



Smithsonian

National Museum of the American Indian

Kimowan Metchewais [McLain], 1987-2011

Kelsey Moen

2016

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Collection Overview

Repository:	National Museum of the American Indian
Title:	Kimowan Metchewais [McLain] collection
Date:	1987-2011
Identifier:	NMAI.AC.084
Creator:	Metchewais [McLain], Kimowan
Extent:	871 Negatives (photographic) 1918 Slides (photographs) 989 Polaroid prints 24 Notebooks 0.8 Linear feet 1,496 Photographic prints
Language:	English, Cree
Summary:	The collection of Kimowan Metchewais [McLain], significant First Nations artist, contains materials related to his artistic practice and his personal life. The materials include not only photographs of his art, completed and in-progress, but also sketchbooks and journal entries that give important context to his major works and artistic practices. The materials range from his early career in the early 1990s as a magazine editor to his solo and group exhibitions to his time as an art professor at various universities and images of his final works in 2011. McLain balanced both Western and Native artistic methods and history in his work, his archive provides valuable insight into the swiftly evolving and often contested world of contemporary Native American art.
Digital Content:	Image(s): Kimowan Metchewais [McLain] collection

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Bequest of Kimowan Metchewais [McLain] in 2015. Materials in boxes 35-37 were a gift of Kimowan's niece April Strong, 2024.

Separated Materials

The National Museum of the American Indian has 185 of Kimowan Metchewais [McLain]'s works in their Modern and Contemporary Arts collection. These pieces have catalog numbers 26/9426 - 26/9610. To view these pieces, an Object Collections Research Request must be made two months in advance, using the form found at <http://www.nmai.si.edu/explore/collections/accessing/>. Kimowan Metchewais [McLain] also has an artist file held by the Vine Deloria Jr. Library, containing material relevant to this collection. It can be accessed by contacting the library by phone: (301) 238-1376 or email: AskALibrarian@si.edu.

Processing Information

Processed by Kelsey Moen, intern, Summer 2016. Updates made by Emily Moazami, Head Archivist, 2025.

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Kimowan Metchewais [McLain] Collection, Box and Folder Number; National Museum of the American Indian Archive Center, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Access to NMAI Archive Center collections is by appointment only, Monday - Thursday, 9:30 am - 4:30 pm. Please contact the archives to make an appointment (phone: 301-238-1400, email: nmaiarchives@si.edu).

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

Kimowan Metchewais [McLain] was a significant figure in the Native art world. He was born in Oxbow, Saskatchewan, October 2, 1963. He used his step-father Bruce's name- McLain, until later in life when he began to go by his mother Ada's maiden name - Metchewais. He spent his childhood and early adulthood on the Cold Lake First Nations reserve in Alberta. He began his artistic career working as an illustrator and later editor at Windspeaker Native Newspaper from 1983 to 1989. From 1992 to 1996 he attended the University of Alberta in Edmonton, receiving his Bachelors of Fine Arts. It was during this time, in 1993, at age 29, that he was diagnosed with oligodendroglioma, a rare form of brain tumor. The surgery to remove the tumor and following radiation left McLain with a permanent bald spot on the back of his head would feature in his art in later years. He was told that life expectancy for this condition was 11-12 years. Despite his illness, in 1995 Kimowan received the Ellen Battel Stoekel Fellowship to spend the summer at Yale University and in 1996 he received a National Award from the Canadian Native Arts Foundation. He continued on to complete his Master of Fine Arts at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico, from 1996 to 1999. It was there he met life-long friend Larry McNeil. Kimowan then made the move to Chapel Hill, North Carolina where he began teaching in the Art Department at the University of North Carolina, and continuing to exhibit his own work in both solo exhibitions and group exhibitions.

In Chapel Hill he lived in the neighborhood of Carrboro, a small, relaxed community attached to the larger college town. At this time, Kimowan developed an interest in "hooping" – hula-hooping as a spiritual activity--founding a collective and developing many close friendships through the hobby. He also began making trips home to Cold Lake and documenting the people and places there. In 2005, following symptoms of his tumor returning, McLain underwent a relatively complication-free surgery that allowed him to return directly to work, including participation in the well-received Loom exhibition. In 2007 Kimowan underwent surgery once again but due to complications from the surgery, Kimowan was left partially paralyzed. For a year, Kimowan worked diligently at rehabilitation, even developing his own rehab program he called "Kimochi," and was eventually able to return both to work and hooping. During his time at the hospital he met his eventual fiancée, Antje Thiessen.

Following his return to work, Kimowan continued to evolve his artistic practice – producing what some called his magnum opus - *Cold Lake* in 2004 and the evocative self-portrait *Raincloud* in 2010. Both pieces are examples of the space Kimowan gracefully navigated, between Native and Western sensibilities and artistic practices in his

work. In 2011 his symptoms returned for a final time and he returned to his mother's home in St. Paul, Alberta, with Thiessen, for palliative care. He passed away on July 29, 2011. A retrospective of his work *Horizon: Kimowan Metchewais (McLain)* was shown that fall at the John and June Allcott Gallery, University of North Carolina.

Scope and Contents

The Kimowan Metchewais [McLain] collection spans the majority of Kimowan's artistic career from 1987 to 2011, beginning with his work as a comic illustrator and ending with one of his final pieces, *Raincloud*. **Series 1: Works** contains materials relating to his artistic works, mainly consisting of 4X6 color photographs, slides, and negatives of his completed works. There are also images of the works in progress, sources of inspiration for various pieces, and several items reflecting the various processes he used to create the final work, be it painting, "paper wall," installation, or a mixed media piece. Works of note include: *After* (1999), *Map of Moths* (2001), *Cold Lake* (2004), and *Raincloud* (2010). **Series 2: Polaroids** is Kimowan's collection of Polaroid prints. These prints were used as a reference collection by the artist, and reflect all aspects of his life and work: from intimate personal portraits of the artist, friends and family, to color studies, to documentation of nature and everyday items, the series is glimpse into the heart of the collection.

Series 3: Sketchbooks, is an equally revealing look into Kimowan's artistic practice and personal life. Documenting everything from his tobacco research, his thoughts on art history and teaching, designing his website, the creative process of exhibit planning, and numerous sketches in pen, pencil, and charcoal, the sketchbooks are an invaluable resource for understanding both the man and the work he created. **Series 4: Personal Materials** contains materials related to Kimowan's personal life- his travels around the U.S. and abroad, the works by other artists he felt were important to collect, published material related to his work and also his decisions on where to go to graduate school and where to apply for teaching positions. **Series 5: Teaching Materials** contains materials concerning his teaching career- mainly slides of his student's work, and slides he used in his lectures. He taught art classes at both the University of New Mexico and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, on subjects ranging from "Drawing I" to "Native American Art in the 1980s."

The collection contains 4X6 color photographic prints, 35 mm color negatives, 3X5 Polaroid prints, and 35 mm color slides, noted if otherwise. Some titles are bracketed, this reflects a title that has been constructed during processing, titles not bracketed were generally assigned by the creator.

Arrangement

Collection is arranged by subject. **Series 1: Works** is arranged chronologically within the subseries, excepting the Works, General subseries. **Series 2: Polaroids**, retains the original order created by the artist. Images are separated by subject and arranged alphabetically. **Series 3: Sketchbooks**, is arranged chronologically when date is known. **Series 4: Personal Materials**, is arranged by subject and occasionally by format. **Series 5: Teaching Materials** contains slides which are arranged chronologically and by subject.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Art -- American Indian
Indian art -- 21st century
Powwows

Types of Materials:

Negatives
Photographic prints
Sketchbooks
Slides

Names:

Cold Lake First Nations
McNeil, Larry, 1950-
University of New Mexico
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Places:

Alberta
North Carolina -- Chapel Hill

Container Listing

Series 1 : Works, 1991-2011

733 Negatives (photographic)

1,406 Photographic prints

1242 Slides (photographs)

Scope and Contents: This series focuses both on specific installation pieces and exhibitions, and also on more general works. The exhibits trace his artistic evolution from his M.F.A. show, *After*, to an innovative group exhibition, *Loom*, with his colleagues at UNC-CH. His paintings and mixed media works are represented from the very earliest work we have record of, to the works he finished in the year before his death. The series are arranged by work and chronologically. It consists mainly of slides, 4X6 color prints, and 35mm color negatives, and published material, however some original works are included – particularly in the Polaroid and Paper Works series, giving valuable insight into his artistic process.

Subseries 1.1: Works, general , 1991-2011

96 Items

95 Photographic prints

154 Slides (photographs)

Scope and Contents: This subseries contains general works from various points in the artist's career. Of special note are the Polaroid works and the works on paper. These materials document the process McLain often used: playing with the format of Polaroid images, turning them into paper objects, and staining them with various processes, including tobacco. The objects in this collection have notes indicating the various scales and enlargements he experimented with when creating his large, wall-sized pieces. Some of his earliest oil on canvas paintings are also pictured in slides, 4X6 prints, and negatives, giving insight into his early career.

Box 1, Folder 1-9;

Box 34

[Works, General, undated](#)

72 Photographic prints

6 Negative rolls

Notes: Photographs of various works spanning the artist's career, including dead bug series, and five images that may be the original Cold Lake fishing prints. Negatives are undeveloped and the contents and dates are not known.

Box 1, Folder 10

[Edmonton, undated](#)

1 Photographic print

Notes: Black & white print scored by the artist in grid pattern.

Box 1, Folder 11-17

[Polaroid Works, undated](#)

22 Photographic prints

Notes: Polaroid prints and other photographic prints cut and taped together with various other materials, notes by the artist on enlargements.

Box 11, Sheet 1	[Collection Sent to Tracy Whattam] 20 Slides (photographs) Notes: Copy of envelope that originally housed slides is attached.
Box 11, Sheet 2-3	Kimo 1 Good, undated 22 Slides (photographs)
Box 16, Folder 11; Box 11, Sheet 5; Box 11, Sheet 4; Box 16, Folder 14	Map of Moths, 2001-2002, 2001 1 Exhibition catalog 17 Slides (photographs) 3 Postcards Notes: Work exhibited in 2002 as part of group show <i>art/spirit/art</i> at the James M. Johnston Center University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, and exhibited in 2004 as part of the group exhibition <i>Flock and Fable: Animals and Identity in Contemporary Art</i> at the Chelsea Art Museum.
Box 11, Sheet 6	[Dead Birds], undated 17 Slides (photographs)
Box 11, Sheet 7-8	Early Cree Bible, 2004 23 Slides (photographs)
Box 11, Sheet 9	Photograph Avoidance Behavior, undated 7 Slides (photographs)
Box 11, Sheet 11-12; Box 16, Folder 10	Four Stories, February-March 2002 2 Postcards 36 Slides (photographs) Notes: Work exhibited at Southwest Texas State University.
Box 11, Sheet 12	[Early Work], 1990-1995 12 Slides (photographs)
Box 17, Folder 1-30	Works on Paper , undated 96 Items Notes: Series contains images and pieces from the entire oeuvre. Includes enlargements of two images, Four Stories portrait. Also includes experimentation with different paper processes.
Box 33	Images on CD , 2001-2006 37 CD-Rs Notes: Set of 37 CDs containing low-resolution images, scans of prints and Polaroids from the collection. Images from series <i>Without Ground</i> , <i>MFA Works</i> , and <i>Cold Lake</i> among others. CDs and their cases are labeled by the artist.
Drawer 12, Folder 7-9	Oversize Works, undated Notes: Works include Native Lands: Photographs by Kimowan McLain in poster size, illustrations of his journey from Cold Lake to Chapel Hill in 2007 when his symptoms were returning, designs for Cold Lake

catalog, and what is possibly a piece of one of his larger paintings, among others.

Subseries 1.2: MFA Work, 1997-1999

250 Slides (photographs)

Scope and Contents: Kimowan's M.F.A. work at the University of New Mexico is represented in this subseries mainly by photographs of his oil on canvas paintings, but the beginnings of his use of mixed media and installation/performance art are also documented. The images hint at the themes that would continue throughout his career, call backs to Native art history, such as ledger paper, juxtaposed with the struggles of the contemporary Native community, and his own personal identity in that space.

Box 11, Sheet 13-16 Spring 97, 1997
50 Slides (photographs)

Box 11, Sheet 17-19 Spring '97 [Pipe Series], 1997
44 Slides (photographs)

Box 11, Sheet 20 Fall '97-98 [Striped Blanket Series], 1997-1998
4 Slides (photographs)

Box 11, Sheet 21 Cheyenne River Indian Boxing Club, Fall 1997
6 Slides (photographs)
Notes: Original work is mixed media, 24" X 24".

Box 11, Sheet 22 Birds of America, 1998
6 Slides (photographs)
Notes: Original work is mixed media, 36"X 50".

Box 11, Sheet 23 Ringside, 1997-1998
4 Slides (photographs)
Notes: Original work is mixed media, 18"X 24".

Box 11, Sheet 24 Photoshoot/Border Town, 1998
7 Slides (photographs)
Notes: Original works are both mixed media, 18"X 30".

Box 11, Sheet 25 Calendar, 1998
3 Slides (photographs)
Notes: Original work is mixed media, 36"X 54".

Box 11, Sheet 26 The Boxer, 1998
9 Slides (photographs)
Notes: Original work is mixed media, 36" X 36".

Box 11, Sheet 27 Breath, 1998

	7 Slides (photographs)
Box 11, Sheet 28	Winter Count, circa 1998 4 Slides (photographs)
Box 11, Sheet 29-30	Portraits, 1997-1998 36 Slides (photographs)
Box 11, Sheet 31-32	Red Objects, circa 1998 37 Slides (photographs)
Box 11, Sheet 33-34	[Works 95-98], 1995-1998 34 Slides (photographs)

Subseries 1.3: *After*, 1998-1999

23 Photographic prints

2 Negatives (photographic)

251 Photographic prints

Scope and Contents: This subseries features photographs of Kimowan's M.F.A. Thesis exhibition, held April 9-23, 1999 at the Sommers Gallery, University of New Mexico. The installation was made of photocopy transfers on the walls of the gallery, the artist playing with perceptions of distance and space, and continuing the theme of examining his positionality as a contemporary Native artist. The images are both detail and installation views of the entire exhibit and the individual pieces.

Box 16, Folder 6; Box 12, Sheet 1-4	After installation views, 1998-1999 7 Postcards 72 Slides (photographs)
Box 16, Folder 6	After solo exhibit postcards, April 1999
Box 16, Folder 8	After group exhibition materials , September- December 2000 Notes: <i>After</i> was part of the group exhibition <i>The Living End</i> held at the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art.
Box 12, Sheet 17; Box 1, Folder 22; Box 12, Sheet 14-15	Burglary, 1998-1999 34 Slides (photographs) 4 Polaroid prints 1 Negatives (photographic)
Box 1, Folder 21; Box 12, Sheet 5-6	Wishing Well, 1998-1999 2 Polaroid prints 32 Slides (photographs)
Box 12, Sheet 7-9	Secret Flight, 1998-1999 42 Slides (photographs)
Box 1, Folder 20;	The Anti-Place, 1998-1999

Box 12, Sheet 10-11	40 Slides (photographs) 4 Polaroid prints
Box 1, Folder 18; Box 12, Sheet 16; Box 12, Sheet 17	Morning Search, 1998-1999 11 Polaroid prints 1 Negatives (photographic) 16 Slides (photographs)
Box 12, Sheet 12	Medicine Bag, 1998-1999 11 Slides (photographs)
Box 12, Sheet 13; Box 1, Folder 19	Evident Relics, 1998-1999 4 Slides (photographs)
Box 12, Folder 23; Box 1, Folder 23	Unbalanced Reciprocity, 1998-1999 2 Polaroid prints

Subseries 1.4: *Reburial: Wrathful Architecture* , October-November 2000

280 Slides (photographs)

Scope and Contents: This subseries contains slides of, *Reburial*, an exhibit held at the John and June Allcott Gallery, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill date. The theme of the piece is Kimowan's relationship with his step-father, Bruce McLain. The installation was the first large scale work Kimowan did with what he called "paper walls", a format he would continue to explore throughout his career. Journal entries (**Series 3**) and feature articles give context to the painful personal history this work represents.

Box 12, Sheet 18	Good of Reburial, 2000 20 Slides (photographs)
Box 16, Folder 7	Reburial Exhibit Postcards, 2000
Box 12, Sheet 19-21	Reburial Installation Views, 2000 60 Slides (photographs)
Box 12, Sheet 22-24	Burial at Sea, 2000 55 Slides (photographs) Notes: Original work is mixed media, 5' X 8'.
Box 12, Sheet 29-30	Falling of the Log, 2000 40 Slides (photographs) Notes: Original work is mixed media, approximately 40" X 18" X 3".
Box 12, Sheet 31-32	Baptismal, 2000 34 Slides (photographs)
Box 13, Sheet 1	Yellow Wallpaper, 2000

	20 Slides (photographs)
Box 13, Sheet 2-5	Reburial Shooting Notes/Slides, August 1 2000 51 Slides (photographs) Notes: Contains original notes from August 1 reshoot of the exhibition.
Box 16, Folder 9	Endeavors Article on Reburial, Winter 2001

Subseries 1.5: *Loom*, 2001-2002

221 Slides (photographs)

292 Photographic prints

279 Negatives (photographic)

Scope and Contents: This subseries features *Loom*, a group show organized by the University of North Carolina faculty, held at the Chatham Label Mill in Pittsboro, North Carolina. Kimowann's pieces included *Wasp/Moth* in which he placed a dead moth on a table and then, using a string made of his own hair, attached the wasp to the ceiling so that it hovered above the moth and moved in slow circles as the AC came on and off. Another piece, *Floor Crack Excavation* was created by excavating one of the seams in the original wood floor of the mill (a process painstakingly documented in the prints and negatives of this series,) and using the items found to create little scenes or "little events." Each event is accompanied by a line of poetry, taken from a copy of *America's Best Poetry* he had found in a corner of a room at the mill.

Box 13, Sheet 6-9; Box 1, Folder 24-25	Loom overviews, 2001-2002 17 Photographic prints 57 Slides (photographs) Notes: Artist's note on slides: "off exposures".
Box 13, Sheet 10	[Esik's Table], 2001-2002 5 Slides (photographs)
Box 13, Sheet 12	["Little Events"], 2001-2002 4 Slides (photographs)
Box 13, Sheet 13	Wasp/Moth, 2001-2002 19 Slides (photographs)
Box 13, Sheet 14-15	Coffin, 2001-2002 27 Slides (photographs)
Box 13, Sheet 16	pix of Jeff W. , 2001-2002 4 Slides (photographs)
Box 13, Sheet 17-18	Garden, 2001-2002 32 Slides (photographs)
Box 13, Sheet 19-21	Map of Moths, 2001-2002

50 Slides (photographs)

Box 1, Folder 26-36;	Floor Crack Excavation , 2001-2002
Box 13, Sheet 22-23;	275 Photographic prints
Box 13, Sheet 24-39;	279 Negatives (photographic)
Box 2, Folder 1-17	23 Slides (photographs)

Subseries 1.6: Bowls, circa 2001

50 Negatives (photographic)

28 Slides (photographs)

15 Photographic prints

Scope and Contents: This subseries illustrates Kimowan's use of everyday objects to create a reference collection that would then show up in motifs throughout his work. Bowls are most significantly found in his pieces *Unbalanced Reciprocity* (**Series 1.3**) and the painting pictured in these slides. This subseries illustrates Kimowan's use of everyday objects to create a reference collection that would then show up in motifs throughout his work.

Box 2, Folder 18-19;	Bowls, undated
Box 13, Sheet 40-42	50 Negatives (photographic) 15 Photographic prints
Box 13, Sheet 43-44	Bowls, Summer 2001 28 Slides (photographs) Notes: slides are dated summer 2001

Subseries 1.7: *Without Ground*, 2002

286 Negatives (photographic)

240 Photographic prints

Scope and Contents: This subseries documents a piece commissioned by the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, for their Ramp Space. Using a process similar to *After*, the images were photo-transferred onto the wall, and then painted over to create a disorienting illusion of space and distance. There are several Polaroids (**Series 2**) showing Kimowan at the opening of the piece, talking about it with guests. The majority of this record series contains a series of studio shots taken during the creation of the piece, with the artist's notes on which to enlarge and ultimately include.

Box 16, Folder 12	Without Ground Exhibit Catalog, Postcards, September 2002-April 2003
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Box 14, Sheet 1-15;	Without Ground , circa 2002
Box 3, Folder 1-13;	286 Negatives (photographic)
Box 2, Folder 20-34	240 Photographic prints Notes: Series of studio shoots for final work.

Subseries 1.8: Cold Lake, 2004 -2006*139 Photographic prints**58 Slides (photographs)**98 Negatives (photographic)*

Scope and Contents: This subseries includes the Cold Lake images, taken at the annual gathering at Cold Lake over a period of several years, form the central theme of several of Kimowan's works. The Cold Lake sketchbook (**Series 4**) provides the context to the artistic choices Kimowan was making when he photographed his friends and family in the water. There are also several magazine features included wherein he discusses both the location and the work.

Box 14, Sheet 16-17	Cold Lake/Greensboro , 2004 24 Slides (photographs) Notes: Notes from artist: "dark, .00 X 100, medium 'Cold Lake', light and details."
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Box 16, Folder 17	Endeavors Article on Cold Lake 2004 Trip, Winter 2005
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Box 16, Folder 19	Spirit article on Cold Lake Work, Winter 2007 1 Magazines (periodicals)
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Box 14, Sheet 18-19	Cold Lake Polaroids , 2004 34 Slides (photographs) Notes: Slide photographs of original polaroid prints.
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Box 14, Sheet 20-24; Box 3, Folder 14-27	Cold Lake, 2006 139 Photographic prints 98 Negatives (photographic)
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Subseries 1.9: Lac St. Anne, 2005*217 Photographic prints*

Scope and Contents: Similar to Cold Lake, Lac St. Anne is also a regarded as a sacred place of healing where Native peoples gather annually to wade in the water. There are many similarities between this series of work and the previous – mainly portrait shots with some candid shots.

Box 4, Folder 16-19	Lac St. Anne/Nicole, 2005 40 Photographic prints
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Box 4, Folder 1-15; Box 3, Folder 28-32	Lac St. Anne, 2005 177 Photographic prints
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Subseries 1.10: 118th Ave., 2005*167 Photographic prints*

Scope and Contents: This subseries features images from 118th Ave., the Cromdale neighborhood of Edmonton, Alberta. In the galley proof? in (oversize) he talks about his connection to the place and the Native

community there. Many of these images are of family, however many are also the result of Kimowan walking down the street and photographing the people he found.

Box 4, Folder 20-22 [Downtown Lovers, 2005](#)
29 Photographic prints

Box 4, Folder 23-24 [Agnes' Apt, 2005](#)
20 Photographic prints

Box 4, Folder 25 [People on 118th Ave, 2005](#)
11 Photographic prints

Box 4, Folder 26-27 [Rianna, fightgirl, jacknife tattoo, 2005](#)
23 Photographic prints

Box 5, Folder 1;
Box 4, Folder 28-30 [118th Ave, 2005](#)
38 Photographic prints

Box 5, Folder 2-5 [118th/Edmonton, 2005](#)
34 Photographic prints

Box 5, Folder 6 [118th gaustas, 2005](#)
12 Photographic prints

Subseries 1.11: Powwows, 2004-2006

218 Photographic prints

18 Negatives (photographic)

Scope and Contents: This series features images from a period of two years, when Kimowan travelled to several different powwows in Alberta, North Dakota, and Minnesota. He documented both the performers and the audience, particularly focusing on the children attending the North Dakota powwow. There is also a series of prints and negatives that are clearly of a powwow, but the specific event was not identified.

Box 5, Folder 7-10 [Hinckley Powwow, 2005](#)
38 Photographic prints

Box 5, Folder 11-14 [ND Powwow, circa 2005](#)
36 Photographic prints

Box 5, Folder 15-17 [Gorgeous Kids at ND Powwow , circa 2005](#)
28 Photographic prints

Box 5, Folder 18-20 [Saddle Lake, Cold Lake First Nations Powwow, circa 2005](#)
27 Photographic prints

Box 5, Folder 21-24 [\[Saddle Lake Powwow\], circa 2005](#)
36 Photographic prints

Box 5, Folder 25-30;
Box 14, Sheet 25

[Powwows, undated](#)
18 Negatives (photographic)
53 Photographic prints
Notes: Negatives are black & white.

Subseries 1.12: Published Material, 1991-2011

Box 16, Folder 1

Comics, circa 1995
Notes: "The Day Fox Shut Down the School" - 1993, "The Case of the Blue Cross Travel Claim" - July/August 1992.

Box 16, Folder 2

Our World's are One Catalog, April-May 1991
Notes: Featuring early work *Red Earth Woman*, 1991.

Box 16, Folder 3

Photography's Objects Catalogs, 1997
Notes: Catalog designed by Kimowan McLain.

Box 16, Folder 4

Graduate Student Exhibition Catalog, 1998
1 Exhibition catalog

Box 16, Folder 5

Graduate Student Exhibition Catalogs, 1999

Box 16, Folder 13

Accidental Gathering Catalogs and Postcards, August-September 2003
Notes: Solo exhibition at Artspace in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Box 16, Folder 15

Printing Services Information , undated
Notes: The two print shops McLain primarily used, in Albuquerque and Chapel Hill.

Box 16, Folder 16

NCAC Film & Visual Artist Fellowship Recipient, 2004

Box 16, Folder 18

UNC Faculty Biennale , February-March 2005
Notes: Group exhibition at the Ackland Art Museum, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill - featuring McLain's *Cold Lake*.

Box 16, Folder 20

Black Flash Feature, 2007
Notes: Featuring works *May*, *August*, and *Night*.

Box 16, Folder 21

Practicing Contemporaries, 2007
Notes: UNC Studio Art Faculty exhibit, Ackland Art Museum.

Box 16, Folder 22

It's Complicated - Art about Home Postcards, 2010-2011
Notes: Group exhibition at Evergreen Gallery, Evergreen State College - featuring McLain's *Goodwill*, *118th Ave*, *Edmonton*.

Box 16, Folder 29

Denver Art Museum, Correspondence, June 2008

1 Slides (photographs)

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Series 2: Polaroids, undated

989 Polaroid prints

Scope and Contents: Kimowan used his Polaroids as a reference collection – inspiring many of his works, paintings, "paper walls", and installation pieces. He had them arranged in three handmade boxes, in alphabetical order with card titles separating them. This arrangement was preserved as much as possible – the series titles reflect the box titles, while the folder titles reflect the card titles exactly. Sometimes these folder titles are accurate, while other series, such as the "Ball" series, has no images of balls and instead features everything from portraits to object studies to images of works. The untitled grouping at the end of the series, a collection of almost 200 prints, are images from every part of the collection that McLain had stored separately.

Subseries 2.1: A-H, undated

209 Polaroid prints

Box 6, Folder 1-6	Ball, undated 65 Polaroid prints Notes: Poloroids in Folder 5 (NMAI shots), and Folder 6 (Gord Thiessen portraits) originally taped together and labled as a set, tape was removed during processing.
Box 6, Folder 7	Bed (long) , undated 8 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 8	Blue Puddle , undated 3 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 9-11	Bowls, undated 34 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 12	Boxer, undated 1 Polaroid print
Box 6, Folder 13	Bracelets , undated 4 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 14	Building Models , undated 3 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 15	Buildings, undated 6 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 16	Burkley, Jen, undated 4 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 17	Buttons, undated 4 Polaroid prints

Box 6, Folder 18	Cali, undated 1 Polaroid print
Box 6, Folder 19-20	Cars and Trucks , undated 13 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 21	Color, undated 9 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 22	Cook, Michael, undated 1 Polaroid print
Box 6, Folder 23	D'Amato, Susan, undated 1 Polaroid print
Box 6, Folder 24	Deserted Houses, undated 2 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 25	Eye Pieces, undated 10 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 26	Farms, undated 2 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 27	Fences, undated 4 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 28	Figures, Human, undated 4 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 29	Footwear, undated 4 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 30	Fruit, undated 3 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 31	Furniture, undated 1 Polaroid print
Box 6, Folder 32	Hair Piece, undated 2 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 33	Hands, undated 9 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 34	Hand Signs , undated 11 Polaroid prints

Subseries 2.2: I-P, undated

217 Polaroid prints

Box 6, Folder 35	Interiors, undated 7 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 36	Laena Marie , undated 11 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 37	Lakewater, undated 2 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 38	Landscape , undated 2 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 39	Lucy, undated 2 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 40	Magnolias, undated 9 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 41	McLain, Hans, undated 5 Polaroid prints
Box 6, Folder 42-43	Mom's Wacky Mocs , undated 18 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 1-4; Box 6, Folder 44	Monet , undated 48 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 5	Monuments, undated 1 Polaroid print
Box 7, Folder 6	McLain, Luther, undated 2 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 7	Medicine Bag , undated 1 Polaroid print
Box 7, Folder 8-10	Model Buildings, undated 36 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 11	Neckpieces, undated 8 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 12	NMAI , undated 1 Polaroid print

Box 7, Folder 13	Nude (yikes!) , undated 4 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 14	Lakewater, undated 1 Polaroid print
Box 7, Folder 15	Long Hair (jeans), undated 12 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 16	Long Hair (on floor), undated 5 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 17	Long Hair (yellow suit) , undated 7 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 18	Lucky Strike Factory, undated 11 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 19-23	Plants, undated 42 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 24	Pipes, undated 4 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 25-28	Portraits, undated 32 Polaroid prints

Subseries 2.3: Q-Z

509 Polaroid prints

Box 7, Folder 29	Red Backgrounds , undated 2 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 30	Roadways, undated 6 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 31-32	Self-Port , undated 16 Polaroid prints
Box 7, Folder 33-34	Shadows, undated 17 Polaroid prints
Box 8, Folder 1	Shelves, undated 5 Polaroid prints
Box 8, Folder 2	Skull, undated 2 Polaroid prints

Box 8, Folder 3	Sidewalks, undated 2 Polaroid prints
Box 8, Folder 4	Signage , undated 1 Polaroid print
Box 8, Folder 5	Sky, undated 1 Polaroid print
Box 8, Folder 6-7	Smoker, undated 19 Polaroid prints
Box 8, Folder 8	Striped Dress at Women's War Memorial 1, undated 1 Polaroid print
Box 8, Folder 9	Striped Man, undated 7 Polaroid prints
Box 8, Folder 10	Structures, undated 10 Polaroid prints
Box 8, Folder 11	Throat, undated 2 Polaroid prints
Box 8, Folder 12	Tuxedo, undated 6 Polaroid prints
Box 8, Folder 13	Umbrella, undated 7 Polaroid prints
Box 8, Folder 14	Walls (blank, windows) , undated 1 Polaroid print
Box 8, Folder 15	Windows , undated 1 Polaroid print
Box 8, Folder 16	Vigil, Antonio, undated 4 Polaroid prints
Box 8, Folder 17-25	Q-Z, undated 94 Polaroid prints Digital Content: Polaroid made by Kimowan Metchewais (Cree [Cold Lake First Nations]), 2005 Image(s) Notes: folder 21 contains small pieces of photographs attached to paper
Box 8, Folder 26-35	[Row 1], undated 98 Polaroid prints

Notes: Artist's note: (KAM 7/12.)

Box 9, Folder 1-20

[Untitled, undated](#)

208 Polaroid prints

Notes: Images from throughout the Polaroid collection, self-portraits, objects, structures, and more, not arranged in any order. Folder 11 contains Polaroid with image possibly of the artist at a young age.

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Series 3: Sketchbooks, 1987-2010

24 Notebooks

Scope and Contents: Kimowan's sketchbooks tie the entire collection together, they encompass his thoughts on personal matters, his creative process, the minutia of his daily life, and his sources of inspiration. Filled with journal entries, artworks, and other materials all mixed together, they provide vital context to every other element of this collection.

Box 35, Folder 1	<p>An Artists Notebook, 1987-1995</p> <p>Notes: This notebook includes journal entries, sketches, and poems among other topics.</p> <p>This journal was a gift of April Strong, 2024.</p>
Box 35, Folder 2	<p>Tan Notebook, 1993-1996</p> <p>Notes: Journal contains notes, sketches, and journal entries. It includes several loose journal pages that appear to have torn from a different journal and placed in this book.</p> <p>This journal was a gift of April Strong, 2024.</p>
Box 35, Folder 4	<p>Cloth-covered Notebook, 1995</p> <p>Notes: Notebook contains journal entries, sketches, and notes.</p> <p>This journal was a gift of April Strong, 2024.</p>
Box 18	<p>Black Sketchbook, 1995-1996</p> <p>Notes: Sketchbook includes material from summer 1995 when McLain was part of the Yale Summer Fellowship. Items include sketches - charcoal and pen, paintings, negatives with contact sheet, class notes and notes on technique, loose printed pages, among others.</p>
Box 19	<p>Composition Book, 1993-2000</p> <p>Notes: Notebook contains mainly notes and sketches from "Painting with Doug Haynes" class, also has journal entries and sketches discussing the "Native American Object" project, and more recent entries on <i>Hand of the Father</i> from <i>Reburial</i>.</p>
Box 20	<p>Black Sketchbook, 1999-2003</p> <p>Notes: Sketchbook includes journal entries - some focused on his tobacco research, figure sketches in pencil, pen and marker, exhibit planning, among others.</p>
Box 21	<p>Black Spiral Sketchbook, 2000-2001</p> <p>Notes: Sketchbook contains journal entries, charcoal sketches, ink sketches, exhibit planning for <i>Reburial</i>, Poloroids of brothers Hans and Luther as "post-Curtis" portraits, thoughts on smoking and the "Marlboro Indian," Archie Seelkoke, among many others.</p>
Box 35, Folder 4	<p>Blue Spiral Notebook, 2002</p> <p>Notes: Notebook contains journal entries, sketches, and notes.</p>

This journal was a gift of April Strong, 2024.

Box 36, Folder 1	Red Notebook, 2002 Notes: Notebook contains journal entries, notes, and sketches. This journal was a gift of April Strong, 2024.
Box 22	Black Spiral Sketchbook, 2002 Notes: Sketchbook contains charcoal sketches, portraits, class planning for Intro to Mixed Media and Contemporary Indian Art, exhibit and work planning notes and sketches, among other items.
Box 23	Red Spiral Sketchbook, 2002-2004 Notes: Notebook contains journal entries with thoughts on teaching for the first time and his student's work, class planning, exhibit planning for <i>Without Ground</i> , notes on his performance pieces, sketches of figures, portraits, doodles, logo design for a catering company, thoughts on Edmonton trip, among others.
Box 36, Folder 2	Blue Composition Book, 2003 Notes: Notebook contains mostly portraits of people and self-portraits. There is one journal entry in this notebook. This journal was a gift of April Strong, 2024.
Box 24	Composition Book, 2004-2006 Notes: Notebook contains journal entries, studio space planning, essay on art, notes on switching from film to digital.
Box 36, Folder 3	Black Notebook, 2005 Notes: This Notebook contains journal entries, notes, to-do lists, contact information, and sketches. This journal was a gift of April Strong, 2024.
Box 25	Cold Lake Notebook, circa 2005 Notes: Notebook artist used to plan <i>Cold Lake</i> work. Contains 4X6 prints taped onto pages with notes from the artist, also features prints from Subseries 10 (118th Ave.) and 11 (Powwows) with notations.
Box 26	Borden & Riley Sketchpad, circa 2005 Notes: Sketchpad contains notes and sketches concerning McLain's oligodendroglioma- this focused on one of many surgeries and post-surgery recovery periods, including development of his "Kimo-chi."
Box 36, Folder 4	Matters of the Person Notebook, 2007-2008 Notes: This notebook contains to-do lists, journal entries, and sketches. This journal was a gift of April Strong, 2024.
Box 27	Green Canson Sketchpad, undated Notes: Sketchpad contains series of charcoal sketches of figures hooping.

Box 28	Biggie Jr. Sketchpad, undated Notes: Sketchbook contains charcoal sketches of human figures, cat figure, logo designs for <i>Windspeaker</i> , Cree alphabet printout, and sketches planning website construction.
Box 29	Black Spiral Sketchbook, undated Notes: Sketchbook contains figure studies, portraits, and doodles. Note that some images appear near the end of the book.
Box 30	Impressions Sketch Pad, undated Notes: Sketchpad contains figure studies in pencil, charcoal sketches and still lifes, website design ideas, among others.
Box 31	Cold Lake Venus Small Black Sketchbook, undated Notes: Sketchbook contains sketches in pen and pencil of figures hooping, portraits, and loose polaroid, among others.
Box 32	Small Mauve Spiral Notebook, undated Notes: Notebook contains notes from daily life: appointments, music lists, directions, exhibit design, shopping lists, among others.
Box 36, Folder 5	Eviction Notice Notes, Undated Notes: Loose graphic paper with the title, "Eviction Notice by Braindrop [Kimowan]." The writing appears to be poetry or idea notes. This journal was a gift of April Strong, 2024.

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Series 4: Personal Materials, 1991-2011

138 Negatives (photographic)

85 Slides (photographs)

97 Photographic prints

Scope and Contents: There is no clear division between the end of work and the beginning of personal life for an artist, but these materials are not explicitly related to specific works. They reflect his travels, other artists whose work influenced his, his time teaching in the Fine Arts department at the University of North Carolina, his decisions about where to study and live (more depth on this topic in **Series 3**), and finally the program created by his loved ones for his memorial service.

Subseries 4.1: Travel, 2002

90 Photographic prints

138 Negatives (photographic)

Scope and Contents: This series of photographs and negatives focuses on McLain's trips around both the U.S. and abroad. The images from Chinook feature an entire series on one sunset, as well as roadside scenes and billboards. The ice storm images highlight his attention to detail, and the Ecuador [sic] images his equal attention to human emotion and character.

Box 9, Folder 21-22; Box 14, Sheet 26-27	Blueridge/Icestorm, 2002 33 Negatives (photographic) 16 Photographic prints
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Box 9, Folder 23-25	Kokum's , undated 26 Photographic prints
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Box 9, Folder 26-28	Sunset, Chinook, MT, June 2005 27 Photographic prints
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Box 9, Folder 29-30	Chinook, MT, June 2005 21 Photographic prints
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Box 14, Sheet 28	Ecuador , 2002 28 Negatives (photographic)
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Box 14, Sheet 29-33	Travel/Personal, undated 77 Negatives (photographic)
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Subseries 4.2: Works by Other Artists

85 Slides (photographs)

Scope and Contents: These three artists were all part of McLain's M.F.A. cohort at the University of New Mexico. His respect for their work is evident, and his continuing relationship with them – particularly with Larry McNeil, had a great influence on his own career and work.

Box 14, Sheet 34-37	Enid Baxter Blader , 1997
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58 Slides (photographs)
Notes: Images of 1997 show "Recall."

Box 14, Sheet 38 Larry McNeil, 1998
17 Slides (photographs)
Notes: Images from Raven series.

Box 16, Folder 30; Cheryl Dietz , undated
Box 14, Sheet 39 10 Slides (photographs)
Notes: Catalog for exhibit *Irregulars*, also contains Dietz's resume.

Subseries 4.3: Published Material , 1991

Box 16, Folder 23 Kimowan Metchewais McLain Memorial Program, Business Cards, 2011
Notes: buisness cards, memorial programs

Box 16, Folder 24 Copy of "Contemporary Native Art" essay, February 1995

Box 16, Folder 25 College Catalogs, 2000-2001
3 Magazines (periodicals)
Notes: Washington Universtiy, Washington University School of Art, Boise State University

Box 16, Folder 26 Printed Matter, undated
Notes: Postcards sent to and collected by the artist, writings, and other collected material.

Box 16, Folder 27 University of North Carolina Application Material, circa 1999

Box 16, Folder 18 Washington University Application, Correspondence, May 2001

Subseries 4.4: Biographical Materials

Scope and Contents: This subseries includes Kiomwan Metchewais' curriculum vitae (CV) or resume. It also includes polaroids depicting Kimowan as a child and a photograph of him as an adult.

Box 16, Folder 31 Kimowan Metchewais' Short Curriculum Vitae (CV), 2010
Notes: Kiomwan Metchewais' CV from 2010.

Box 16, Folder 32 Kimowan Metchewais' Long Curriculum Vitae (CV), 2010 April 21
Notes: Kimowan Metchewais' long curriculum vitae (CV).

Box 16, Photo-folder 33 Family Photographs
Notes: This folder contains six polaroids circa 1973-1978 depicting Kimowan and family and one color print depicting Kimowan as an adult.

Photographs were a gift of April Strong, 2024.

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Series 5: Teaching Materials, 1997-2004

591 Slides (photographs)

Scope and Contents: This series, composed almost entirely of slides, illustrate the relationship between students and instructor. Teaching was a large part of Kimowan's life in Chapel Hill, and as his journals (**Series 3**) reflect, a job he was very passionate about. Teaching from the very general, Drawing I, to the very specific, Native Art in the 1980s, the slides cover Western art history and Native American art history.

Subseries 5.1: Student Work, 1997-2003

254 Slides (photographs)

Scope and Contents: These slides of his student's work reveal a focus on the Chuck Close project, one he discusses in his journals (**Series 3**) as being one of his favorites. The work the students produced show the influence of McLain's style on their creative processes.

Box 14, Sheet 40-46 Student Work , circa 2000
80 Slides (photographs)

Box 14, Sheet 47-49 Outdoor Painting Class, 2003
44 Slides (photographs)

Box 14, Sheet 50-51 Spring Painting Class, circa 2000
39 Slides (photographs)

Box 15, Sheet 1-2 Spring '98, Spring 1998
25 Slides (photographs)

Box 15, Sheet 3-5 Drawing I: Chuck Close Project, circa 2000
44 Slides (photographs)

Box 15, Sheet 6-7 "Native American Object" Project, May 1997
22 Slides (photographs)

Subseries 5.2: Lecture Slides, 2004

337 Slides (photographs)

Scope and Contents: These are the slides that accompanied McLain's lectures, both for classes he taught and presentations he gave. The slides from the Native Art classes feature many contemporary Native artists, ranging from Fritz Scholder to James Luna.

Box 15, Sheet 8-9 Drawing I Lecture, circa 2000
28 Slides (photographs)
Notes: Taught at University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

Box 15, Sheet 10-11 NS [Native Studies] 360 , circa 2000
34 Slides (photographs)
Notes: Artist's note: "various + studio school." Taught at University of Alberta, Edmonton.

Box 15, Sheet 12-13	NS [Native Studies] 360, circa 2000 40 Slides (photographs) Notes: Taught at University of Alberta, Edmonton.
Box 15, Sheet 14-15	Native American Art in the 1980s, circa 2000 29 Slides (photographs)
Box 15, Sheet 16-23	Native Studies, Native Art , circa 2000 145 Slides (photographs)
Box 15, Sheet 24-27	"Four Kinds of Stories" Presentation, 2004 61 Slides (photographs) Notes: Correspondence regarding lecture also included.

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