

Throwback: Vanity 6-Nasty Girl



[youtube id="a2awcfsL_Uc"]

Denise Matthews was the lead singer of Prince's 1981 all-woman trio Vanity 6. Matthews was Vanity and Susan Moonsie (Susan) and Brenda Bennett (Brenda) were the other two women in the group. Prince's original idea was to include Susan, Brenda and Jamie Shoop to form a lineup called The Hookers in the '70s. He met Vanity at The American Music Awards in 1980 and asked her to join the group. "Nasty Girl" was Vanity 6's second single and it was a hit. Vanity 6 wore lingerie and became the female counterpart to Prince's sexual revolution. "Nasty Girl" dominated R&B radio stations but the risqu  lyrics kept it away from pop playlists. Prince wrote and produced all the songs on their album but he gave Vanity songwriting credit for "Nasty Girl." They released one album and opened for Prince with The Time on the 1999 tour before disbanding in 1983. Vanity was supposed to be in Purple Rain and there were plans for a second album until she left Prince's camp and got a record deal with Motown. She recorded two albums for Motown and had success with the R&B hit "Mechanical Emotion" that featured Morris Day. Vanity made a dozen movies and most famously starred in the cult classic *The Last Dragon*. The period of the late '80s to the early '90s also saw Vanity appearing on various television shows. In the early '90s, Vanity left the entertainment business and became born again denouncing her stage name and persona. She attributed her life change to an almost death experience from drug abuse which led to an encounter with Jesus. The rest of her life was spent honoring her spirituality and spreading the word of God as an evangelist. Her autobiography, *Blame It On Vanity: Hollywood, Hell and Heaven* was released in 2010. In 2016, Vanity died at

age 57 of renal failure just months before Prince's passing in April.Â

R.I.P. Vanity

[youtube id="gQQdA2aat2k"] [youtube id="L8uAKY6sP3I"] [youtube id="_r-Nic6m-70"] Denise Matthews who became Vanity under Prince's tutelage in the '80's has died today at the age of 57. Vanity became famous in the '80's as Prince's girlfriend and the lead singer of his all-girl group Vanity 6. They scored a hit in 1982 with their song "Nasty Girl" and their album became a collectible from Prince's prime era of producing other acts. She later signed a recording contract with Motown and released two albums, *Wild Animal* and *Skin On Skin*. Â Her "Mechanical Emotion" duet with Morris Day was very popular and the single "Pretty Mess." Jesse Johnson produced music for her songs for the *Action Jackson* soundtrack. As an actress, she appeared in 12 films including *Action Jackson*, *The Last Dragon* and *52 Pick-Up*. The Ontario native also did television work until she retired from the entertainment industry and became a born-again Christian in 1997. In 2010, she released her autobiography, *Blame It On Vanity*. Matthews had been in declining health for years after suffering kidney failure in the '90's and receiving a transplant.