

## radio choice

*Chris Campling*

### Bridging the Gap

Radio 4, 11am

This lovingly compiled sound picture of the Tyne Bridge examines what it means to the people of Newcastle — and its local wildlife. Kittiwakes, for example, use the bridge as a nesting site; the most inland breeding site for these ocean-travelling gulls in the world. Threaded through the narrative are snatches of Tommy Proctor, a Tyne tour guide at work (“There is the Millennium Bridge; unlike the wibbly-wobbly one in London, ours doesn’t move”) and some occasionally overwrought blank verse from the poet Keith Armstrong. We also get the history of the decline of local industry — the phrase “ferrying coals to Newcastle” is somewhat redundant these days, what with the pits closing down — and a general sense of a civic pride as strong now as it ever was. And, at the end of it all, a snatch of Lindisfarne to make us feel that the fog on the Tyne is all ours, too.

### The Write Stuff

Radio 4, 6.30pm

The excellent literary quiz with the terrible cliché for a title and the frequently brilliant final round (some of those parodies of the featured writer of the week) returns for a six-part series. The host is James Walton and the team captains John Walsh and Lynne Truss.

### Mordrin McDonald: 21st-Century Wizard

Radio 4, 11pm

Mark my words — when this creation of the Scottish stand-up David Kay is a global phenomenon (among those who can follow the accent, that is), you will be proud to say that you were among those who shared his first, faltering footsteps on the road to greatness. Mordrid (played by Kay in splendidly lugubrious style) is the 19th best magician in Britain, 2,000 years old and immensely powerful but forbidden to use his magic to make his life easier.

Instead, he ekes out a living selling home-made jams and complaining about modern life. Jack Docherty, Gordon Kennedy (*below*) and Cora Bissett are among the ably supporting cast.

