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From Golden Rock to Historic Gem: a historical archaeological analysis of the maritime cultural landscape of St. Eustatius, Dutch Caribbean
Stelten, R.J.G.

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Author: Stelten, R.J.G.

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Curriculum Vitae

Ruud Stelten (Roermond, 1986) completed BA and MA degrees in Archaeology at the Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University in 2009 and 2010 respectively. Research for his theses focused on maritime archaeology on the Dutch Caribbean island St. Eustatius, where he also worked on his first Caribbean archaeological research projects under the direction of the St. Eustatius Center for Archaeological Research (SECAR). During and after completing his studies, Ruud was employed as an archaeologist at Grontmij archaeology in the Netherlands, where he worked on numerous commercial archaeological projects dealing with remains from every major period in northwestern European history.

Ruud directed his first archaeological field research in 2010 at the Aapravasi Ghat UNESCO World Heritage Site in Mauritius, where he spent a total of five months researching the archaeology of indentured laborers. In late 2011, Ruud became the island archaeologist of St. Eustatius, a position he held for two years. During this time, he managed SECAR, conducted various commercial archaeological projects, organized several student field schools, and was involved in public outreach. Between 2014 and 2016, Ruud was hired as field supervisor on archaeological projects in the Dominican Republic, Martinique, and Grenada, as part of the NEXUS1492 project.

Recognizing the need for sharing archaeological research with the general public, Ruud founded Terramar Museum on Bonaire, an archaeological museum displaying the story of 7,000 years of Caribbean history. The museum opened in August 2016, and Ruud took on the position of director for the first year of the museum's existence. During this time, he established a solid foundation for the museum and welcomed thousands of visitors. He was involved in all aspects of the museum operation: guiding tours, collection management, public outreach, educational programs, presentations and workshops, and setting up temporary exhibitions.

As a specialist in Caribbean maritime archaeology, Ruud was hired to carry out various commercial underwater archaeological projects throughout 2017 and 2018. This prompted him to establish his own organization dedicated to maritime archaeological research: The Shipwreck Survey. He now organizes multiple underwater archaeological field schools, research projects, and expeditions every year on St. Eustatius and other locations around the world.