



HERITAGE AS CIVIC RESISTANCE

Posted on June 18, 2025 by Dima Fadel



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Architects Yasmine Dagher and Nadine Harake reflect on the founding and evolution of the Beirut Heritage Initiative (BHI), a collective born in the aftermath of the 2020 port explosion. With clarity and urgency, they recount how architecture, activism, and community care converged to restore not only damaged buildings but also the social and cultural fabric of historic Beirut neighborhoods.

The discussion traces emblematic restoration projects such as The Blue House and the Gholam Cluster, shedding light on the financial challenges of heritage preservation in a privatized urban context. Alongside their work with BHI, they introduce Dagher, Hanna & Partners (DHP), their architecture and heritage practice, which spearheads adaptive reuse projects that reframe traditional architecture for public use. From Beit Trad, a boutique guesthouse in Keserwan, to Beihouse, a newly opened heritage complex in Beirut, DHP's projects demonstrate how historic homes can be revitalized as shared, living environments.

More than a story of emergency response, the conversation unfolds as a call for a different urban future—where local materials, knowledge, and memory guide both architectural restoration and civic resilience.

ISSN : 2575-5374

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