CROWNS - A MUSICAL
BY REGINA TAYLOR

SYNOPSIS
Crowns is a coming of age story about a 17-year-old girl. Yolanda is on a self destructive path running the mean Englewood streets of Chicago. Yolanda’s mother sends her down south to live with her Grandma Shaw after Yolanda’s brother is shot and killed. Grandma Shaw introduces Yolanda to her circle of “Hat Queens” (each woman owns at least one hundred hats).

Yolanda tells her story in a mix of hip-hop and spoken word. Yolanda’s sound is mixed with gospel, jazz, blues, R&B and other idioms of the women who become a part of her life. At first, Yolanda thinks these women have nothing in common - think “Joy Luck Club” or “The Secret Life of Bees” – as this community joins together to save Yolanda’s life.

Each hat holds a story of a wedding, funeral, baptism as the women share their stories of how they moved through life’s struggles. They baptize Yolanda in history/memory. Yolanda realizes she’s not alone in her feelings. The hats aren’t just a fashion statement - they are testimonies of sisterhood - they are hard earned Crowns.

Besides the 73-year-old salt of the earth Mother Shaw, there is Velma, a 27-year-old mortician who has buried too many classmates; Jeannette, 35 and accused of being too flirtatious with other women’s husbands; Wanda, a 40-ish by the book school teacher and Mabel the preacher’s wife who is bigger than life and bodacious.

Yolanda returns to Chicago with new eyes. She can better see where she’s from, who she is and where she’s going.

Crowns has been one of the most produced musicals in the country and has played at the top regional theaters. Its first run was at the McCarter Theater in Princeton, New Jersey and transferred to a very successful run at Second Stage in New York City.

This musical won Helen Hayes Awards (for Best Production, Best Musical and Best Director for Ms. Taylor). Crowns is enjoying critical acclaim and great audiences for its current production at the Goodman Theatre.
VIDEO LINKS:

Goodman Theatre
Regina Taylor’s gospel musical sensation returns to the Goodman, promising audiences a joyful good time. http://www.goodmantheatre.org/season/Crowns/?tab=2&utm_source=mail2&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=BringCROWNStoYourTheatre4.0

ARTICLES & REVIEWS:
Crowns Review “Chicago’s Got Hattitude by Katy Walsh http://chicagotheaterbeat.com/2012/07/10/review-crowns-goodman-theatre/


Time Out Chicago – Crowns at The Goodman
The Goodman revisits Regina Taylor’s ode to strong women and their hats http://timeoutchicago.com/arts-culture/theater/15498061/crowns-at-goodman-theatre-theater-review

SOME REVIEW HEADLINES:
“Inspiring” and “Stirring work” — TIME OUT CHICAGO

“There is something about 'Crowns' that warms the soul” — CHICAGO TRIBUNE

“Rich and beautiful” — CHICAGO TRIBUNE

"Chicago’s got 'Hattitude' " — Katy Walsh

“The hat is most definitely where it’s at” — CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

“Chicago's best 'Crowns' production yet” — CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

“Taylor [has] gathered some of the finest black divas in Chicago (and beyond)” — CHICAGO SUN-TIMES