ALLEYN, Edmund (born Quebec, Quebec, 1931 – d. Montreal, Quebec, 2004 / né à Québec (Québec) en 1931 – décédé à Montréal (Québec) en 2004)

Born in Quebec City in 1931, Edmund Alleyn lived and worked in Montreal from 1970 until his death in 2004. After attending the École des beaux-arts in Quebec City, he won the Grand Prix aux Concours artistiques de la province de Québec and a grant from the Royal Society in 1955. He lived in France from 1955 to 1970 and then returned to Montreal. In 1958 and 1960, Alleyn was included in the selection of Canadian paintings featured in the Guggenheim competition, and in 1959 he won the bronze medal at the Sao Paulo Biennial. He has had many solo exhibitions and has participated in important group shows both in Canada and abroad including the Venice Biennial in 1960 where he represented Canada. His works are included in the collections of Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, Musée d’art contemporain de Montréal and the National Gallery of Canada.

Edmund Alleyn’s production over the last forty years can be considered eclectic. He has explored various styles of painting from abstraction, narrative figuration and even pop art. Although of very diverse styles, his paintings share one constant: a reflection on the human condition and the destiny of humanity. This is perhaps most obvious in the works from the mid-1960s that deal with the rapidly changing world of technology. This series of works can be interpreted as a reaction to the ever-growing control of human beings by technology and the medical profession. Diagram-style representations of machines, computer systems, recording tapes, electrical wires and medical apparatuses as well as schematized human body parts appear to be floating in an ambiguous space.¹

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¹ The National Gallery owns the work Icarus (1966) from this period.