



What Remains?

Life, Death and the Human Art of Undertaking

Ru Callender



Publication Date: September 15, 2022

Nature & Environment

\$28.00 USD

Hardcover • 6 x 9 • 288 pages

ISBN 978-1-91529-412-8

MEDIA CONTACT: Merritt Smail, msmail@chelseagreen.com,

802-295-6300 x141

“Death is not my friend, neither is it my enemy; it is my destiny.”

What Remains? is the raw, unflinching story of an unorthodox undertaker. While it is a book about death, about saying goodbye to those you love – and those you don’t, it is also a book about life. It is a celebration of everyday humanity and our capacity to face death with courage and compassion.

When he became an undertaker, Ru Callender undertook to deal with the dead for the sake of the living. Setting up the Green Funeral Company in 2000, he had no formal training or experience in undertaking, just an old Volvo (which served as a hearse) and the desire to face his own unresolved grief for the death of his parents. Ru brought a pioneering, outsider ethos to the business of death; an unseen level of deliberate emotional engagement to his trade. He found that allowing people to participate emotionally and physically in the funeral itself—rejecting the prevailing industrial funeral business model that robs people of the chance to approach death with honesty and participation—had a profound effect.

Turning modern occult rituals into performance art, Ru has carried coffins across windswept beaches, sat in pubs with caskets on beer-stained tables, helped children fire flaming arrows into their father’s funeral pyre, and turned modern occult rituals into performance art – all in the name of creating truly authentic ceremonies that celebrate those who are no longer here, and those who remain.

***What Remains?* is a profound, deeply moving, and politically charged book that will change the way readers think about life, death, and the all-important end-of-life experience.**

“Death has shown me unimaginable horror, the unbreakable core of love and courage that lies at the heart of what it means to be human.” —Rupert Callender, from *What Remains?*

“Rupert Callender hope[s] to redefine the funeral.” —The Telegraph