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'Behold a Man' on KQED 1304 portrait of a sex change

The process of sex change — the intricate surgery and the social, psychological and familial barriers confronting transsexuals — is the subject of "Behold a Man", a documentary broadcast Wednesday at 10 p.m. on KQED Channel 9.

During a year-long project, KQED reporter Pamela Young and filmmaker Lorne Morrison recorded the metamorphosis of Jason, who was born a woman 30 years ago, but always felt that he was a man trapped in a female body.

Applicants for the sex change program at the Stanford University Clinic are put through an intense screening process to eliminate those who believe surgery will be the answer to all their emotional problems. The doctors will only accept those with severe gender dysphoria, a feeling of existing in the wrong anatomical body.

Jason, who had been attracted to masculine pursuits and interests throughout his life, was accepted into the program. Hormone treatments deepened his voice and gave him a beard, but it was after nearly two years of cross-living as a man before he was scheduled for surgery.

A series of intricate operations transformed Jason from a female to a male and, for the first time in his life, he felt whole and complete.

"Behold a Man" was first shown as a three-part documentary on "A Closer Look" the regular KQED evening news program.