



Voices on the Coast

a writing retreat with **Mark Smith**

8 - 10 November 2024

Voice can be a difficult concept for new writers to grapple with, particularly when they receive feedback from competition judges, manuscript assessors or even prospective publishers. What defines voice? How does a writer create their own unique style that will allow their writing to stand out from the crowd? And how do we emulate the writing of authors we admire without mimicking their style? This workshop retreat is a chance for writers – new, emerging or established – to find their own voice through stories that reflect their life experience and their passion for writing.

In this weekend retreat, author **Mark Smith** will be working with a small group of writers interested in exploring their creative voice and crafting stories that are truly individual and unique. Using workshop activities gathered over thirty years of teaching, and the last ten years as a published writer, Mark will guide participants through the essential elements of storytelling – character, setting, exposition and imagery – with an emphasis on drawing on lived experience to generate and define their own voice. These techniques will be adaptable to both fiction and non-fiction.

Mark Smith and **Ingrid Gaiotto** welcome you to this fully accommodated workshop retreat. The environment will be nurturing, supportive and stimulating, with morning guided writing sessions designed to shake loose new ideas and structured talks around key writing principles. In the afternoons, there will be opportunities to share your writing in a supportive, salon-style atmosphere, designed to encourage and inspire.

Come with a desire to explore what you can create through language, a willingness to restart a stalled project or generate ideas for a sparkling and surprising new one, and maybe a written extract or two from work already in progress. Mark is new enough to the publishing world to understand the frustrations and joys of sharing your work, gaining feedback from your peers and learning what to take on board and what to leave behind. He learned his craft through short fiction, and by taking part in workshops like this one, where he met writers at a similar stage in their careers and became part of a network of like-minded creatives that still nourish and support him now. His guided workshop sessions will draw on the works of writers familiar to participants as well as providing prompts, tools and techniques that they can draw on long after the weekend is over.

Allow yourself the luxury of an uninterrupted writing focus in this convivial atmosphere, delight in delicious local food and wine and enjoy an introduction to vibrant Geelong and the Eastern Beach waterfront.

An experienced tour operator, **Ingrid Gaiotto** has a passion for hospitality inspired by her Italian heritage. Ingrid will be your welcoming host during the workshop retreat and provide the food and drink for your enjoyment on the select days and evenings meals are provided.

The Workshop Facilitator



Mark Smith is the author of four novels: *The Road To Winter*, *Wilder Country*, *Land Of Fences* and *If Not Us*. *Wilder Country* won the 2018 Australian Indie Book Award for Young Adults, while *The Road To Winter* is taught in schools around the country. He is also an award-winning writer of short fiction, with credits including the Josephine Ulrick Literature Prize and the Alan Marshall Short Story Prize. His work has appeared in *Best Australian Stories*, *Great Ocean Quarterly*, *The Big Issue*, *Island*, *The Saturday Paper*, *The Victorian Writer* and *The Australian*. He is also the co-curator of *Minds Went Walking*, *Paul Kelly's Songs Reimagined* and *Into Your Arms, Nick Cave's Songs Reimagined*. Mark's new novel, *Three Boys Gone*, will be published by Pan Macmillan in January 2025.

“Mark’s workshop was a true masterclass! I felt like I gained years of writing experience in a few hours thanks to his engaging and accessible insights that made everything just click. I walked away feeling inspired, confident, and with all the tools I needed to improve my craft.”

Miranda Luby, Writer

You Host



Ingrid Gaiotto is a hospitality & tourism entrepreneur, interior designer and educator, originally from Biella in Piedmont, Italy. Ingrid's passion for Italy inspired In giro Tours, which offers unique and unforgettable travel experiences through the cultural symphony that is Italy, in the company of a local and away from the tourist trail. In giro has expanded to now also curate bespoke local experiences, tours and retreats. As host and guide, Ingrid is enthusiastically welcoming.

“Ingrid, we had a wonderful trip with you and can’t thank you enough for the care and attention that you gave us all. Definitely the best organised trip that we have been on ... A truly memorable experience.”

Chris Spriggs, In giro Tour of Piemonte participant



Venue

Eastern Beach Art House is located on the spectacular Geelong waterfront, just one hour from Melbourne. It sits amidst a large, verdant garden and boasts tri-level views over Corio Bay, including Eastern Beach and the Royal Geelong Yacht Club marina. Built in 1909, this atmospheric Art Deco home was improved in 1947 and is now largely furnished with a rich collection of artworks and antiques from the former Brooklyn Arts hotel in Fitzroy, Melbourne. Participants in this workshop will have exclusive access to the boutique accommodation.

Program

Friday 8 November, 5pm start

After arrival and settling into your room, you are greeted with a traditional Italian aperitivo, followed by a fully catered dinner featuring local food and wine, and plenty of writerly conviviality to welcome all participants.

Saturday 9 November

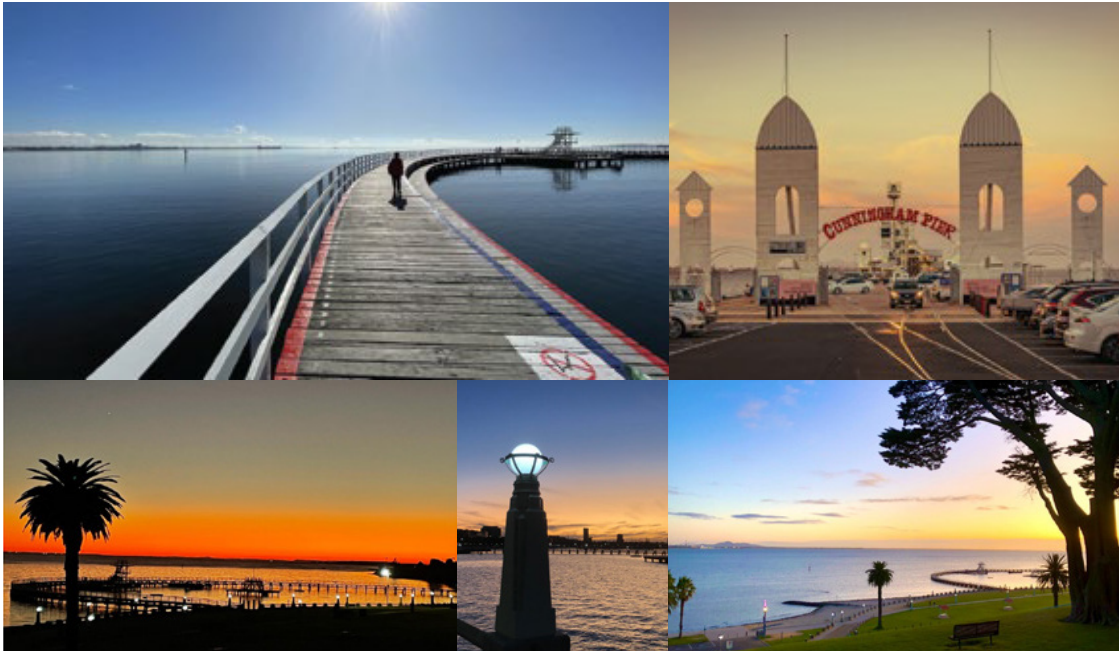
The option of a morning walk for those who are early risers, or simply some quiet time for 'morning pages'. The workshop itself commences at 10.00am and finishes at 5.15pm, with a break for morning tea and lunch. Dinner is at your discretion, offering you a chance to explore some of the fabulous local restaurants.

Sunday 10 November, 5pm finish

The workshop follows the same format, with a break for morning tea and lunch. Weather permitting, in the morning we'll engage in an immersive encounter with Geelong, guaranteed to stimulate ideas for your writing and a deeper experience of this historic town and, later, gather for convivial readings of our new work and reflection in the afternoon.

Accommodation

Eastern Beach Art House offers two tiers of guest accommodation across five bedrooms. Every room is large and comfortable, however, all rooms share a bathroom. The ground floor has two deluxe * rooms: the Salon and Bay View (ideal for single occupancy + \$40/night single supplement payable*). The upper floor offers two very comfortable rooms: the Front and South garrets (ideal for both single occupancy and twin share). The Undercroft is a quirky former cocktail bar that is fitted out as a bedroom for this workshop.



Experience Historic Geelong

Geelong is blessed with historic architecture, a stunning waterfront, beautiful botanic gardens, great restaurants and a thriving urban precinct and cultural scene - reclaiming and reshaping the city's old industrial landscape and its many grand old buildings.

Get a dose of sunshine with a stroll along the waterfront from Cunningham Pier to Eastern Beach, taking in public artworks, landscaped gardens, ice-cream parlours and fabulous restaurants and cafes. Take a dip in the sheltered beach pool, kick back in the promenade complex and restored pavilion right across the road at Eastern Beach, or walk in the renowned Botanical Gardens nearby.

Cost

Non-residential – \$950pp (excludes accommodation/breakfast)

Residential (includes accommodation & breakfast at Eastern Beach Art House)

- *Single occupancy bedroom* (shared bathroom) – \$1,350pp*
- **The Salon and Bay View Deluxe rooms incur a \$40/night single supplement – \$1,430pp*
- *If you prefer to share a room with a writer friend, the cost is reduced to \$1,150pp*

The price includes an opening night aperitif, dinner and wine; accommodation/breakfast (for residential participants only); morning teas and lunches; and writing-related activities and handbooks. We will do our best to accommodate dietary preferences and requirements.

Please book early if you'd like to secure one of the deluxe rooms, as rooms will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis. Alternative nearby accommodation is also available. Please note that the boutique accommodation is in a historic building and rooms are accessed via stairs, with no lift available.

To ensure this writing workshop allows generous one-on-one mentoring and guided writing time, it is strictly limited to 10 people.

Booking

To book your place, please contact Ingrid Gaiotto on 0418 418 288 or email info@ingiro.com.au

We will email you a confirmation, a Booking Form and an invoice requesting payment in full (please refer to our terms and conditions below). If you make a booking to attend, you are agreeing to the following terms and conditions:

General Conditions

We're looking forward to an enriching and enjoyable retreat together and we reserve the right to ask any participant to leave the retreat if we consider their behaviour to be unacceptable or detrimental to the health or wellbeing of others on the retreat, without refund.

Payment

All bookings must be accompanied by a signed Booking Form and payment in full.

Cancellation

All cancellations must be made in writing to info@ingiro.com.au

If you have to cancel for medical reasons, you will be required to present a medical certificate and your payment will be refunded in full. Otherwise, if the cancellation is made up to 14 days before the workshop, we will refund your payment minus an administration fee of \$250. If you cancel less than 14 days before the retreat, the total payment made by you is non-refundable. If minimum numbers for the retreat are not reached, the retreat will be cancelled and your payment refunded in full.

“Close the door. Write with no one looking over your shoulder. Don’t try to figure out what other people want to hear from you; figure out what you have to say.”

Barbra Kingsolver

“You should write because you love the shape of stories and sentences and the creation of different words on a page.”

Annie Proulx