

ARTIFACT #3: Serena Williams

Artifact 3.1

Read this blurb on Serena Williams from the [National Women's Hall of Fame](#) in Seneca, New York.

"Serena Williams is a highly regarded tennis champion, entrepreneur, investor, fashion designer, and executive producer. Considered among the greatest tennis players of all time, she was ranked world No. 1 in singles by the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) for 319 weeks, including a joint-record 186 consecutive weeks, and finished as the year-end No. 1 five times. She won 23 Grand Slam singles titles, the most by any player in the Open Era, and the second-most of all time.

Off the court, Serena established her venture capital firm, Serena Ventures in 2017, which focuses on investing in women and founders of color and has since built a portfolio of over 20 early-stage companies. That same year, Serena launched her clothing label, S By Serena.

In addition to her fashion and investment ventures, Serena is a published author and executive producer. In 2023, she introduced her multimedia production company, Nine Two Six Productions. This endeavor aims to elevate female and diverse voices through inspiring content.

In 2016, Serena Williams and Venus Williams honored their late sister by founding the Yetunde Price Resource Center, a non-profit that collaborates with other organizations to offer healing-centered and trauma-informed programs to victims of violence."

Artifact 3.2

[Watch this clip](#) from the 2018 US Open presented by CBC News.

Artifact 3.3

Excerpt from the essay [Serena Williams: How Black Women Can Close the Pay Gap](#) written by Serena Williams for Fortune Magazine

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I'd like to acknowledge the many realities black women face every day. To recognize that women of color have to work—on average—eight months longer to earn the same as their male counterparts do in one year. To bring attention to the fact that black women earn 17% less than their white female counterparts and that black women are paid 63% of the dollar men are paid. Even black women who have earned graduate degrees get paid less at every level. This is as true in inner cities as it is in Silicon Valley.

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Growing up, I was told I couldn't accomplish my dreams because I was a woman and, more so, because of the color of my skin. In every stage of my life, I've had to learn to stand up for myself and speak out. I have been treated unfairly, I've been disrespected by my male colleagues and—in the most painful

times—I've been the subject of racist remarks on and off the tennis court. Luckily, I am blessed with an inner drive and a support system of family and friends that encourage me to move forward. But these injustices still hurt.

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The cycles of poverty, discrimination, and sexism are much, much harder to break than the record for Grand Slam titles. For every black woman that rises through the ranks to a position of power, there are too many others who are still struggling. Most black women across our country do not have the same support that I did, and so they often don't speak out about what is just, fair and appropriate in the workplace. When they do, they are often punished for it.

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I want to bring my perspective and experiences as an athlete, an entrepreneur and a black woman to the boardroom and help create a more inclusive environment in this white, male-dominated industry. And I want every woman of color to do the same. Every step forward you take is two steps of progress for womankind. Let today serve as a reminder that we have a voice. We deserve equal pay for our mothers, our wives, our daughters, our nieces, friends, and colleagues—but mostly, for ourselves.

Black women: Be fearless. Speak out for equal pay. Every time you do, you're making it a little easier for a woman behind you. Most of all, know that you're worth it. It can take a long time to realize that. It took me a long time to realize it. But we are all worth it. I've long said, "You have to believe in yourself when no one else does."

Let's get back those 37 cents.