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By:

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R&B singer and songwriter Luther Vandross has died at age 54, in New Jersey it was announced today. The grammy-winner, known for his romantic hits like "Here and Now" and "Any Love," died with his family and close friends besides. "Luther Vandross had a peaceful passing under the watchful eye of friends, family and the medical support team," said Rob Cavanaugh, a spokesman at the JFK medical centre in Edison, New Jersey and added that he "never fully recovered" from a stroke he suffered at his Manhattan apartment on April 16, 2003. At the annual Grammy telecast in 2004 Vandross won four awards, including best song for "Dance With My Father" and appeared on videotape for his acceptance speech. "I asked him, just before he took sick, 'What are you trying to do? Why are you working so hard?' " his mother, Mary Ida, recalled last year following the Grammy show. "I warned him, 'You're going to kill yourself.' He said, 'I want to give them the best that's in me. I want them to hear it and see it.'" Luther wrote songs for David Bowie album (Fascination) and the Broadway musical The Wiz and sang backup for Barbra Streisand. He never married or got children.