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## THE Arts



PAVEL ANTONOV

**Elephant Room** Steve Cuiffo (as Louie Magic) levitating Geoff Sobelle (Dennis Diamond) at St. Ann's.

### *Where the Slacker Magic Happens*

Penn and Teller, meet Wayne and Garth. And another guy.

The three beta males laying waste to St. Ann's Warehouse in the delightfully daft "Elephant Room" may not have much luck with the ladies, no matter how many synchronized karate kicks and amplified hair-metal ballads they offer. Nonetheless Stan's Warehouse, as one of them calls it, is where the magic happens.

That's magic, as in Las Vegas-style sleight of hand, even if Dennis Diamond, Louie Magic and Daryl Hannah's base of operations, a wood-paneled living room

in Paterson, N.J., is more strip mall than Vegas Strip. (Mimi Lien contributed the suitably grotty set.) Still, their lovable-loser shtick as well as their nifty skills help turn "Elephant Room" into one of the coolest places in town.

(It's worth mentioning that Dennis, Louie and Daryl bear an alarming resemblance to the new vaudevillians Geoff Sobelle, Steve Cuiffo and Trey Lyford — Mr. Sobelle and Mr. Lyford are best known for "All Wear Bowlers" — albeit disguised under regrettable facial hair.)

Directed by Paul Lazar, with an eye for the perverse and a shrewd sense of pacing, "Elephant Room" gives its tricks space to breathe. If Dennis wants to hypnotize his two chums so that he can have a private phone chat with the Dalai Lama, so be it. ("If you try to take care of every other sentient

being on the face of the planet and you don't take care of yourself, you're going to get sick.")

Likewise for Louie's boyhood memories of aping Harry Houdini's techniques and Daryl's musings on how to bandage "a gash across your entire midsection."

When these three schlubs pull off an impressive feat, the usual flourishes — the visual equivalent of "tada!" — have an extra tinge of vindication. We don't learn much about life outside the Elephant Room, but when the eggs are disappearing, and the Aerosmith is blaring, and the cinder blocks are levitating, and the cuties from the audience are (warily) participating, it's hard to imagine things getting much better for Dennis Diamond, Louie Magic and Daryl Hannah. If they can make it at Stan's Warehouse, well, maybe they can make it somewhere else too. I like to think so.

*"Elephant Room" continues through Sunday at St. Ann's Warehouse, 38 Water Street, Dumbo, Brooklyn; (718) 254-8779, [stannswarehouse.org](http://stannswarehouse.org).*

**ERIC GRODE**

**THEATER REVIEW**