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To Whom It May Concern:

I have been covering the American art scene for more than 15 years for the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, the *Oxford American*, and numerous other publications. I am writing to defend *dustindiamond.com* as an electronic art installation of great wit and outstanding merit. It would be a terrible violation of Max Goldberg's First Amendment rights as a creative artist to deprive him of this domain, and destruction of this site would be nothing less than an act of artistic vandalism.

Cyberspace has become one of the hottest mediums in the contemporary art scene, and on-line art projects are widely recognized as among the most intriguing artworks of our day. In this respect, *dustindiamond.com* lies within a young but already well-established artistic tradition.

Parody, and in particular parody of particular celebrities and of the very idea of celebrity, is a central concern of contemporary art. In this respect as well, *dustindiamond.com* is part of a widely recognized and well-defended trend in the arts that includes Andy Warhol's Marilyn series, Richard Prince's appropriation of the Marlboro Man, and numerous contemporary artists' use of film and TV clips.

Dustindiamond.com is clearly a parody of a personal site. It pokes fun at our celebrity-obsessed culture yet also reveals the underlying pathos of that obsession. Its bad design, comically cheesy technology, and heart-breakingly clumsy prose are all calculated to add to that effect. The guest book is a particularly brilliant aspect of the work. By throwing the site open to the responses of electronic passersby, the guest book further reveals the depths of longing, fear, and even rage that fuel our society's love affair with fame. Certainly the postings in the guest book are often obnoxious, unpleasant, even obscene. But art in our era has never hesitated to use the tools of shock to make a point—and in this case it is not the artist but the audience which is revealing itself.

The *dustindiamond.com* site is a wonderful work of art and deserves wider support, not eradication. I hope that the merely commercial claims of Mr. Diamond will not be given greater weight than the artistic merits of this unique and delightful parody installation.

Very truly yours,

Tessa DeCarlo