

## CD Review: Darin Leong - Five Years and Many Miles

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By Ken Volpe - *Guitar Jam Daily*

I'd like to introduce a very talented, not yet well known guitarist from Hawaii, Darin Leong. I received his 13-track CD titled, *Five Years and Many Miles*, awhile back. Right off the bat, it is obvious that the production is top-notch. The guitar tracks sound full with a rich chime on the top end and a full focused low end. The overall textures are not brittle or overly processed like many acoustic guitar type projects. The overall vibe of *Five Years and*

*Many Miles* is laid back, tranquil and melodic. In consuming Darin's music, I can easily tell that Darin is at peace with himself and his music. There are a variety of influences evident from his compositions.

Track 1 "Gratitude," contains lush layers of steel string strumming patterns with a beautiful, memorable melody. I'm talking about a guitar melody that really stays with you. The next cut is "Sunday," which is a tasteful ballad with beautiful harmonics and peaceful overtones. A little further along I came across one of my favorite tunes on the CD titled, "Manoa Morning." In this song he is using an alternate tuning with wonderful Fingerstyle feel a la Phil Keaggy. Kudos to Darin's compositional skills on this one. Next I came across "For the Greater Good," which is an upbeat, feel good type tune that contains a great use of major modal melodic lines. This tune also has a great groove. Towards the end of the CD is a cut called, "Ukulele Etude," which contains some incredible Uke harmonies and pedal tones. As I alluded to earlier, the quality of the production is astounding. On "Ukulele Etude" the listener can easily pick out each of the distinctive parts. The rest of the tunes on Darin's CD feature a variety of tonal colors and moods that will make you smile.



Darin definitely has a gift for melody and execution on multiple stringed instruments. The CD also features Nathan Awaeau on bass, percussion and even piano. All compositions were written and recorded by Darin Leong.

My only criticism of *Five Years and Many Miles* is that it might be a bit too tame for some guitarists. I'd also like to see some more interaction with other instruments and perhaps vocals. However, even though it is an instrumental CD, which may usually appeal to mainly musicians, this CD will have a wide audience appeal.

For more information about Darin Leong go to [www.hawaiiguitar.com](http://www.hawaiiguitar.com) .