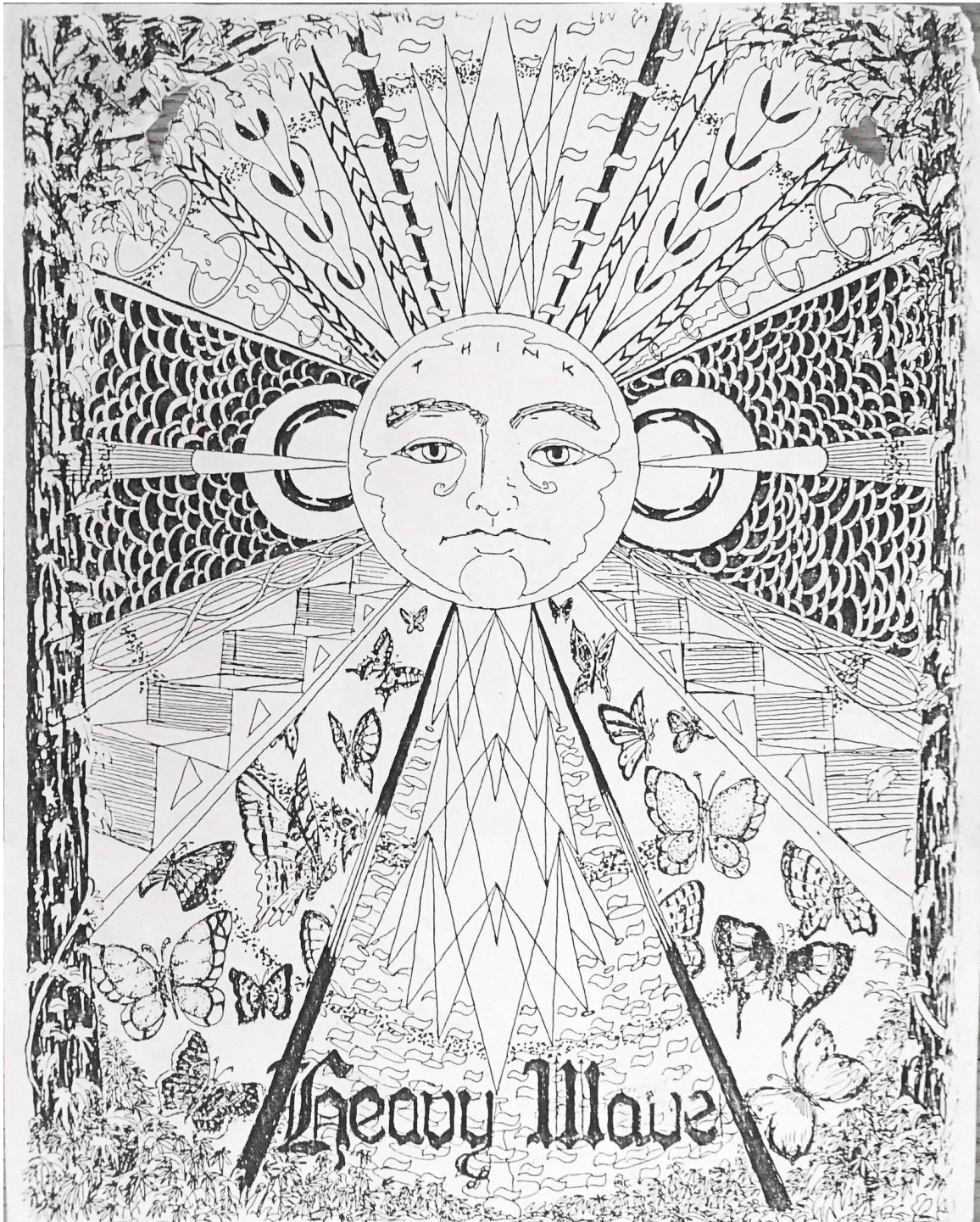


PSYCHEDELIC SUN DRAWINGS
1982 and 2005



1982 —The First Sun

Minneapolis, In the early 80s —before college, in my late teens—I was motivated to be a good draftsman illustrator, getting into spending hours at the drawing table with the thinnest rapidograph pens, busy focusing on hand-rendering detailed ink work. Influenced by brother **Craig**, who did remarkable rapidograph drawings, expertly crafted. I was impressed, wanting to master that too. So I did a few decent drawings, mostly in the form of copycat work for practice at first. **Rick Griffin** and **M.C. Escher** were my favorite graphic artists I'd emulate during high school. (the former was very **San Francisco**, where I fell for in '84.)

I started this detailed rapidograph drawing of a psychedelic sun a day or two into August of 1982. During that summer I was rarely at my family home, while I mainly spent my time on **Nicollet Island** with bandmates, practicing in **Jack's** mansion basement music studio that year. It was an outrageously trippy summer, playing our garage band style of jamming too long, swimming in the **Mississippi River**, tripping on acid — y'know, good wholesome summer fun as a teenager during a recession. Capped by the annual **Grateful Dead** concert, that year in **St Paul** on August 6th!

This is not a concert review, but there is reason why that evening led this psychedelic sun — I was very *psychedelicized!* Returning to work on the final touches of this while on a high quality dose of orange windowpane LSD that bandmate **Jason** gave me at the show. I remember him telling me to only take it if interested, because it's high quality from California, and would otherwise save for himself later. I was interested.

Needless to say, many peaks were experienced at that tremendous concert! When arriving back to my room after all that, there it was unfinished on the drawing table, beckoning for completion. I was tripping yet felt enough focus to sit back at the drawing table and work... headphones on, listening to Grateful Dead albums. The paper had enough structure penciled down that I confidently laid the rapidograph with india ink to it, inventing as I saw fit, along with filling lines

previously drafted. I experienced a visually vibrating drawing, illuminated by pulsating rhythms of lines and forms overlapping, synchopating, ordered yet organic. I knew that this would be the band poster for our upcoming gig, blowing minds!

The page seemed to be perfectly alive, illuminated drafted details sharpened, butterflies float up from below, foliage festooned this mandala/tarot card-like image, with the most important final touch — the sun face. I didn't want to fuck that up, carefully penciling its facial structure before inking. It's round face appears childlike, while this ended up having a slight expression of world weariness. This seemed perfectly weird!

Finished before daylight! I went to sleep for a few hours at dawn, satisfied.

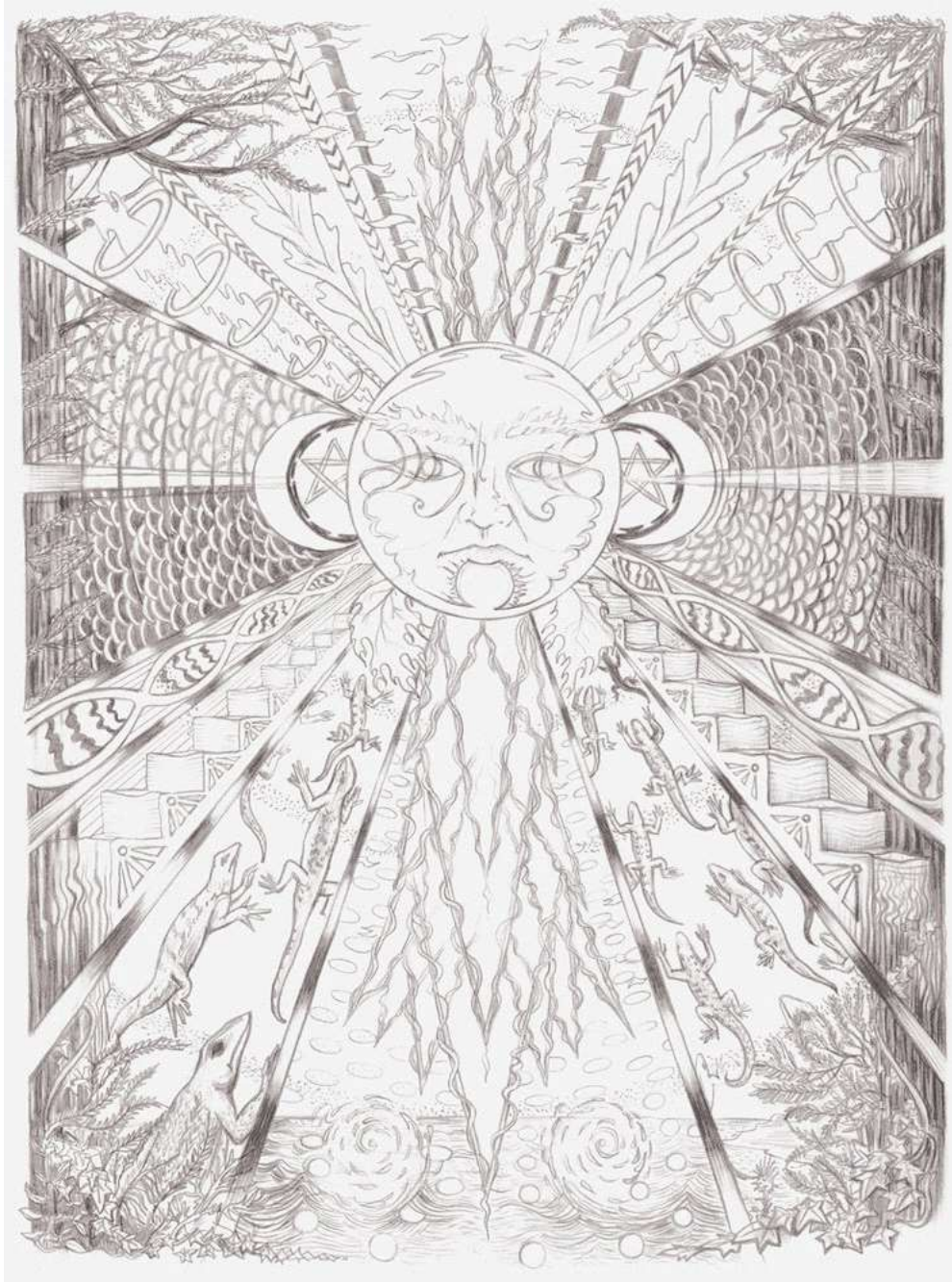
The next day the band had a gig at our friend **Dhaivyd's** house in St Paul. I wrapped the drawing to bring to the island, knowing it will impress. Toting it in backpack, bicycling north to meet everyone on the island to haul band equipment in a van to Dhaivyd's and set up.

I arrived early enough to show off my work. It positively stopped Jack in his tracks. He was so taken by it that it was natural to give to him. This would be more appreciated by others there than in my isolated bedroom.

Declared by the band as our summer poster, I added the band name **Heavy Wave** right then and there in calligraphic style. Jack hung it up, and we went to play the party. I later added text to a photocopy/xerox my dad later made for me at his workplace.

My typography wasn't well developed then, but the info worked enough. For our gig at **The Peoples Center** at the **Cedar-Riverside** neighborhood, it was "*Rock Against The Draft*", a benefit for the cause, with a few speakers (including cohort Steve, who faced government pressure for refusing to register) talking about the issue, then a hopping dance party with us in the auditorium, more like a gym floor. Probably our best gig that year, with a fun dancing crowd!

Photocopies of the poster are all that remains, the original was apparently lost in shuffles long ago when Jack was going through transitions.



2005 —The Second Sun

Fly forward to 2005 in **San Anselmo** in central **Marin County** where I lived in a nice house with a *Sequoia* tree in the front, during a few years when returning to drawing table work, enjoying rendering fine detailed pencil drawings, getting into different grades of graphite, with finer sharpening tools and a clean process. This was after years of macro oil paintings, having made less micro artworks for awhile until then, rediscovering my love for drawing at a drafting table with an elbow lamp. It was fabulous to draw into the late hours, with quality headphones on, doing what I did over 20 years previous, only finer and more strikingly original. I decided that the psychedelic sun deserved an upgraded revisitation. This is my **California** version — more detailed, with many of the same elements only with more filigree applied, adding festooning redwoods, and replacing the butterflies with lizards (that were everywhere on the trails I frequented). It was another labor of love, but this time not tripping on acid. Just naturally psychedelized.

- Dean Gustafson, April 2025



at the drawing table, 2006