

Eleven Play is a Japanese dance group that incorporates advanced technologies directly into their practice. This piece incorporates drones into the performance. Surrounded by an all-white stage, sprinkled with black computer monitors facing the audience, the three dancers and their accompanying drones put on a mesmerizing and eerie display. At the beginning, the dancers appear in control, or at least in mutual dialogue with the drones. We see the dancers pushing and pulling the drones, as if conducting them. The drones are what one would want in a good dance partner, they follow the music and they're responsive to your body, they just happen to be flying robots. Yet at the performance's 1:56 minute mark, there is a shift, and the drones become menacing and the dancers visibly fearful. Simultaneously, with the projection appears to become the drones' conductor — a commentary on the problems of control in a largely algorithmic machine. The drones start dancing to their own beat, and the human dancers become superfluous.

*(from a review by Ben Valentine)*