

The Whiting, 1241 E. Kearsley St., Flint, MI 48503

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact:

Wendi Fournier

Advertising and Promotions Manager

The Whiting

(810) 237-8689

wfournier@thewhiting.com

They Can't Help Themselves, The Four Tops Visit The Whiting!

Flint, MI – The Whiting is proud to present one of Motown's greatest bands, The Four Tops on **Friday, February 13 at 8pm.** With chart topping hits like *Reach Out (I'll Be There)*, *I Can't Help Myself (Sugar Pie, Honey Bunch)*, *Baby I Need Your Loving* and *Ain't No Woman (Like the One I've Got)*, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductees The Four Tops, are the most stable and consistent group to emerge from Motown Records. After an amazing 50 years, their powerful, recognizable sweet harmonies and unforgettable voices are still delighting old and new fans alike! When fans reach out, The Four Tops are still there! The Four Tops are part of The Whiting's *Jazz, Blues & Beyond Series*.

Ticket prices range from \$19 to \$47. To order tickets to this amazing performance simply visit TheWhitng.com, call (810) 237-7333 or (800) 8-CENTER, or visit the Ticket Center located at 1241 E. Kearsley St. just off I-475 between the University of Michigan Flint and Mott Community College. For a complete schedule and full details on the entire 2008-09 season line-up, visit TheWhiting.com or phone the Ticket Center and request a free brochure.

The Four Tops have been marveling audiences with their infectious blend of pure vocal power and sweet harmonies since 1954. High school friends from Detroit's North End, Levi Stubbs, Renaldo "Obie" Benson, Abdul "Duke" Fakir and Lawrence Payton started playing

parties as the Four Aims, as they were aiming for the top. After catching the ear and eye of singer Billy Eckstine, they changed their name to The Four Tops, so as not to be confused with the Ames Brothers.

After a brief stint with Chess Records in the late 50's and Columbia Records in the early 60's the group was introduced to Berry Gordy, who signed them to his new label, Motown Records. At Motown the group was teamed with the songwriting powerhouse of Holland, Dozier and Holland. The rest is history. Hit after hit followed, starting in 1964 with "Baby I Need Your Loving," and continuing with songs like, "Reach Out, I'll Be There", "Standing In The Shadows of Love," "Bernadette," and "I Can't Help Myself (Sugar Pie Honey Bunch)". During the British invasion of the U.S., the Four Tops became a sensation in England.

In 1972, after Motown moved to Los Angeles, The Four Tops signed with ABC/Dunhill Records. The group's hits kept on with "Ain't No Woman (Like The One I Got)" and "Keeper Of The Castle" and others. As records sales starting slowing, the group returned to their strength-live performances.

In the early 80's, The Four Tops signed with Neil Bogart and Casablanca Records. Two albums on the label produced the hits, "When She Was My Girl," "Tonight I'm Gonna Love You All Over," and "I Believe In You and Me." In 1985 the group stopped the show at the heavily rock-filled Live Aid. Critics around the world hailed their set as a highlight of the marathon benefit concert. But benefits were not foreign to The Four Tops. To this day, they have raised money all over the globe with their charity work, never forgetting where they came from. Playing almost 200 dates a year, and starting off the 90's with an inductee to the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame.

Solo work has never been something that The Four Tops set their sights on, but on occasion they have lent their talents to others. Lawrence and Duke served as producers on other music projects; Obie co-wrote "What's Going On?" with Marvin Gaye and Levi was the voice of the man-eating plant, Audrey II, in the movie, "Little Shop of Horrors." But through it all, the group stayed together for forty three years, something that is unmatched by any other group ever.

Nothing could stop them even the bad times and hardships of the entertainment world.

In June of 1997, Lawrence Payton died of liver cancer. The group decided to continue on and worked for almost 2 years with the 3 remaining members, with no signs of slowing down, dedicating every show to Lawrence's memory.

The year nineteen ninety-nine marked the group's 45th anniversary, and marked the first member change. In February, Theo Peoples, a golden voice, multi-talented young man from St. Louis and Ronnie Mcneir joined Obie and Duke onstage for the first time. When "Obie" Benson passed in 2005, the group was then joined by Rokie Payton who is the son of original member Lawrence Payton. The results have been magical, showing the group is ready to continue playing concerts, corporate events and even using 80 symphonies, to spread their magic worldwide.

The Four Tops are: Abdul "Duke" Fakir, Theo Peoples, Ronnie Mcneir and Rokie Payton.

This performance is generously sponsored by McLaren Regional Medical Center, ABC12, YellowBook, Health Plus, Plant N Moran, Ruth Mott Foundation, WFNT, CARS 108, CW46 and NBC25.

The Whiting is a member organization of the Flint Cultural Center Corporation and is dedicated to bringing the performing arts to the community. The Whiting is a nonprofit organization and an Equal Opportunity Employer providing programs and services without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex or handicap.

****High Res Images are available upon request.**

**To secure tickets or request images, please contact Wendi Fournier at
(810) 237-8689 or wfournier@thewhiting.com****

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