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3 Women

USA 1977, 125 min.

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DIR Robert Altman **PROD** Robert Altman, Scott Bushnell, Robert Eggenweiler
SCR Robert Altman **CAM** Charles Rosher Jr. **ED** Dennis Hill **MUS** Gerald Busby
CAST Shelley Duvall, Sissy Spacek, Janice Rule

ROBERT ALTMAN: FILM SOCIETY AWARD

FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN DIRECTING

One night in 1976, Robert Altman had a series of dreams "in which I was making a film with Shelley Duvall and Sissy Spacek and it was called *3 Women* and I didn't know who the other woman was. It took place in the desert, and it was about personality theft." Overcoming his initial dismay at realizing this vision was only a dream, Altman set out to bring the apparition to life. The result is a major film where pretty colors, oozing camera movements, small talk and a subtle, creeping osmosis between the two lead actresses begins to build a mood not just of theft or imitation, but interaction and support. Janice Rule would be the third woman, and there are fine supporting performances from the veterans John Cromwell and Ruth Nelson in what remains one of the most tender and mysterious of Altman's pictures. It can be read as feminist or surrealist; as a gentle treatise on acting and the loss of modern personality; or as a strange 20th-century Western in which it is clear at last that it is women who get the pioneering work done. To this day, Duvall and Spacek have never done finer work.

—David Thomson



Robert Altman (b. Kansas City, Missouri, 1925) See filmography on page 27.

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