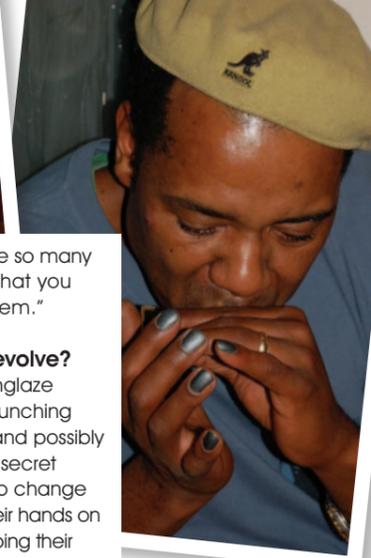




This page: (L-R): Jonathan Montoya, lead guitarist of Saliva loves Manglaze; Manglaze has sponsored drag racer Karey McGee's Kawasaki ZX1400. The team is pimping her bike with Manglaze illustrations



Manifesting Manglaze Matte

ALEX FOX talks to Marc Paez, the creative brain behind Manglaze, matte polish for men, a concept launched over two years ago – making Manglaze the first matte polish range to hit the now hot for it market



L-R: Marc Paez and Cory Sargent

The Manglaze team

- Marc Paez (38yrs), Cory Sargent (38yrs) & Kyoko Osawa (31 yrs)
- Marc & Kyoko live in Chicago, Cory has spent summer 2009 kitesurfing at the Outer Banks of North Carolina
- Marc & Kyoko were married on Valentine's Day 2009. Marc & Cory have been best friends since high school.

Q: What initially sparked the idea of Manglaze?

A: "I had the idea for a manly nail polish a long time ago, but it was really just a pipe dream. My friend Cory started wearing the stuff on his toes when he took up the sport of kitesurfing. He was barefoot or in flip-flops most of the time and just thought it'd be a cool thing to do. That kinda brought the old nail polish for men idea that I'd had many years ago back to life."

Q: Why did you pursue the idea?

A: "None of us had any background in the cosmetics industry. So this was really just one of many stupid ideas I had floating around in my head that I'd most likely never do anything with. At one point I had heard the term 'male polish' and thought that was worth talking to a trademark attorney about. But again, the idea just sat there lacking any real motivation. That motivation finally came one weekend when my friend Cory came to town to see the band GWAR. We were out drinking and he was stuck on the word 'man-glaze' for some reason. He was just goofing on it constantly and wouldn't stop. It became the theme for the night. GWAR does this thing where they shoot various bodily fluids all over the audience. So the show reinforced the whole 'man-glaze' theme. Finally, at some point, either that night or the next morning (it's still a bit hazy) one of us was like 'dude, Manglaze would be an awesome name

for that nail polish idea'. It made sense even once I sobered up the next day and we just thought the name was so damn funny, we had to do it."

Q: How hard was it to fund this business venture (as two polishes is an unusual amount to launch a line with)?

A: We all have day jobs. Sure, it was a major leap of faith. Also, a pretty major investment for a wacky idea. My co-workers and most of my friends thought I was nuts. No one had ever heard of an indie nail polish company and the pitch of a non-glossy nail polish was often answered with an 'ick' or a 'why?'. We chose two colours as we figured most guys didn't need too many options. And since there was the very real possibility that people would just hate the stuff, the plan was to minimise our investment."

Q: Why did you launch in Japan?

A: Kyoko is from Japan. I had been there the year before (2006) and couldn't wait to go back. The food is amazing! Our artist, Joe Simko (sweetrot.com) created artwork and giant monsters for Magma, a hardcore punk festival. Since Cory and I grew up listening to some of those bands, it seemed like a natural setting to bring Manglaze into the world. Sink or swim you know. If the hippest and hardest trendsetters Japan had to offer, could dig us, we were pretty sure the rest of the world would get into Manglaze eventually."

Q: How was it received in Japan and later in the USA?

A: "We were shocked. There were no hang-ups about it being for guys or girls. Our first customers



Scratch thanks models: (Top L-R) Jonno Ollimi, Stevan Linenberg, Jones, Everton Fox, Martin John, Paul Quinn, Michael Heap, Ritchie B

were these two really big, badass looking tattooed up, dread lock wearing biker dudes. These guys looked at the stuff for five seconds and were sold. The warm welcome in Yokohama was a huge relief for us. Back in the States, it came online and the response from people has been of complete adoration. Since our launch in 2007 we've had countless emails from people telling us that they'd been scouring the internet for a matte nail polish for years! Most of our customers found us. So it's been pretty underground until recently. It's awesome though to be so exclusive yet global."

Q: Who is wearing Manglaze?

A: "Generally, it's about 50/50 men and women. It started off being mostly guys then girls got a hold of it and discovered they could use it matte or with a glossy top coat - so they could have two polishes in one. I think anyone that buys a nail polish called Manglaze must be a pretty cool person. Definitely they've got a great sense of humour and they're not too uptight."

Q: Can salons buy it in or is it sold purely on the internet?

A: "We really got hooked on selling directly to our customers. Getting emails back from people saying they 'love' the stuff every day is just awesome! I'm a glutton for positive feedback and since we're new to the industry, our customer interactions have been invaluable. That said, we are looking for a few select retailers and salons that have a good fit for what we're into. Manglaze wouldn't fit in some places and it's in such a short supply, I can't really have very much of our inventory sitting on shelves at a bunch of scattered locations waiting for someone to come in and buy it. I'd rather have everyone be able to buy it at one place online and with a few exclusive partners."

Q: Why matte?

A: "Back when it was just a loose concept, I discovered a motorcycle designed by J.T. Nesbitt (bienvillestudios.com), the Confederate Hellcat. The bike is mostly matte black and carbon fibre. That bike and the whole murdered out car thing going on, made me wonder what a matte finish nail polish would look like. Also, I'm partially colour blind; mostly red/green. One thing that's really hard for me to do is perceive colours with a bunch of glossy reflections in the way. I think that helped lead me to a matte finish and the selection of our first two colours - grey and black. Colours certainly evoke various emotions. Nail polish has traditionally been hidden behind a perfectly glossy shell. But life isn't always glossy and perfect. If you look at the human body,

really just our eyes are glossy. There are so many textures on our body and in nature that you can almost feel just by looking at them."

Q: How is this business going to evolve?

A: "We should have a white (aka Manglaze Mayonnaise) and a clear top coat launching soon. We'll follow with a blue, green and possibly a really awful yellow. We also have a secret innovation coming out that is going to change the whole game. When people get their hands on our big new Manglaze, they'll be dumping their old traditional nail polishes for good. It's gonna be a scary thing for sure. As for other products, we currently have some Manglaze gear available through CafePress and if anyone wants some of our specific imagery on a shirt or anything at CafePress, we'll be happy to create it for them."

Q: Your product imagery is unusual in the polish world, explain its concept?

A: "Again we fell back on the stuff we grew up on. We try to run Manglaze like a punk rock band or an indie label. Illustration is cheaper in most cases than photography and you can't really capture severed limbs, blowtorched fingers, monsters and anatomically enhanced women quite so easily with a camera, although we have tried!"

Q: Describe the festivals where you've promoted Manglaze.

A: "Besides our launch at Magma in 2007, last year we rocked our ink at a tattoo show called Rock the Ink! We set up in the backstage lounge and Manglazed the hands of nearly every musician to hit the stage over the three-day event. Our biggest endorsement came from Saliva's lead guitarist, Jonathan Montoya who said, "The stuff just won't come off!" He uses it without a base coat, which probably works best for durability. This summer we're sponsoring Half Fast Chicago Motorcycle Club's Chicago Shakedown at one of Chicago's most rocking venues, the Cobra Lounge. We'll have nail techs there to slap it on people to show how smoothly it goes on and how quickly it dries. Once they see it in action, most people are hooked."

Q: What celebs wear Manglaze?

Sasha Grey - Adult film star who recently had the lead feature film role in Steven Soderbergh's *The Girlfriend Experience*.
Roz Weston - Canada E! host
Metal Sanaz - Myspace Heavy Metal Vixen
Marissa Lauren - Singer/actress
Ronny North - SoCal guitar hero
Royal Underground - The clothing line owned by Nikki Sixx and Kelly Gray requested the ManGlaze for their 2009 summer line photo shoot! **S**

"If you're a guy and like the look of nail polish but have been afraid to try it, just go for it. The kind of girls that like a guy in nail polish are gonna get you into all sorts of trouble!" **Marc Paez**

