



The Hummingbirds Institute

DANCE YOGA MUSIC

Maher Benham
Founder and President
Tel: 212.505.2525
www.hummingbirds institute.org

Inside the heart of every human being there is a hummingbird. Its fluttering wings are the spiritual life force within us, inspiring and empowering us to create.

Founder and President
Maher Benham

Medical Director
David K. Jin, M.D., Ph.D.

Executive Staff
Michael McNabb
Director of Operations

Margaret Berger
Administrative Director/
Development Director

Russell Suggs
Communications Director

Frederick Tuccinardi
Special Needs Director

Saba
Dance Director/
Performance Production Director

Gayatri Matangi
Yoga Director

Daniel Bernard Roumain
Music Director

Madeleine Beckman
Creative Writing/Speaking/Signing
Director

Tadej Brdnik
Mentor Program Director/
Art Institutions Liaison

Victoria De Paul
Director of Health & Wellness

Board of Directors
Maher Benham
Howard Blau, Esq.
Frederick Tuccinardi

Honorary Board of Directors
Stuart Hodes
Terese Capucilli
Chris Landriau
Nadine Hack
Denise Jefferson
Dudley Williams
Sharon Gannon
David Life

Advisory Team
Robert Taylor, Accounting
Philadelphia Insurance Company
Patricia Vardin, Ph.D.
Diane Dragone

Background of Founder

Maher Benham, Founder and President The Hummingbirds Institute *In Her Own Words*

“My background in dance and yoga and working with people with cerebral palsy led me to establish The Hummingbirds Institute. I have been dancing since the age of four. I am a former member of the Martha Graham Dance Company, and I am on the faculty of the Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance and the Ailey School of Dance. I am a certified Jivamukti Yoga teacher.

My nephew, now 24, was born with cerebral palsy, and has lived most of his life in a wheelchair. He has been my primary inspiration. He loves music, and he loves to dance. I have taught him yoga in his wheelchair. He also enjoys dancing in his wheelchair.

I have taught others with special needs. One teenage girl with cerebral palsy, who it was thought would always be wheelchair bound, learned to walk, first with a walker, then a cane, and then on her own. I used the imagery, given to me directly from Martha Graham, of a hummingbird inside our hearts, which lifts us up, both physically and in spirit. I encouraged her to stand up by having her imagine the hummingbird in her heart fluttering its wings, and thereby lifting her out of her wheelchair. In that moment, she stood up. Today she walks beautifully.”

-- Maher Benham