

EGAN BRONZE JEWISH BRONZE OIL LAMPS

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BAY AREA LAMP MAKER TO LIGHT THE JUDEAN PAST

CALIFORNIA SCULPTOR TO REINTERPRET THE ANCIENT "DAROM" LAMPS

BENICIA, Calif., April 10, 2003 – San Francisco Bay Area-based sculptor and lamp maker, Frank Egan, will soon embark on a new phase of his exploration of ancient Greek, Roman, and North African clay lamps; a fascination which has ruled his life for the past two decades. The creator of bronze lamps based on ancient styles, Egan will travel to Israel in early May 2003 to study the obscure Jewish oil lamp known as the "**Darom**." For more information on Frank Egan and his lamps, please visit <http://www.jewishlamps.com>

Born in Eau Claire, Wisc., Frank Egan has lived all over the United States before moving to Benicia, Calif., in 1994, where he established his own foundry. Formerly an Air Force mechanic and an organic farmer, he began pursuing his sculpting career in 1975 in Arkansas, where he studied with sculptor Hank Kaminsky. His reproductions of ancient lamps gained international attention in 2000 when he was commissioned to create lamps for 20th Century Fox's blockbuster film, *Planet of the Apes*.

Named after the Negev desert region in southern Judea where they were found, the **Darom** (south) lamps represent the most exquisite lamps ever crafted in Israel. They were produced during a very narrow period of history from the destruction of the Second Temple to the Bar Kokhba Revolt (70 C.E. to 135 C.E.). These lamps convey a strict adherence to the precepts of the Torah, and exhibit the holy foods offered to the temples during the Jewish festivals and holidays according to the Jewish calendar.

(more)

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After the fall of the 2nd Temple in 70 C.E., the Jews were driven from Jerusalem and subsisted in the caves and high lands of the desert. Their desire to perpetuate their beliefs of their religion through physical means found expression on coins and lamps of that era. These lamps bear witness to the religious tenacity of the ancient Jews, and are the most artistically refined lamps in Jewish history. Their production ended when nearly a half million Jews were slaughtered, starved or enslaved by the Romans during the three years of the Bar Kokhba Revolt from 132 C.E. to 135 C.E.

Once in Israel, Egan will collaborate with archaeologists, historians and university professors to complete this body of knowledge, and to photograph this harsh environment which the ancient Jews were forced to inhabit and subsist in. Upon his return, he will begin the production phase of these lamps, constructing them in bronze to one and a half times their original size. These will be functional representations of the ancient works with an accompanying web site presentation.

Asked why he pursues this unusual path for a sculptor, Egan says, "Because art is important, and because I believe that what I do will promote a greater understanding of the people of the world. I have selected the humble oil lamp because it is an object that everyone understands, and light represents the esoteric value of truth. I have chosen to pay homage to the original artists and the ancient Jews by casting these lamps in bronze to give them a permanence and beauty that only bronze can impart."

For more information on Frank Egan and his lamps, please visit <http://www.jewishlamps.com> or call (707) 746-5746. To arrange an interview with Frank Egan, please contact Shonali Burke at (925) 706-1838 or shonali@attbi.com.

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