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A Major Lighting Innovation at Viabizzuno

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For Milan Design Week, the Italian lighting manufacturer **Viabizzuno** has created one of the most spectacular installations – a series of silos filled with incredible lighting scenarios – and released one new and ingenious product.

For many years, Viabizzuno has created sophisticated lighting experiences. Its founder, Mario Nanni, has always been inspired by the cinema, an art form where light – and the absence of it – is of the essence. The company has also collaborated with numerous architects on its minimalist collection. It was the place that Peter Zumthor turned to when designing the restrained fixtures of his famed Therme Vals project, and David Chipperfield sought the company's expertise on his elegant lighting scheme for Valentino boutiques.

During Milan Design Week, Viabizzuno has brought together its two strengths: conjuring a high-drama experience, and debuting a light fixture at the height of technical sophistication. In the courtyard behind the company's Milan showroom (usually off limits to the public, as it focuses on trade), it has installed a series of huge metal silos. Guests are welcomed six at a time through the door of the first silo – a sort of antichamber of anticipation – then are free to move from silo to silo, each one perfectly executing the wow factor. In the first silo, you look down at the ground to discover that what feels like glass block flooring is instead a tapestry of spice bottles, some empty save for a light bulb. Many of the vignettes play with the height of the silo structure; what at first glance seems a cylindrical fixture made of fresnel lenses turns out to be an infinite chandelier, rising all the way to the oculus at the top of the silo.

One of the silos features N55 fixtures – the new product Viabizzuno is debuting – with a variety of bulbs in different types, shapes, sizes – designed by a who's who of international stars, including Zumthor, Kengo Kuma and Winy Maas. The product satisfies a multitude of applications, from floor lamps to track lighting. But the real magic in this is that its electrical housing, engineered with a smart power supply and with an innovative heat dissipator, unscrews like an incandescent bulb. This way, if it ever stops working, you could simply ship it back to Viabizzuno and receive a replacement. The company will refurbish the obsolete one with new and better technology, evolving the product even more. The company sees this as an innovation in sustainability. It's also remarkably pragmatic and creative at once – one more step in the light bulb's green evolution.

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