



FAREWELL: Siyasanga Kobese, one of five victims of the Komani accident, was laid to rest at the weekend

Picture: THEMBILE SQGOLANA

State promises to name art centres after killed artists

By **TEMBILE SQGOLANA**

TWO beloved Eastern Cape celebrities – actor and former Joyous Celebration singer Siyasanga Kobese and *Inxeba* actor Thobani Mseleni, who died in a car crash with three others – were laid to rest this weekend.

Kobese was buried in Komani on Saturday while Mseleni was laid to rest in Fort Beaufort on the same day.

The vehicle they were travelling in from Gauteng collided head-on with another one between Jamestown and Komani on April 28.

Also killed in the accident were TV personality Akhumzi Jezile, who was buried last week, Skhum-buzo Mbuthuma, an IT specialist at Urban Brew Studios, and Masesi Wilhemina Tumi Morake, both from Gauteng, who were also buried this weekend.

In Fort Beaufort, renowned actors such as Charmaine Mtinta, Zimkitha Kumbaca and Chumani Pani, and musician Phelo Bala, were among the hundreds who gathered to pay their last respects to Mseleni.

Artists Athenkosi Ziqu and Thembakazi Bawuti unveiled a mural they painted on a Fort Beaufort wall in honour of Mseleni.

Among the dignitaries at Kobese's funeral were Joyous Celebration founders Jabu Hlongwane and Lindelani Mkhize and former Joyous Celebration singer Nobathembu Mabeka-Mhlongo.

Newly appointed public works MEC Pemmy Majodina, award winning gospel singer Bethusile Mcinga and Jezile's family also joined hundreds of mourners at the Sandringham sport field in Komani.

In the packed marquee on the sport field, Kobese's mother Nokwakha's angelic voice filled the venue.

She burst into song during her touching tribute to her child. "I stand here to release my child. She

has made me proud and did not disappoint me. I send her away with a white dress as she made me proud of her.

"By singing here I want to show Jabu Hlongwane that Siya got the singing talent from me," she said.

Speaking on behalf of the family, Anele Nogqala said the family had lost a lot.

"She has lifted the family name. She loved entertaining people. She died a breadwinner and had dreams for her family," he said, adding Kobese had touched many lives.

Majodina said Kobese was energetic and full of life.

"She loved entertaining people and she lived her life to the fullest," said Majodina.

She said her "triplets" – Jezile, Kobese and Mseleni – would have the province's art centres named after them.

"They are the sons and daughters of the home of legends," she said.

Mabeka-Mhlongo said she was Kobese's big sister.

"We have to honour God for the resilient spirit Siya had. She prayed and trusted God in everything," she said.

She said Kobese had wanted to be an actor, "and getting into acting is not easy".

"Through resilience, prayer and hard work she got what she wanted," Mabeka-Mhlongo said.

She said in the gospel industry you either pray or use traditional medicine.

"Siya was praying just like me," she said.

Hlongwane told mourners that Kobese had completed her race.

"That is why we came all the way here. In a short time she achieved a lot and we are grateful to have worked with her," said Hlongwane.

Speaking on behalf of Kobese's friends, Ntokozo Mwerase said Kobese had a beautiful heart and "loved like a fool". — *tembiles@dispatch.co.za*