**Press Release**

**New show: *Alexander Pope: A Search For Perfection***

The award-winning blind Storyteller, **Giles Abbott** will be performing his new piece ***Alexander Pope: A Search For Perfection*** in Pope’s actual Grotto and other local venues during the Twickenham Festival 2016 and beyond. Commissioned by the **Pope’s Grotto Preservation Trust**, Abbott’s piece will explore the complexities of Pope’s character, drive, creativity, and his stunning artistic and design concepts.

After Shakespeare and Tennyson, Alexander Pope is the most quoted poet in English. He was also a savage satirist, a garden designer and a Catholic in dangerous times. His Grotto is all that survives of his wonderful house and estate on the banks of the Thames in Twickenham.

“Pope's Grotto is an extraordinary mine of images and stories and provides the perfect inspiration for Giles's wonderful storytelling. Giles’s ability to deliver Pope's poetry in a lively and accessible way will enthuse lovers of Pope and new audiences of all ages alike.” – **Pope’s Grotto Preservation Trust**

“I’m thrilled to have this chance to tell the story of Alexander Pope and his Grotto. I’m astonished and inspired by just how much he achieved given the obstacles of education, faith and disability in his path.” – **Giles Abbott**

**Giles Abbott** will be performing ***Alexander Pope: A Search For Perfection*** on the following dates:

[Orleans House Gallery](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/home/services/arts/orleans_house_gallery.htm) - 30th May 2016 at 1pm and 6pm (full version: 45mins)

[Pope's Grotto](http://www.popesgrotto.org.uk/) - 18th & 25th June 2016 between 10am - 3pm (shortened version on the hour and half hour)

[Twickenham Library](https://www.richmond.gov.uk/twickenham_library) - 4th July 2016 at 7pm (FV: 45mins)

[Old Sorting Office Arts Centre, Barnes](http://www.osoarts.org.uk/) - 13th October 2016 at 7.30pm (FV: 45mins)

Tickets will be sold via the venues with the exception of Pope’s Grotto which can be bought via Eventbrite: [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/popes-grotto-open-days-and-alexander-pope-a-search-for-perfection-tickets-21763560395?aff=eac2](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/popes-grotto-open-days-and-alexander-pope-a-search-for-perfection-tickets-21763560395?aff=eac2)

**Age guidelines**: 10+ (material suitable for younger audiences but attention span for full version advised)

**About Giles Abbott:**

**Giles Abbott** started storytelling in 1999 in response to sudden, but not total, sight loss. Since then he has become an award-winning storyteller who just happens to be the UK’s only blind professional Storyteller. His repertoire includes British, Norse and Greek myths, and folktales from around the world. He is the Storyteller in Residence for the Last Tuesday Society at the Museum Of Curiosities, and regularly performs at storytelling and literature festivals. He also works with both children and adults using storytelling to promote confidence, increase literacy and inspire a love of words. [www.gilesabbott.com](http://www.gilesabbott.com)

* **For more information on Giles Abbott please email** [**storytellergiles@gmail.com**](mailto:storytellergiles@gmail.com) **or call Liza Frank on 07966 451 947**
* **For more information on Pope’s Grotto please visit** [www.popesgrotto.org.uk](http://www.popesgrotto.org.uk)

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**Note to editors:**

* ***Alexander Pope: A Search For Perfection*** is supported by the National Lottery through Arts Council England. To find out more about the Arts Council visit [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)
* Giles Abbott is available for interview and advance photographs. Please contact him on 07900 244 574 or [info@gilesabbott.com](mailto:info@gilesabbott.com)

 