

Prince Protege-Turned-Evangelist Dead at 57

Denise Matthews, who performed the song “Nasty Girl,” had a career-changing, born-again experience that included renouncing her earlier ways, which included an addiction to crack cocaine.

“I sing to Jesus for Jesus now,” she told *Rolling Stone*. “This gives me pure joy ... worship! I apologize profusely to those I have offended deeply a million times over.”

Matthews, who was known as “Vanity,” died Monday (Feb. 15) at age 57. She had been diagnosed with “sclerosis encapsulating peritonitis,” a life-threatening abdominal condition.

Matthews had collaborated with Prince and was the lead singer of Vanity 6, a 1980s female singing group. She said she turned away from drugs in the 1990s and converted to Christianity.

Recently, she attempted to raise money to cover her medical expenses through . As of Tuesday, her page on the crowdfunding site had raised more than \$6,600 toward a \$50,000 goal.

In an update posted four months ago, she wrote: “I went into the emergency twice this week, boy it is not fun suffering in this body of weak flesh... but Jesus is straightening out all my crooked places in my heart as i go thru this time of won’t complain!”

Fellow entertainers mourned via Twitter, noting Matthews’ Christian faith.

Drummer Sheila E. tweeted about her sadness that her “friend in Christ” had died.

© 2016 Religion News Service. All rights reserved.