

THE THREE SEASONS

THREE VIDEOTAPES MADE BY CATHERINE ELWES WITH CHANNEL 4 TV

AUTUMN

18 minutes 1991

This tape is the last in the THREE SEASONS series for Channel 4's Eleventh Hour programme. 'Autumn' is a psychological landscape in which the different facets of a woman's personality and experience are played out and resolved - if temporarily. Different elements in the landscape are at times malevolent or benign, symbols of creativity and fecundity or missiles of self-destruction. The real and the imagined are interchangeable, internal and external events fuse. The landscape is a canvas on which images are continually worked and reworked. They become analogous to the strength and resilience of the autumnal woman portrayed by the artist's sister Rosamund Elwes.

WINTER

14 minutes 1988

The anxious mother in WINTER is wracked with real and imagined fears. What her imagination makes of a harmless game is only the truth in a more acceptable form. War games grow out of boy's games like some hideous natural law. Her son stumbles into an image of a future his gender has mapped out for him. There was a time when he was locked into the safety of her womb. But now he is separate, vulnerable and she cannot control the natural and man-made dangers of the world she has brought him into. She watches and watches and watches.....

SPRING

8 minutes 1988

Traditionally, Spring is the season of new life and optimism. The young girl in the tape is poised between the freedoms of childhood and the cultural restrictions of her impending womanhood. The future still seems full of promise and Rebecca celebrates her creative energies with unladylike acrobatic displays. The camera's eye is 'une femme d'un certain age' who matches Rebecca's antics with electronic trickery. The child's exuberance and the tapemaker's artistry combine to confirm the survival of women's creativity in this persistently male world.

The THREE SEASONS weave their narratives without words. The urgent voice of Elwes' early work has evolved into a more poetic visual language that speaks no less eloquently of her perceptions as a woman artist. Nick Houghton has described her style as '..simple but resonant, a refreshing counterpoint to the video overkill of her male contemporaries.'