

# *Live Entertainment*



## **CHICO DEBARGE**

A member of a musical family that notched major successes in the R&B field in the 1980s and 1990s, Chico DeBarge went his own way stylistically. While the other DeBarges offered romantic harmony singing that recalled the 1960s heyday of their label Motown, Chico DeBarge was a full-throated soul singer whose lyrics tended toward raw sensuality and toward serious reflections on the temptations of the criminal life. DeBarge, composing much of his own material, drew on his life experiences. Born on June 23, 1966, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Jonathan DeBarge received the nickname Chico from his sister Bunny. He was the eighth of 10 children, several of whom formed the vocal group DeBarge in the late 1970s. Several others were members of another R&B ensemble called Switch. Chico DeBarge was too young to join these groups, but his appearances with a local church choir made it clear that he had inherited his family's musical talent. After attending high school in Detroit, he broke into the music business himself and was signed to Motown.

His debut album, *Chico DeBarge*, was released in 1986. Even at this stage of his career, DeBarge's music differed from the sweet harmonies of DeBarge and their falsetto-specialist lead singer El; Chico's music had a funkier edge. The album's leadoff single "Talk To Me" ascended the charts rapidly, and the family seemed to have produced yet another musical sensation.