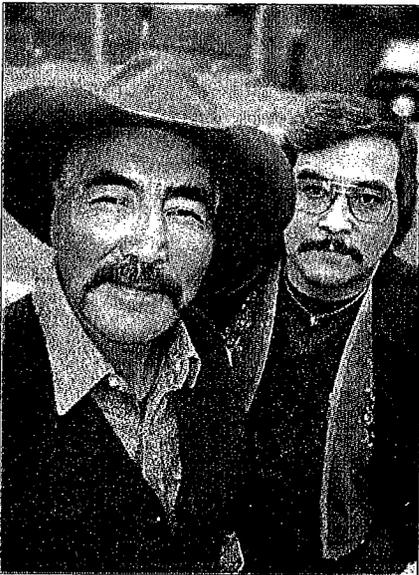


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GEORGE M. HENRY, the veteran producer-director, also screened a smashing movie at the Pacific Cinematheque theatre Tuesday. Made for the Kaska Dena Council and the Kaska Nation, Kaska native Porter's 60-minute *Heaven's Pass* details the life of the few folk who still live literally from the land in a remote, six-million-hectare zone bounded by the northern Rocky Mountains.

Two Kaska Dena featured in the film — **Peter Stone** and **George McDonald** —



George McDonald, with Peter Stone, hung on to his hat for rough ride south.

are credited as executive producers. The latter is physically, morally and humorously arresting enough to become an actor in the **Chief Dan George** genre.

Much of what the 54-year-old McDonald says is in Japanese-hinting English, with subtitled words in the rare Kaska Dena dialect. Movingly, he attributes a decline in large wildlife to Alaska Highway traffic and go-anywhere All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs): "The wolves are getting bigger, and the people are getting bigger."

Still, enough moose occupy Kaska Dena meadows for *Heaven's Gate* to show one being shot, butchered and packed out for an al fresco feast while an elderly couple slice and smoke the remainder for winter sustenance. Not for the squeamish, the scenes show how life was for many Canadians until not so long ago

With land claims prevalent, the picture obviously has a political component. But its documentary merit is still enormous.

As for McDonald, his two-day journey to premiere *Heaven's Gate* at the Pacific Cinematheque Tuesday was an arduous one, involving stages by horse, ATV, boat,

ATV again, truck and aircraft. He also arrived in the big city wearing a new, tan stetson rather than a prized black one decorated with eagle feathers.

Mountain streams on McDonald's route are in flood now, with rocks and trees tumbling down them. "George didn't wear his best hat," Stone grinned, "because, if he'd had a mishap in Yedehi Creek, he knew he'd have lost it."



Producer-director George Henry, partner Jan Staples at *Heaven's Pass* premiere.