

TECHBURGH

A WEB SITE NAMED DESIRE

A LOCALLY PRODUCED
ONLINE SOAP GETS BUBBLY REVIEWS.



→ It's a popular show filmed and set in Pittsburgh. It's funny, smart, sexy and entirely addictive. But, unlike thousands of fans all over the world, you've probably never heard of it, let alone seen it. But you should.

Now in its sixth season, "Something to Be Desired" is a "sitcom in a soap-opera structure" that's available only online at its own site, somethingtobedesired.com; at video sites such as Blip.tv, Yahoo or YouTube; or by free subscription at iTunes, where new episodes can be downloaded to watch on the go with your iPod or iPhone. New episodes run on Mondays and are five to 10 minutes long.

Nominated as one of the five "Best Series" in the 2008 Yahoo Video Awards, "STBD" (as fans call it) grows its audience each year, getting insightful, impassioned feedback from as far away as Europe and Australia. Writer/producer/director Justin Kownacki, an Erie native and Art Institute of Pittsburgh graduate, credits much of the show's success to its all-volunteer cast and crew.

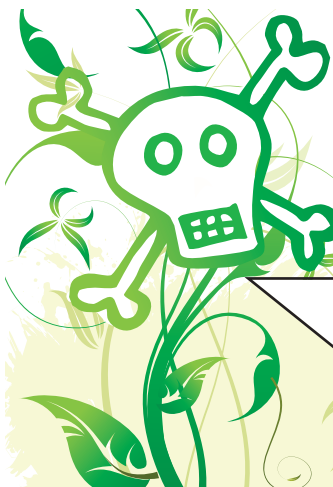
One of the most popular characters, Caroline, is played by Verona native Ann Turiano, an actress who has lived and performed in London, and is happy to be producing a show in Pittsburgh. "As an actor it is unheard of to get this much freedom, to work on a project with this level of collaboration," she

says. "STBD" is based in Pittsburgh, and it's clear that we love and embrace Pittsburgh by how the city and its people are showcased."

Many episodes have been filmed at Affogato, a Bellevue coffee shop, and location shoots have included downtown gallery crawls, Light Up Night and local neighborhood scenes.

Kownacki said he hears from fans, including displaced Pittsburghers, who look forward to each episode as a fun weekly distraction—and a touch of home. He adds that Pittsburgh has a large and important Web presence. "We have an incredibly creative and vibrant online community here in Pittsburgh, producing work that is being seen and heard all over the world." It makes "STBD," as Turiano calls it, "an accidental Web ambassador." For more information or to watch episodes, visit somethingtobedesired.com.—Jonathan Wander

Welcome to Techburgh!
Our area has an amazing tech and online community, and we're telling the world in our new column. Know something cool we should feature? An exciting new start-up company? An eclectic blog? An especially chic geek? Let us know! Send an e-mail to techburgh@wqed.org.



GREEN LIGHT: Rest in (Green) Peace

The eco-friendly set is digging deep—6 feet down to be exact—to help preserve the planet.

→ Thought going green ended at hybrid cars and energy-efficient light bulbs? Eco-conscious people around the nation are helping to "greenify" in a way that's a bit more, well... permanent. Fifteen green cemeteries have cropped up around the United States—four in just the last year. Green burial is thought to have originated in England and foregoes metal caskets, concrete vaults and toxic embalming chemicals for biodegradable caskets (made of pine or cardboard) and chemical-free embalming. Trees replace gravestones, and there's a benefit for the pocketbook as well as for the planet: Smaller funeral tabs replace post-ceremony debts. While Pittsburghers won't be able to find a green plot around here just yet (the nearest green cemetery is more than two hours away in Wilmot, Ohio), Green Burial Pittsburgh is working to change that. Pete McQuillin started up greenburialpittsburgh.org at the beginning of this year and began meeting with an advisory board over the summer. The group is gauging local interest and is looking for its first land site. From there, it may not be long before locals can be forever green.—C.H.