

## **#5. SENATE CHAMBER**

### **NARRATOR:**

If you peer through this window, you will see the Senate Chamber. It has been in use since 1881 and was designed by H. H. Richardson. Richardson was renowned for the incredible detail of his work, which often called for rich combinations of luxurious materials. An entire architectural style was named after him: "Richardson Romanesque".

Directly in front of you is one of the two Visitor's Galleries, which have been here since the chamber opened. The back wall of the Gallery is made of Knoxville white marble, the columns are Scottish red granite and the arches are Siena marble. Look up to see the richly carved, paneled golden oak ceiling.

### **JIM JAMIESON:**

"It's considered one of the most grand and elegant rooms in North America. It is essentially a square; it has two visitors' galleries, one on the east side, one on the west side. The side walls are Mexican onyx, there are gold leaf-embossed wall panels above the onyx."

### **NARRATOR:**

The room receives abundant southern light – bathing the senate proceedings with a golden hue.

### **JIM JAMIESON:**

"And that's a function of the gold and amber color of the onyx on the walls. It's a function of the lack of blue and green in the stained glass windows, and certainly the reflectivity of all the gold leaf that's on the embossed panels around the upper parts of the Chamber. Plus all the light fixtures are gold in color. It's just a beautiful room. It's the most intact restored room we have in the Capitol right now."

### **NARRATOR:**

The large center seat on the platform is for the Lieutenant Governor, who serves as the president of the Senate. Notice the stained glass image of the New York State Seal behind the seat. The Senate Chamber is the site of a key element of the legislative process for the State of New York. If it's been awhile since you took a civics class, press 6 on your Acoustiguide for a brief refresher course on how a bill becomes a law.