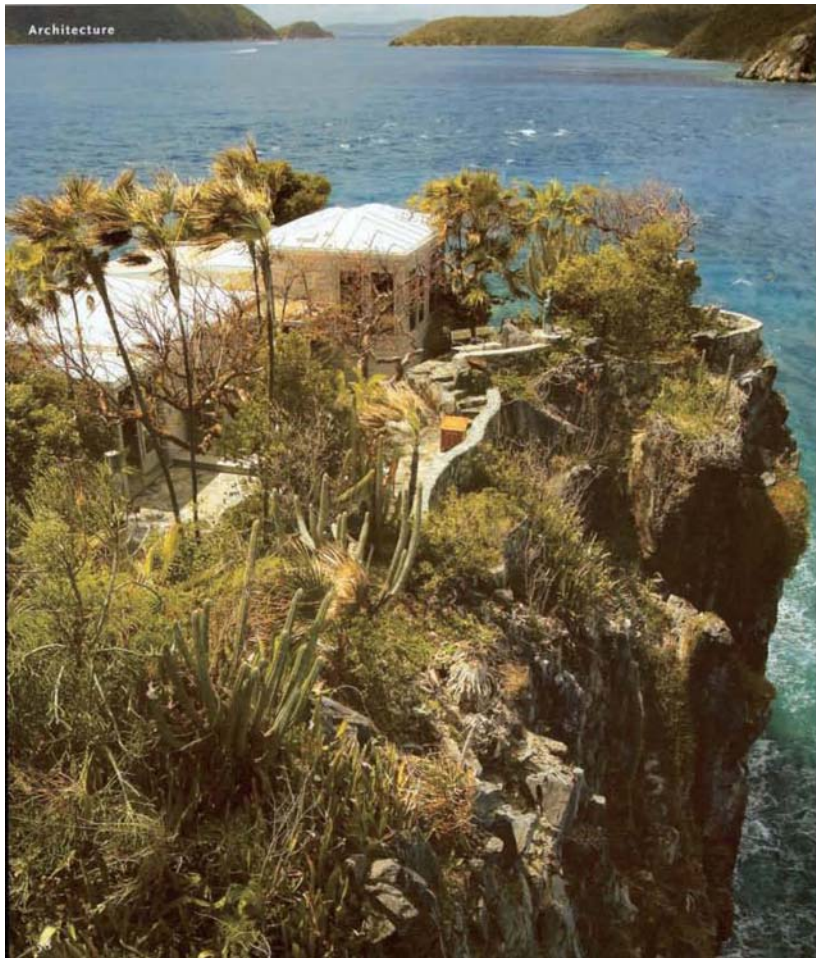




*Clockwise from top left: Curved lounge sitting on a secret patio at the cliff's edge; tucked on a ledge, this private bedroom overlooks dramatic cliffs and sea views; a gazebo with a staircase leads down to another section of the estate.*







Local architect Michael Helm oversaw the restoration. It was a familiar project, as he was Selzer's original designer of Steele Point.

The 4,200-square foot main house is actually a series of pavilions on different levels of a 100-foot cliff. To keep it from toppling into the sea below, the builders "stitched" the house into the rocks underneath, using 20 foot steel rods. Its levels are connected via stairwells and bridges. Angled brackets and braces support overhanging decks and rooms.

To protect the structure from the elements, Helm used red cypress wood, resistant to rot and insects. The wood was sandblasted to resemble driftwood.

Selzer had told Helm he wanted to awaken in the morning in his sea-level bedrooms, tumble out of bed and into the water for a swim. He would ascend to an upper level for breakfast. His climb would conclude at the top tier, his sculpture studio, 100 feet above the surf. At the end of the day, he would reverse his trek.

In building the structure, Helm tried to maintain existing vegetation, including palms and sea grape trees, oleander hedges, and mango trees. Little excavation was required. "The house is tailored to this site," Helm says. "It's a very gentle guest on the point."

The restoration was gentle as well. The house had become weathered in the time between owners, but was structurally sound.

*Previous pages, clockwise from top left: A typical scene from this bedroom at Steele Point; an elegantly appointed bedroom on the lower deck; an open-air shower off one of the private bedrooms.*

*Opposite page: An overhead view of the main house surrounded by vegetation.*

*Above: Incredible sunset views can be seen at Steele Point.*