*Programme note*

The Shard at London Bridge is the tallest building in the European Union. The iceberg shaped tower was designed by Renzo Piano, whose inspiration came from the history of the site: the railway lines snaking through and over the streets, the sails of the tall ships that once sailed the Thames, and the spires of the London churches as painted by Canaletto. His intention is that the tapered design will make for a more elegant, delicate addition to the skyline than a conventional sky-scraper might, while the glass façade will reflect the light in such a way that the building will appear to change with the weather and the seasons.

Stephen Goss's orchestral showpiece takes inspiration from the Shard's place in the centre of London's past, present and future. The piece is energetic and optimistic: suggesting, in glittering orchestral textures, the play of light as the building reflects the changing sky. In its Reichian rhythmic drive perhaps there is also a hint of New York brought to the capital's skyline.

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