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# Differences stall art negotiations

Authorities at odds  
with duo on return  
of Gardner works

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Federal authorities are still anxious to get the paintings back, and the two individuals who claim they can arrange it are still interested in negotiating, but there has been no significant progress for weeks toward the return of priceless artworks stolen from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.

According to sources, although some headway has been made in clarifying the positions of the parties involved, serious differences remain on how to get negotiations started.

The sources, who asked not to be identified, said that federal authorities led by US Attorney Donald Stern want to see how unrelated criminal charges against one of the two individuals, William P. Youngworth III of Randolph, are resolved before engaging in serious new discussions.

Talks between Youngworth and authorities, which played out in a blizzard of headlines and television reports in July and August, broke down in September when neither side showed willingness to meet the other's demands.

Stern said he was unwilling to engage in any talks until Youngworth and his associate, Myles T. Connor Jr., showed they had "concrete and specific" evidence that they had access to the stolen artwork.

Youngworth and Connor provided, through intermediaries, photographs purportedly of two Rembrandt paintings stolen in the March 1990 heist, as well as particles of paint from the Rembrandts. However, they have been unwilling to show more proof until their demands that they be given immunity and the \$5 million reward money are met.

Some progress may be made later this week. Gardner officials are expected to announce the results of their analysis of the photographs, as



**WILLIAM P. YOUNGWORTH III**  
Talks broke down

well as possibly the paint chips.

Youngworth has been in the Norfolk County House of Correction since September when he was found guilty of possession of a stolen motor vehicle. Since it was his third conviction on a major crime, Youngworth could be sentenced to the maximum 15-year term if he is found guilty of being a habitual offender under Massachusetts criminal laws.

Martin Leppo, Youngworth's lawyer, has filed a motion to dismiss the habitual offender indictment, contending insufficient evidence to corroborate the charge was presented to the Norfolk grand jury that issued the indictment. A hearing on that motion is set for tomorrow.

Both Youngworth and Connor, who is also in prison on unrelated charges, have told reporters and friends that unless authorities are willing to show more flexibility in dealing with them, they are prepared to stop cooperating.

Leppo said he intends to speak to Assistant US Attorney Brien T. O'Connor seeking to avoid that possibility.

While reports of a federal grand jury probing the case have surfaced in recent weeks, neither Youngworth nor Connor has been directed to testify so far, according to Leppo. If the two refused to provide information under a grant of immunity, they could be sentenced to eighteen months in jail for contempt of court.