

Basic Detail Report



U.S. Senator Zachariah Chandler

Lewis Ives, Zachariah Chandler

Historical Figure

Date

c. 1880

Medium

oil paint

Dimensions

94 x 75 in. (238.8 x 190.5 cm)

Paintings

Object number

CA.2025.03.017

Michigan State Capitol Building (100 N. Capitol Ave), Floor 3, South Wing, Corridor

This portrait of Senator Zachariah Chandler is painted in the traditional style of Lewis T. Ives. Though Chandler sits in a rather relaxed pose, his attire and the neoclassical surroundings elevate the formality of the portrait. The large column, bookshelf, sweeping drapery, and ornately carved walnut furniture contribute to the classical, academic feel of the portrait, while the addition of a Victorian rug adds a modern element to the piece. The wrinkles in the rug provide a sense of movement to the artwork, as if the sitter has just adjusted his chair while preparing to be painted. Though the black and white tiles beneath Chandler's feet are similar to those in the current Capitol, the flooring is also reminiscent of the Dutch master Vermeer's hallmark interior scenes of 17th-century daily life. Given that Ives studied in Europe as a young man, it is likely he could be referencing earlier artwork with his choice of flooring. The brown tones present in the portrait similarly contribute an older feel to the piece – a trick used by many American artists in the 19th century.