

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Stuart Weitzman highlights inspiring women in new series

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STUART WEITZMAN  
SHINE SERIES



*Serena Williams is the inaugural guest for Stuart Weitzman's "The Shine Series." Image courtesy of Stuart Weitzman*

By KATIE TAMOLA

U.S. footwear label Stuart Weitzman is launching a conversational video series with the help of the most famous talent in tennis.

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"The Shine Series" is a new series centering conversations with inspirational figures and leaders about how they let their strength shine through their personal and professional lives. For its inaugural episode, chief marketing officer Behnaz Ghahramani at Stuart Weitzman catches up with the footwear's global spokeswoman and esteemed athlete Serena Williams about life-changing shoes, motherhood, their previous work together and inspiring those around her.

"When it comes to Stuart Weitzman, I think having Serena as the first person to be included in this series is a natural fit for the brand as she is a global ambassador, she's known as a shoe lover and for her success in the sport as well as ventures that she does outside of it," said Kimmie Smith, cofounder and creative director of [Athleisure Mag](#), New York. "It is empowering when you look at her as an athlete, an entrepreneur, a woman, a mother and as a Black woman.

"Hearing barriers that she has broken and continues to break as well as being a beacon of hope for women that they can still navigate their worlds while maintaining their families is still a conversation that exists [and is appreciated]," she said. "She represents someone who continues to push forward while making her communities better in the areas that she is involved in."

Serena, shoes and inspiring those around you

Upon launching the first episode of the series, Ms. Ghahramani notes that the footwear brand is excited to launch this venture during Women's History Month. Ms. Ghahramani then notes that the last time she and Ms. Williams saw each other she was six months pregnant, which leads to them catching up about how their daughters and families are doing.

Ms. Williams then begins to reminisce on the Stuart Weitzman Footsteps to Follow campaign ([see story](#)) she did

starring herself and her daughter Olympia. Ms. Williams has shot quite a few things but notes that it was the best shoot she's ever been on.

*The teaser for the Shine Series by Stuart Weitzman, hosted by chief marketing officer Behnaz Ghahramani*

The tennis star explains how she's happy to be able to have something the mother-daughter duo did together that she can show to her daughter 20 years from now. Ms. Ghahramani and Ms. Williams then talk about Olympia's electric and natural energy on the production set, lovingly and jovially posing and trying on disparate shoes.

This was the first time Olympia ever accompanied her mother to a set for a campaign, and although Ms. Williams was initially nervous, the set became another natural setting for her daughter to sing, dance and express herself. From talking to dancing and trying on shoes, Ms. Williams remembers the entire setting feeling authentic.

"When she was in the shoes, it was so authentic, because she always goes in my closet and always picks up the Stuart Weitzman shoes and stands in them," Ms. Williams said in the video. "It was like playing in my closet [at home] I'm really happy how it came out, it was a wonderful image."



*Serena Williams and her daughter Olympia, filming a previous effort for Stuart Weitzman entitled "Footsteps to Follow". Image courtesy of Stuart Weitzman*

Ms. Ghahramani then asks how Ms. Williams tries to inspire the next generation and her daughter.

"I really hope I just inspire the next generation of girls, and Olympia, to believe that anything is possible," Ms. Williams said in the video. "The idea that we inspire those younger than us is amazing, but we also inspire each and every one of us in every single way in every step that we take every single day."

Ms. Williams is actively recognizing that she inspires young girls but that she is also inspired by other generations, other mothers and other women around her as well. Ms. Ghahramani then notes how when she was pregnant, she was somewhat apprehensive about how to handle significant developments in her personal and professional life all at once, and ultimately drew inspiration from Ms. Williams who at the time was also pregnant and competing in the Australian Open.

Ms. Williams then tells Ms. Ghahramani that she herself now has a story to inspire other women about taking a new and exciting job when nine months pregnant. This leads the two women to discussing strength and bold moves.

Ms. Williams has a message for anyone listening and that is that one does not have to be a professional athlete to make bold moves. Playing tennis while pregnant was a bold move, business ventures are a bold move, seeking out new opportunities and beyond are all bold moves that people can seek.

Ms. Ghahramani reverberates the point that Stuart Weitzman is really committed to the concept of letting one's strength shine through, and belief that when this strength is shone, it inspires others to do the same.

When it comes to strength, Ms. Williams continues to inspire it.

"We can't live in this world and be weak," Ms. Williams said in the video. "If you're a woman or a woman of color you really need to be strong and you really need to stand up and you can't allow anything to run you over."

Ms. Williams noted that she gave her daughter a name that reflects strength and hopes to continue to have opportunities to inspire and be inspired by her daughter, and to try on shoes together.

The episode ends with a discussion on the importance of community, sisterhood, some of Ms. Williams's favorite shoes she has owned more than ten pairs of the Stuart Weitzman 5050 boots—and the power of a life-changing pair.

"That's the GOAT of shoes," Ms. Williams said. "Shoes can change your life."

A good ambassador goes a long way

Ms. Williams is one of the most accomplished athletes of all time, and her partnership with Stuart Weitzman offers an even more intimate look into the life, joy and thought processes of the star. Brands are continuing to seek ambassadors that will seize consumer attention but also reflect brand values and offer the kinds of personalities and conversations people can connect to.

French fashion label Louis Vuitton has recruited tennis champion Naomi Osaka as its latest house ambassador in another youthful push. The 23-year-old athlete, who is of Japanese-Haitian descent, is also finding her voice in activism and has publicly supported social causes including Black Lives Matter ([see story](#)).

Swiss watchmaker Tag Heuer has also enlisted Naomi Osaka as its newest ambassador athlete as the brand continues to move in a younger and more diverse direction. Ms. Osaka, who has grown into an activist role in recent months, appears in a new film for the watchmaker. The vignette shows how the elite athlete embodies Tag Heuer's ethos of passion and precision ([see story](#)).

Swiss watchmaker Zenith has named future Hall of Fame quarterback Aaron Rodgers as the brand's new face in North America. One of the best players in the National Football League, Mr. Rodgers exemplifies the watchmaker's ethos of "reaching your star" by reaching the apex of his sport ([see story](#)).

Many consumers will continue to be inspired by series like Stuart Weitzman's latest, where they can see women in powerful places of leadership, offering the message that greatness is achievable for all.

"To see Stuart Weitzman include Serena Williams in this way really creates a sense of a partnership that is truly rooted in shared values, and it presents a sense of comfort and awareness when you see her on their platform, as it feels real," Ms. Smith said. "I also think that having this conversation between the chief marketing officer and Serena also allows others watching to see how important it is to amplify women's voices whether they're a celebrity or someone who is trailblazing as an executive."

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