



The
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BEST OF KC 2025

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Best of KC 2025: Unicorn Theatre's fire work staged dystopian collision between Charles Schulz and child labor

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Photo by Don Ipock

Earlier this month, we published *The Pitch's* annual Best of Kansas City [issue](#). You can take a peek at the results of the readers' poll [here](#). The issue also included a list, compiled and written by our editorial staff, of some local people, places, and things that we thought clearly won 2025. We'll be publishing these items online throughout November.

One stage play in 2025 took us all by storm, and *The Pitch* is ride or die for a little show that delivered a delightfully horrible time—thanks to the killer creatives over at Unicorn Theatre.

fire work is exactly what we yearn for when we crave clever criticism, and the Orwellian comedy of the whole thing does what satire has failed to do in our modern era: find a way to escalate beyond how fucking bad things have gotten.

Director Katie Gilchrist and playwright Mary Glen Fredrick set the scene of a dystopian industrial hellscape, where a group of children aged six to 12 live alone in the ruins of whatever came before. They work long hours of grueling labor in a struggle to stay alive—and even to help fiscally support their own parents, wherever they might be. Despite the bleak conditions, the youth are enraged by a new law that the local politicians seem set to approve: banning child labor for those under a certain age. What should seem like progress is instead met with feral frustration as the kids themselves move to stop said legislation for fear that they will be unable to work and, therefore, die penniless.

Like the violent frustration of an animal forced to gnaw off its own arm to escape a trap, no recent original stage play has made the audience laugh while tasting the blood of the moment so memorably. Pulling from *Mad Max*, *Oliver Twist*, and *Disco Elysium* equally, you'd need to hunt down future productions of *You're a Good Comrade*, *Charlie Brown!*

Click below to read the November Best Of 2025 Issue of *The Pitch Magazine*: