

Berklee College of Music

Creating Spaces for Non-Males in Electronic Music:
An EP and Record Label by Luminosity

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Master of Music Production, Technology, and Innovation

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Abstract

This project aims to enable a collaborative and empowering space for female and non-male identifying persons within the electronic music industry. Through the development of a multi-sub-genre electronic extended play album, female and non-male identifying producers, engineers, artists, and musicians were given the opportunity to collectively work in a judgement-free environment. In an industry that is predominantly male, female producers and artists struggle to have their voices heard. This extended play album consists of five songs. Two songs are based off of previous projects, ideas, and stories. Three songs are collaborative projects between musicians, writers, and producers. Once mastered, this project aims to further the collaboration between female and non-binary people within the music industry by working to promote and eventually release the extended play album. In addition to the extended play album, an album, this project also contains the development of an all-female and non-binary electronic record label. This label will help promote female and non-male electronic artist's work and educate others on the effects and struggles caused by gender discrimination. The goal of this project is to inspire future female producers in the electronic music industry to continue to learn, create, network, and discover their voice and feel heard.

Keywords: creative project, electronic music, female empowerment, EP, record label, collaboration

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encouraging me to keep going every time I want to give up. I would not have discovered my love for music if not for you and for that I cannot possibly thank you enough.

Introduction

The collaborative EP, *Finding Flares*, was generated out of a need to find healing and purpose. Caroline Hughes is a music producer who goes by the artist name, Luminosity. The idea for this EP originated three years ago when Luminosity first began producing music. Growing up, Luminosity taught herself how to play guitar and quickly found music to be a way of dealing with the harsh realities of life. After she began learning how to produce music during her freshman year in college, she realized music was not just a way to escape reality but also a source of healing. She found herself writing songs about anxiety, depression, love, and other personal experiences. Soon after, Luminosity fell in love with electronic music after attending her first concert, Deadmau5¹. That same year, Luminosity attended her first electronic music festival, Spring Awakening³, in Chicago, Illinois², and came to multiple realizations about electronic music. After experiencing the loving culture that embodied EDM festivals, Luminosity understood that her music and experiences could not only be a source of healing for herself but also for other people. She realized that many people deal with similar feelings of sadness, loneliness, and loss and knew that her music could be a way helping others. During that same festival, Luminosity also noticed the overwhelming lack of women representation. Out of the eighty artists performing throughout the three-day weekend, less than five artists were female. Luminosity realized the need for more female representation in the electronic music industry was extremely important. Over the next two years, she learned that women in electronic

¹ "Deadmau5". 2020. <https://deadmau5.com>.

² Travis Atencio. 2017. "Spring Awakening 2017 Is Music Festival You Don't Want To Miss". *Rave Jungle*. <https://www.ravejungle.com/2017/02/25/spring-awakening-2017-music-festival/>.

³ "SPRING AWAKENING MUSIC FESTIVAL". 2020. *Springawakeningfestival.Com*. <https://springawakeningfestival.com>.

music were not only being ignored but silenced⁴. Luminosity noticed how women were being treated as producers and DJ's and decided to find a way to help change how women were viewed in the electronic music industry. *Finding Flares* is an all women and non-male identifying collaborative EP to enable a sense of empowerment and give a voice to people who feel they could not speak. In addition, this EP addresses topics such as anxiety, depression, PTSD, love, loneliness, regret, and so many more feelings that many people experience throughout their life. *Finding Flares* is an attempt to help people overcome and power through these difficult moments.

This project is a culmination of all the information Luminosity has learned throughout her time at Berklee. *Finding Flares* includes multiple sub-genres within electronic music such as, dance house, bass house, and future bass. As many artists today are breaking music norms by combing different genres and exploring genres outside of their realm, this EP strives to achieve a similar concept. While the concept of combining genres within a single album or EP is quite common today, having an EP written, produced, and released only by women and non-male identifying people is not as common, especially within the electronic music industry. This EP strives to work only with female and non-male identifying people to record, produce, mix, master, and promote this album in order to demonstrate the incredible work women can create. In working only with female and non-male identifying people, Luminosity wants to create a space free of judgement and instead uplift and empower women in the electronic music industry. She will help non-male identifying people feel confident in producing and creating electronic music and educate others on the importance of speaking up for yourself and other women in the

⁴Stephanie Kale. "Beyond Gender? : Women in the Cultural Economy of Electronic Music." 2006. [http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ddu&AN=2FDC9F7\(D181B166&site=ehost-live](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ddu&AN=2FDC9F7(D181B166&site=ehost-live).

industry. Luminosity will include any female and non-male identifying person who wants to be included in this project and will help create a space for learning more about sound design, production, engineering, and promoting within electronic music.

After spending time researching just how problematic gender discrimination in the music industry truly is, Luminosity realized there needed to be a space within the electronic industry that was dedicated to uplifting and supporting female and non-male identifying people. Through this, Luminosity created Brighten Records, an all-female and non-binary electronic label. This label will consist of two sections: a record label and an education platform. The record label section of Brighten Records will be dedicated to seeking out talented female and non-binary electronic artists, producers, and DJs and help them release and distribute their music while building their fanbase and reputation as artists. The second section of Brighten Records will be an education platform dedicated to helping younger generations learn everything possible about music production, technology, DJing, performing, and more. It was also help teach about how labels work and what to look out for when deciding to sign to a label. Lastly, the education platform of Brighten Records will include diversity classes for everyone; not just non-male identifying people. These classes will cover the effects of gender discrimination in the industry as well as how to prevent gender discrimination from happening in the future. Luminosity hopes that by creating this electronic record label, many female and non-male identifying people will begin to realize they are accepted and have a place in music. She hopes this label will help improve female and non-binary representation in the electronic music industry as well as help encourage younger generations to continue producing and developing their skills.

The overall theme of these two projects is understanding you are not alone and building spaces of inclusion and acceptance. While many of the songs on the EP, *Finding Flares* pertain

to serious moments in life where people feel most like giving up, the same can be said for many women in music. Because so many women and non-male people are not taken seriously or are under-represented in the electronic music industry, many of them give up. This entire project revolves around letting people know they are not the only ones going through these moments of difficulty. Luminosity hopes to create a sense of knowing it's okay to reach out to people around you who have been through similar experiences because they can help. By creating an all-female and non-binary EP and electronic record label, Luminosity hopes that women will feel comfortable and confident leaning on one another to achieve greatness.

Review of The State of The Art

Some of the influences for this EP (extended play) consists of electronic producers and DJ's such as; Illenium⁵, Kayzo⁴, Seth Hills, Martin Garrix⁷, Said the Sky⁶, and Alison Wonderland³. Many genres have influenced Luminosity's style such as Pop, EDM (electronic dance music), Rock, Bass music, House, Trance, and Trap. While there are many sources of inspiration from electronic producers, there is an overwhelming lack of female representation within this genre¹. Understanding why it is so difficult for female and non-male identifying producers and DJs to be recognized in the music industry is pivotal to the innovation of electronic music. It is important to focus on the difficulties gender minorities face, specifically within the electronic music community, in order to address these issues. Over the past decade, EDM has become exceedingly popular and has grown in size tremendously, but as few as one in ten of these producers are female¹. While women have struggled to gain legitimacy in the music industry for decades, there is a specific problem in the electronic music genre that has made it increasingly difficult for women to even begin learning how to become producers let alone,

¹ Deanna Radford. "Pink Noises: Women on Electronic Music and Sound." *Herizons*, Spring 2011, 41+. Accessed November 10, 2020.

https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A272168261/PPGB?u=mlin_b_berklee&sid=PPGB&xid=b062a97c.

² Stephanie Kale. "Beyond Gender? : Women in the Cultural Economy of Electronic Music." 2006. [http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ddu&AN=2FDC9F7\(D181B166&site=ehost-live](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ddu&AN=2FDC9F7(D181B166&site=ehost-live).

³ "Alison Wonderland – Official Site". 2020. *Alisonwonderland.Com*. <https://alisonwonderland.com>.

⁴ "Kayzo | Welcome To The Doghouse". 2020. *Kayzo Official*. <https://kayzo-music.com>.

⁵ "Media". 2020. *Illenium*. <https://illenium.com/pages/media>.

⁶ "Said The Sky". 2020. *Said The Sky*. <http://saidthesky.com>.

⁷ Martin Garrix. 2020. "Martin Garrix | Official Website & Dash;". *Martingarrix.Com*. <https://martingarrix.com>.

gaining recognition. The lack of female representation in EDM is not due to the lack of interest from female producers, but rather due to a massive absence of support. This could be due to the historic gender stereotypes that are, unfortunately, still present in today's culture, however, the lack of support has caused gender minorities to struggle gaining access to the necessary technology and information needed to excel in electronic music². Because of the difficulty gaining access to necessary technology and knowledge, female producers have begun creating safe spaces with each other⁹. These communities have been able help female and non-male identifying producer not only begin their path to production but also excel in electronic music¹⁰. By creating an EP with only female and non-male identifying producers, artists, songwriters, and engineers, Luminosity will be able to demonstrate the power that women hold within electronic music. In addition, through this community of female creators, Luminosity hopes to break the barriers of EDM by creating an all-female and non-binary electronic label, Brighten Records.

⁸ Adele Fournet. 2010. *Women Rockers And The Strategies Of A Minority Position*. Ebook. 3rd ed. Sarasota: Music and Arts in Action. <https://musicandartsinaction.net/index.php/maia/article/view/womenrockers/53>.

⁹ Rebekah L. Farrugia. "Spin-Sters: Women, New Media Technologies and Electronic/Dance Music." 2004. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db+ddu&AN=6D07DAC573C37CC7&site=ehost-live>.

¹⁰ Stephanie Kale. 2006. "Beyond Gender? : Women in the Cultural Economy of Electronic Music." <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ddu&AN=2FDC9F79D181B166&site=ehost-live>.

¹¹ Frances Morgan. "Pioneer Spirits: New Media Representations of Women in Electronic Music History." *Organised Sound* 22, no. 2 (2017): 238-49. Doi:10.1017/S1355771817000140.

1. Description

1.1. Finding Flares

1.1.1. Introduction

Finding Flares, is an all-female and non-binary created electronic extended play album. The EP consists of five songs that were written, recorded, produced, and promoted all by female and non-male identifying people. Caroline Hughes, the creator of this project, will be releasing this EP under her artist name, Luminosity. This project was created to help showcase the work of female and non-binary people in the electronic music industry and create an empowering space for women. *Finding Flares* covers tough topics such as love, loss, PTSD, anxiety, depression, loneliness, and more. Luminosity developed this EP out of a need to heal from past experiences as well as find comfort and encouragement through music creation. She hopes the topics covered in the EP will help connect people from all backgrounds who have experienced similar emotions. This EP includes multiple subgenres within electronic music such as anthem house, bass house, and future bass, and has influences from other genres such as lo-fi, rock, pop, trap, and dubstep.

The EP is structured to tell a story of feelings and move the audience through its emotions. Beginning in a low place with the first song, “Fix Me”, *Finding Flares* then moves to a search for answers and understanding with the songs, “Stuck in My Head (feat. Keep it Mellow)” and “Calm in a Hurricane (feat. Angel Rose)”. After beginning to build a sense of confidence through the song “Coded”, the EP ends on a high note with “Break Out (feat. Keep it Mellow)”, giving a sense of purpose and empowerment to the listener. The course of the EP can be summed up perfectly from its name, *Finding Flares*. The emotional journey this EP takes its listener on is a call for help, a search for answers, and finally the decision to reach out and find a way out of the darkness.

1.1.2. Song Descriptions

1.1.2.1. “Fix Me”

Luminosity began writing “Fix Me” at the beginning of her first semester at Berklee Valencia. While in the midst of a panic attack, Luminosity decided to write out her thoughts. In this moment of confusion and loneliness, she wrote out things such as: “Why is it so hard to find love?”, “Why am I so awkward?”, “Why can’t I accept compliments?”, “Why do I feel so numb?”, and “Why can’t I just be normal?”. As these written thoughts began to pile up, at the very end she wrote: “Why can’t I just snap my fingers and be fixed?”. Later in the semester, one of her course assignments was to create an original track in Ableton. While searching for inspiration for this assignment, Luminosity stumbled across her notes from her panic attack and decided to try and make a song out of it. As she began to create the song, “Fix Me”, she fell in love the track and decided to include it in her EP, *Finding Flares*.

The vocals of “Fix Me” were recorded by Luminosity herself in Ableton, where she also produced the track. She used Ableton to record and produce the track due to her original project description for her class. After she submitted the song for her class, she also recorded guitar and continued processing the instruments in Ableton. One of the characteristics of this track that makes it so special is its use of autotune on the vocals. Luminosity wanted the idea of “Fix Me” to be represented in its production by not using Melodyne on the vocals. Instead, she processed her vocals using iZotope’s Nectar and Vocal Synth 2. This gave the vocals a gritty texture and allowed the autotune to be audible to the listener. The autotune represents a longing to be “fixed” or “corrected” to fit into society, but it’s the grittiness and imperfections that make the vocals beautiful.

Luminosity engineered “Fix Me” with the help of Teresa Alos Estredér and Paige Shepherd. Teresa helped review mixes of the song while Paige helped Luminosity develop the specific vocal processing technique on the vocals of “Fix Me”. “Fix Me” is the first track on the EP, *Finding Flares*, and is the inspiration for its creation.

1.1.2.2. “Stuck in My Head (feat. Keep it Mellow)”

Luminosity first came up with the melody and initial lyrics for “Stuck in My Head” during her sophomore year at Northwestern University. During this moment in her life, she had begun to fall in love with someone at her school. She felt as though she could not tell this person how she felt and instead she tried to ignore and forget her feelings all together. Luminosity quickly realized that ignore the crush she had developed on this person only made her feelings grow. As much as she tried to forget this person, she could not and instead found herself unable to stop thinking about them. While Luminosity had originally written the entire song during that year, she was unable to finish the track. During her first semester at Berklee Valencia, Luminosity wanted to try again with the song. However, since writing the initial lyrics for this song, the situation described in the lyrics changed. Luminosity decided to try to write the song from the perspective of feeling guilty and frustrated from not being able to express an emotion. Throughout her life, Luminosity found that whenever she decided not to express love, anger, or sadness in a situation, she often found herself constantly thinking about that topic until she was able to confront it. With the help of Pip Wynans, Luminosity rewrote the song to incorporate these new ideas and combine it with the original hook she had written three years prior. After producing the track, she decided to ask Helo Houviez, whose artist name is, Keep it Mellow, to sing on the track. Helo was able to add an incredible amount of emotion through their vocals and truly made the track unique. It is because of its sense of frustration and unanswered questions

that “Stuck in My Head (feat. Keep it Mellow)” is the second song on the EP, *Finding Flares*. “Stuck in My Head (feat. Keep it Mellow)” was engineered by Luminosity and Teresa Alos Estredér and produced and recorded using Ableton.

1.1.2.3. “Coded”

The song “Coded” is the third song on the EP, *Finding Flares*, because of its intensity. It is a perfect turning point between the first half of the EP and the second half. Luminosity wrote coded during her time at Berklee Valencia as a procrastination project in Ableton. She had been feeling stuck on a separate project and decided to begin a song from scratch to get her mind off of the stress of her other work. While the project was initially just a way to clear her head, she fell in love the song and decided to add it to *Finding Flares*. Towards the end of the song’s completion, Luminosity decided to add vocals to the project to give it more depth. She recorded the vocals herself and processed them using the plugins: Little Alter Boy and Vocal Synth 2. She wrote the lyrics to incorporate the idea of something being coded or unattainable and needing to “break the code”. This project was engineered by Luminosity with the help of Teresa Alos Estredér.

1.1.2.4. “Calm in a Hurricane (feat. Angel Rose)”

Luminosity began to write “Calm in a Hurricane” right after she finished writing “Fix Me” as a way of answering some of the questions she had. The idea behind the song is finding ways to handle some of the tough problems in life. She began producing the track in Ableton and quickly decided to include Angel Rose on the project who is an amazing lyricist and vocalist. Angel helped Luminosity complete the lyrics in “Calm in a Hurricane (feat. Angel Rose)” and also sang on the track. The progression in the song lyrically follows the progression of the music perfectly. The song starts off very quiet and calm but then progresses into a wide future bass

track. Learning how to find ways of coping with past trauma and learning to deal with problems that may occur in the future is exactly what “Calm in a Hurricane” means. Since Luminosity is from Houston, Texas and has been inside multiple hurricanes before, she believed this would be a perfect analogy. The uplifting and hopeful nature of this song is why it is the fourth song on the EP, *Finding Flares*. This track was engineered by Luminosity with help from Teresa Alos Estredér and Paige Shepherd.

1.1.2.5. “Break Out (feat. Keep it Mellow)”

Similar to “Stuck in My Head (feat. Keep it Mellow)”, “Break Out (feat. Keep it Mellow)” began before Luminosity arrived at Berklee Valencia. During her senior of college at Northwestern University, Luminosity found a midi file containing a part of the melody from “Break Out (feat. Keep it Mellow)”. After reworking the melody slightly, Luminosity began to develop the track in Fruity Loops Studios but did not complete the track. Luminosity wanted to rewrite the song in Ableton and give it a new sense of light. She was able to create this infectious dance track that was a perfect ending to her EP. Originally “Break Out” was called “Night Tales”, however, after writing lyrics for the song, she decided to change the title to match its emotion. The track contains vocal recordings from both Luminosity and Keep it Mellow who decided to join the track after their initial recording session for “Stuck in My Head (feat. Keep it Mellow)”. This song discusses the theme of women empowerment in the music industry. “Break Out (feat. Keep it Mellow)” was created to not be just a dance track but a song that shows that women and non-male identifying people are tired of being told they cannot compete with men and having their voices silenced. This track is engineered by Luminosity with help from Teresa Alos Estredér.

1.2. Brighten Records

1.2.1 Introduction

Brighten Records is an all-female and non-binary electronic label created by Luminosity. After Luminosity began producing her EP, *Finding Flares*, she decided that just creating an EP was not enough for this project. While leading a team of all non-male identifying people in her EP, she began to realize just how bad gender discrimination in the music industry really is. She had learned that only two percent of producers in the music industry were female¹. After going through a few classes at Berklee that discussed women in music, she began to realize that while multiple people were talking about how few women there were in the music industry, not many people were discussing why there were so few. She looked at her own experiences with gender discrimination and talked to some of her class mates about their experiences and realized that many non-male identifying people do not feel they have a place in music where they feel heard or appreciated. Because of this Luminosity decided to begin building a place where female producers, artists, engineers, and DJs could be uplifted in the music industry. Luminosity decided an electronic record label would be a perfect place to help non-male people become more prominent in the music industry. She decided to name the record label Brighten Records to symbolize the “light” implied by her artist name, Luminosity.

Brighten Records is made up of two sections. The first section is the traditional record label where artists are signed and helped to release their music and fan base. Brighten Records is a distribution label, meaning that the label wants to build its artist with the intent to promote them to bigger, more established labels later in the artist’s career however, this can change once Brighten Records has established a name for itself. The second section to Brighten will be an

¹ Emily Fox. 2019. “Sound & Vision: Why Only 2% of Music Producers Are Women.” Kexp.org. November 5, 2019. <https://kexp.org/read/2019/11/5/sound-vision-why-only-2-music-producers-are-women/>.

education platform. This platform will include classes that cover music production, technology, performing, and much more. Additionally, Brighten Records will help teach how record labels are supposed to run and be transparent with the way it runs to the public. Finally, Brighten Records will include diversity classes and “Safe Space Conversations” that will be open to everyone.

1.2.2. The Label

The record label section of Brighten Records will operate like a normal record label. Luminosity will help run an A&R team that will seek out and find female and non-binary electronic artist. Brighten Records will keep the way it operates public knowledge to help aspiring artist understand what they should be looking for in a record label. Because of this, Brighten Records will make its artist contract public. When an artist decides to sign with Brighten Records, the label will sit down with the artist and go through their contract page by page to help the artist understand exactly what they are signing and expected of while with Brighten. Because Brighten Records will also be an education platform, each artist contract will include a “Give Back Clause”. This clause will discuss a specific number of hours that each artist will be expected to complete per month, teaching classes or being involved in some way with the education platform of Brighten Records. Brighten hopes to show its artists as role models to younger, aspiring electronic artist and believes that by having each artist be involved in the education platform, this will help build the artist’s reputation and show more female representation in the music industry.

Brighten Records will be a distribution label, meaning that it intends to build its artists reputation with the intent to promote them to bigger, more established labels later in their careers, however this can change as Brighten become a more established label. Working with

each artist to develop not just their music but also their fan base, Brighten will then help each artist distribute their music and promote it to major labels around the world. In addition to helping artist release their music, Brighten Records will help each artist make sure their music is the best it can be by providing them with networking opportunities with mixing and mastering engineers. Lastly, Brighten will make sure no artist loses rights to their music they release while signed with the label. Brighten Records will help each artist release their music, but when an artist decides to leave the label, Brighten will make sure that artist has full rights to their music.

1.2.3. The Education Platform

The education platform of Brighten Records will be built with the intent to help aspiring producers, engineers, DJs, artists, and anyone who identifies as non-male in the music industry improve and have a place they know that are accepted. During her time at Berklee, Luminosity sent out an anonymous survey to non-male people in the music that asked questions about their experiences with gender discrimination while in the music industry. In the survey, it was discovered that 95% of non-male identifying people have experienced some form of gender discrimination in the music industry. It was also discovered that 87% of non-males have doubted their talent or ability to succeed in the music industry because of their gender. At the end of the survey there was a section where the participants were given a chance to share some of their own personal experiences with gender discrimination while in the music industry. Some of the comments included: “Working in the music industry as a woman means constantly being mansplained to” and “people made assumptions about my ability to succeed in the industry because I am female”. There was also a section where participants could leave comments with suggestions they believed would make the music industry more inclusive. Some comments included: “there needs to be more education around the role of women/nonmale identifying

people in music and the industry at large, and this needs to start from when you are in high school/middle school”, “I think the entire industry is severely lacking in transparency, which I think would help bring to light a lot of gender discrimination”, and “in general, giving non-males in the industry more visibility and opportunities”. From these survey responses, Luminosity created three main points that needed to be tackled in the education platform of Brighten Records: 1. Showing non-male people as role models in the music industry, 2. Transparency, and 3. Diversity and Inclusion training.

The first aspect of Brighten Records’s education platform will focus on presenting non-male people as role models in the music industry. Brighten will have some of its artist perform classes that cover anything that artist has been successful in. This could be anything from teaching about music production, taking the audience through one of their own tracks, or teaching about how to DJ. Brighten Records will also invite outside non-male guests to speak on their role in the music industry. Luminosity hope to also collaborate with She Knows Tech². Since She Knows Tech has done a lot of similar classes to help educated other non-male people on music production and technology, Luminosity believes this would be a great collaboration to bring together.

The second aspect of Brighten Records’s education platform will be transparency. In addition to teaching classes on music production and technology, Brighten will also teach classes on the inner workings of a record label. In addition to this, Brighten will also keep the way that it operates as a record label public to serve as an example of the way a record label should be run. Because so many people in the music industry have struggled understanding record labels, their contracts, and the deceptiveness, Brighten will be a place that tries to stay true to serving the

² “She Knows Tech.” n.d. She Knows Tech. Accessed June 14, 2021. <https://www.sheknows.tech>.

artist. The last aspect of Brighten Records's education platform will be diversity. Brighten Records will hold diversity classes for everyone, not just non-male identifying people, covering topics such as gender discrimination. They will help educate on how to handle discrimination while working in the industry as well as how to prevent gender discrimination from occurring in the future. Brighten Records will invite its own artist to speak on their experiences if they would like and Luminosity will try to maintain an atmosphere of openness and acceptance throughout the classes. Brighten Records will also hold "Safe Space Conversations" where non-male identifying people can talk with one another and openly discuss anything. This space will be a place where non-male people can feel comfortable talking about anything on their mind and a space where they know they are accepted and appreciated.

Innovative Aspects

This project includes many innovative aspects that revolve around women inclusivity in the music industry. The first innovative aspect to this project is how *Finding Flares* is an all-female and non-binary written, produced, mixed, and promoted electronic EP. There are very few electronic albums in the music industry that have been built all by non-male identifying people. By making this EP all female and non-binary, this EP showcases the incredible work and ability of female writers, producers, and engineers. In an industry where so few producers are female, this project greatly helps give women the reputation they deserve. Brighten Records is also extremely innovative because not only is it an all-female and non-binary electronic record label, it also combines a record label with an education platform. There are so many innovative aspects to Brighten Records. Luminosity researched multiple electronic record labels in the music industry but was unable to find one electronic label that was all-female. While there were some record labels such as Unspeakable Records¹ that began as all female labels, none were specific to electronic music. Additionally, Brighten Records helps expose just how bad gender discrimination in the music industry truly is. It is also helping fight against gender discrimination and is given female and non-male identifying people a place where they feel accepted and uplifted in music.

¹ "Dot — UNSPEAKABLE RECORDS". 2014. *UNSPEAKABLE RECORDS*.
<https://www.unspeakable-records.com/dot/>.

New Skills Acquired

Luminosity developed many new skills throughout her time working on *Finding Flares* and Brighten Records. While working on *Finding Flares*, Luminosity learned about sound design, production, and engineering. She worked with her teachers at Berklee Valencia to help hone in her new skills to help her build her project to be the best that it could be. Additionally, since including Brighten Records to be a part of her project, Luminosity began to learn all of the ins and outs of record labels. She sat down with multiple people from other programs for help understanding how a record label works and what would need to be done to develop not only a record label, but an education platform. While Luminosity wants to stay on the music production side of the record label, she has learned a lot about legal work, distribution, PRO's, Contracts, and much more. Luminosity has taken all she has learned at Berklee Valencia and has included it in her project. She also developed the ability to speak on women's rights and discuss the importance of fighting against gender discrimination in the industry. This was extremely important when communicating this project's importance.

Challenges

While working on the project was a delight for Luminosity, she did encounter a few challenges along the way. One of the biggest challenges she faced was scheduling. Due to the COVID restrictions in Valencia, it was sometimes very hard to be able to meet with musicians or find time in the studio to record or produce. One of Luminosity's most unexpected challenges was the responses she received after revealing her project was all non-male. She found that some of her classmates and the people in her life did not understand why having a project that was all non-male was so important. This helped Luminosity develop the ability to speak up for herself and against gender discrimination. The last challenge Luminosity faced was budgeting. Towards the end of her project, Luminosity was faced with more expenses than she expected originally. Some of this was due to the addition of the record label to the project, however, some of it was due to the expansion of the project itself including hiring a graphic designer for the album cover and mastering all five tracks by a professional mastering engineer. While all of these challenges were difficult, Luminosity was able to find a way to either overcome them or work around them.

Future Ramifications

While a lot of the work has already been done for this project, Luminosity expects to continue working on these two projects after her time at Berklee Valencia. For *Finding Flares*, Luminosity plans on hiring a mastering engineer to master all five tracks on the EP. She then plans on following a three-month promotion and release plan that goes through promoting the EP to record labels, submitting the EP for playlists, and distributing the EP on all platforms. She hopes to release the EP in September of 2021. She has already been adding some of the songs from *Finding Flares* to her DJ sets, but she hopes to continue to include her music in future performances. In addition, Luminosity hopes to continue to build upon Brighten Records. Her future plans for Brighten Records include building an A&R team, building a legal team, and signing her first artist to the label. She hopes in two to three years' time, Brighten Records will be up and running. She also plans to continue making music and building on the skills and knowledge she has developed during her time at Berklee Valencia.

Conclusion

This projects overall was creating spaces for non-male identifying people in the music industry. Through the all-female and non-binary electronic EP, *Finding Flares*, and the all-female and non-binary electronic label, Brighten Records, Luminosity was able to create multiple spaces that allowed non-male people feel empowered and accepted. Gender discrimination is a huge problem in the music industry and while only two percent of producers in the industry today are female, Luminosity aims to change that. No women should ever feel as though they will never be heard or they do not matter simply because of their gender. Through Brighten Records' efforts in exposing the scale of gender discrimination, Luminosity hopes to help all non-male identifying people in the music industry feel heard and accepted. Luminosity has found a voice through her music with *Finding Flares* being a way of healing and support for not only her but for everyone who listens to it. This project is a lifelong project. Luminosity will continue to create music and fight for gender discrimination. She will not stop until non-male identifying people have equality in the music industry.

Appendix A: Budget

Below is an updated version of the budget for this project.

ITEM	PROPOSED	REAL	SUBTOTAL
MATERIALS (disposables)			
Hard Drives	\$300	\$100	
Memory sticks	\$50	\$25	
Memory cards	\$75	\$100	
			\$225
EQUIPMENT			
HARDWARE			
MICS (Rental) 6 days	\$200	\$0	
INTERFACE (purchase) 120 days	\$700	\$0	
COMPUTER (purchase) 120 days	\$2,500	\$0	
CAMERA (rental) 10 days	\$1,200	\$0	
SOFTWARE			
ABLETON (purchase)	\$435	\$0	
Adobe Suite (purchase) x 5 of months	\$20	\$100	
iMovie	\$0	\$0	
Plugins	\$100	\$100	
			\$200
PERSONNEL			

MUSICIANS 3 of players x rate x hrs.	\$1,200	\$0	
ENGINEERS	\$3,000	\$0	
CAMERAMEN	\$1,500	\$0	
DIRECTOR	\$2,000	\$0	
MIXERS	\$2,000	\$0	
EDITORS	\$2,000	\$0	
MASTERING ENGINEER	\$36/min.	\$700	
PRO APPLICATION	\$150	\$150	
FACEBOOK ADVERTISEMENT	\$100	\$100	
			\$950
STUDIO			
BERKLEE monthly x 5 months	\$0	\$0	
HOME monthly x 5 months	\$0	\$0	
			\$0
CATERING			
MEALS cost/person x #persons x meals	\$XX	\$0	
			\$0
OVERHEAD			
RENT (all inclusive) x 28 of weeks	\$206	\$0	
POWER (included in rent)	\$XX	\$0	
WATER (included in rent)	\$XX	\$0	
INTERNET (included in rent)	\$XX	\$0	
PHONE x 5 of months	\$10	\$50	

			\$50
FEES			
YOUR FEE	\$1,000	\$0	
			\$0
TOTALS	\$19,082	\$1,425	\$1,425

Appendix B: Finding Flares Lyrics

“Fix Me”

CHORUS:

I love too easily
But I don't know to be loved
I thought you needed me
But I don't think anyone does
I want to feel something
But it turns out I feel too much
How do I fix me
Fix me
Fix me

VERSE1:

My body is aching
I'm waiting
Till someday
For things to start to turn around
I'm holding my breath
And I'm hoping
I float and
That maybe I will not drown
Surrounded by people but feel all alone
I stay up at night and I wait by the phone
For you
To fix me

CHORUS

VERSE2:

I want you to notice
I'm fucked up and know it
But we all go crazy sometimes

I'm trying my hardest
I'm fucking exhausted
But I feel I'm running out of time

Healing is hard
when there's salt
In your wounds
And I'm scared that
The pain won't be
Worse than the bruise

And The flashbacks
The nightmares
Are hiding the truth

CHORUS

BRIDGE:
I'm sorry I could not
be there for you
but I'm healing myself
Like you told me to

And I know that the pain
that you're going through
Is more than one can handle alone

CHORUS

“Stuck in My Head (feat. Keep it Mellow)”

VERSE 1:
Left the door open
And leave it all unfinished
If you ask me
I'd tell it all in a minute
I don't what this was
But it's far from ended
Thought it was love
And you never even noticed
And you're gone
And I never got to say this

PRE CHORUS:
I can't sleep tonight
With you stuck my head
Baby I can't breathe right
With this weight that's on my chest
I was too afraid
So now I stay awake
And I miss you everyday
Baby I can't sleep (sleep sleep) tonight
Cause you're stuck in my head

VERSE 2:
I took my time

To think of what to say to you
But I feel no peace of mind
I stumble oh at the sight of you
Yeah
You see
I'm tripping over words
That I havn't even spoken
And scared that you would see
cause then maybe you would notice

I'm not myself
And maybe you're the reason

PRE CHORUS:

I can't sleep tonight
With you stuck my head
Baby I can't breathe right
With this weight that's on my chest
I was too afraid
So now I stay awake
And I miss you everyday
Baby I can't sleep (sleep sleep) tonight
Cause you're stuck in my head

“Coded”

Can't figure it out
I'm stranded
Teaching myself
A new language
I'm all in your head
You hate it
You coded your mind
To hide your motive

I'm feeling you up, now
Don't shake it
I promise I'll be
The one you needed

You feel in your bones
The tension
Break down your walls
To let me in it

“Calm in a Hurricane (feat. Angel Rose)”

Verse 1:

Many days and many nights, I
Stay awake and try to find
Where my heart feels most at home
I'm out here on my own
Work until my fingers bleed, cause I'm
Scared of what you will think
If I don't show some perfection
...just my confession

Pre Chorus 1:

But life's becoming
Like something I once saw in a movie
And the pressures building
Up up up up
And I'm stressing out

CHORUS:

So
Tell me how to find
Tell me how to find
Find
Find calm in a hurricane

Show me how to deal
Show me how to feel
Fine
When I'm wet in the rain

Take my hand and guide out
When I lose my peace of mind

So tell me how to find
Tell me how to find
Find
Find calm in a hurricane
Ah ah

Verse 2:

Hunker down and wait it out
So the wind won't blow you down
When your feet wanna take you miles
As your head spins out in spirals

You could Wish it all to go away
As you look down on the mess you made
But just know that life gets messy
Pick yourself up to find your feet now

Pre Chorus 2:
But I'm becoming
like someone I saw caught in a daydream

And the pressures lifting
Up up up and I'm thinking how
To

CHORUS:

So
tell me how to find
Tell me how to find
Find
Find calm in a hurricane

Show me how to deal
Show me how to feel
Fine
When I'm wet in the rain

Take my hand and guide out
When I lose my peace of mind

So tell me how to find
Tell me how to find
Find
Find calm in a hurricane
Ah ah

“Break Out (feat. Keep it Mellow)”

I'm done crying all this time
I am a woman in power and use it
It don't mean that I am fine
I'm mad at the world
for putting me through this
What I gotta do to be seen as a use
To you oh oh oh oh
Cuause you don't know
Oh you don't know

Oh you don't know
No you don't know

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