

# WIRE

**PAMELA Z**  
**A DELAY IS BETTER**  
STARKLAND CD

Sheer genius from the most gifted and enterprising vocalist/composer/audio artist in the US since the heyday of Joan La Barbara and Meredith Monk. The voice is strong enough on its own to move, but Z has extended her repertoire enormously, using found percussion (like the five gallon water bottle on *Bone Music*), concrète samples, synchronous and asynchronous choral effects and the gesture-controlled BodySynth. The effects are stunning. The oldest things here are *Pop Titles 'You'* from 1986, which uses the Y section of a catalogue she found while working in Tower Records, and *Badagada* from a couple of years later, a useful glimpse of her early experiments with delay effects. The real standouts are *Geekspeak* (1995), which plays with our technical obsessions, and the closing *Obsession, Addiction And The Aristotelian Curve* (1991), a collaboration with harpist Barbara Imhoff made in tribute to Pauline Oliveros, who wrote the liner note, which brings the thing full circle, just like a Pam Z composition. Essential. □

– Brian Morton

**“Sheer  
genius”**

  
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