**Reviews:**

**‘The Towers of Man’ – EM Records, EMRCD 028 (released 16 December 2014):**

Pott has a distinctive voice of his own. … [The title of the Viola Sonata] refers to two towers on the Isle of Man. …This background information is interesting, but you don’t have to know it to enjoy this superb sonata. …The finale is a virtuoso *tour de force.* These few words are sadly inadequate to evoke the power of this dramatic and superbly wrought work. …The composer is …clearly a formidable pianist. No praise is too high for Yuko Inoue, whose viola sings with magnificent, throbbing intensity throughout its range and throughout the work. …This is music of great beauty and integrity, and the performance fully does it justice. It would be criminal to let it pass you by.

**William Hedley, International Record Review, March 2015**

It was with eager anticipation that I received this new disc. I was not disappointed. …The Viola Sonata is instantly rewarding, …placing Pott firmly in the pantheon of the great British chamber music composers of the twentieth century. It is a strong, persuasive and deeply rhythmic tonal work. Each movement has a lot to offer, but …it is the final movement which is the real winner. Themes from the first two movements …are developed along with new material into a wonderful final outpouring.

The performances are excellent. Yuko Inoue had long wished that Pott would compose a sonata for her, and she is beautifully toned in this recording. The sound is excellent and the booklet notes by the composer himself are similarly fine.

**Stuart Sillitoe, Musicweb International, April 2015**

Pott makes no apology for adopting a somewhat conservative approach to composition, speaking of an idiom *'... which turns back into the past to locate and explores roads less travelled ...'* and eschewing novelty for its own sake. But the music is emphatically none the worse for that. The sonata's powerful atmosphere comes from its depiction of two strange towers, follies erected on the cliffs of the Isle of Man above the stormy Irish Sea. The song cycle sets poems of Pasternak and Akhmatova …in German translation, and forms a beautifully crafted addition to the romantic Lied tradition, with subtly incorporated nods to the great Russian song composers - bell sounds and sad, chromatic melodic contours - not excluding Shostakovich, whose DSCH motif is woven into the setting of a poem dedicated to him.

**Records International, May 2015**

The [Viola] Sonata is a fine, arresting work… Though the music is in the English tradition it is not backward-looking; instead the piece restlessly explores keys and interesting contemporary harmonies. It’s big, surging, assertive music with a very strong melodic vein. This is a very fine composition [and] …a significant addition to the repertoire. Yuko Inoue and Francis Pott give the sonata passionate advocacy.

While the Viola Sonata has a decidedly English feel to it, …[the] songs put me much more in mind of Lieder composed by Austrian and German composers.

This disc contains two rewarding and accessible works in what are surely definitive performances. Pott is a significant composer and it’s good to have these two fine examples of his recent work made widely available.

**John Quinn, Musicweb International, July 2015**