

Artist hits back at critics after Apple firestorm

March 19 2012, By MARK KENNEDY , AP Drama Writer



In this undated image released by The Public Theater, Mike Daisey is shown in a scene from "The Agony and The Ecstasy of Steve Jobs," in New York. Daisey, the performer forced to admit that he made up parts of his one-man show that looked at working conditions in Chinese factories where iPads and iPhones are assembled, is not slinking away. "I want you all to know that I will not go silent," he writes in a new blog posting Monday following a torrid weekend in which he was exposed as mixing fiction and fact and had to edit his monologue. (AP Photo/The Public Theater, Stan Barouh)

(AP) -- Mike Daisey, the performer forced to admit that he made up parts of his one-man show that purported to expose horrific working conditions in Chinese factories where iPads and iPhones are assembled, isn't exactly slinking away.

"I want you all to know that I will not go silent," he writes in a new feisty

blog posting Monday following a weekend in which he was exposed as mixing fiction and fact and then had to edit his monologue.

While acknowledging that parts of "The Agony and the Ecstasy of [Steve Jobs](#)" are made up, Daisey said he stands by his critique of the way Apple products are manufactured in China. "If you think this story is bigger than that story, something is wrong with your priorities."

In an interview with "This American Life" host Ira Glass broadcast Friday, Daisey acknowledged that some of the claims in his show weren't true. The radio show retracted its Jan. 6 episode on Daisey because Glass said he couldn't vouch for the truth of its claims. Daisey then cut parts of his one-man show and added a prologue in which he addresses the questions raised by critics.

Before he scrubbed the monologue, Daisey described traveling to the Chinese [industrial zone](#) of [Shenzhen](#) and interviewing hundreds of [workers](#) from Foxconn Technology Group, the world's largest electronics contract manufacturer. Daisey said he stood outside the gate with a translator and met workers as young as 12 and some whose joints were damaged because they performed the same action thousands of times a shift.

Daisey has now admitted that he mixed fact and fiction - though he never warned his audiences or the journalists who talked with him. Some of the most damning assertions - that he met underage workers, people poisoned by [industrial chemicals](#) and workers crippled by repetitive strains - have fallen apart.

"If people want to use me as an excuse to return to denialism about the state of our manufacturing, about the shape of our world, they are doing that to themselves," he writes.

Daisey has been criticized for misleading thousands of people, putting a grand theatrical tradition into disrepute and even potentially harming the very workers he was apparently trying to help. But on his blog, he was hardly apologetic.

"Given the tenor of the condemnation, you would think I had concocted an elaborate, fanciful universe filled with furnaces in which babies are burned to make [iPhone](#) components, or that I never went to China, never stood outside the gates of Foxconn, never pretended to be a businessman to get inside of factories, never spoke to any workers," he writes.

"Except that we all know that isn't true. There is nothing in this controversy that contests the facts in my work about the nature of Chinese manufacturing."

Daisey - a performer in the vein of Spalding Gray and John Leguizamo - has performed the monologue for more than 50,000 people from Seattle to Washington, D.C. He was expected to take the show on tour after its latest run ended Sunday at The Public Theater.

More information: Online: <http://mikedaisey.blogspot.com>

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