

whitewall

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## The NEW ERA ISSUE

SUPERBLUE - TARA DONOVAN - CHARLES GAINES - MARTINE GOMEZ -  
- MICHAEL ARMITAGE - RAFA ESPARZA - WOHA

## FOCUS



David/Nicolas, Standard Geometries for Del Savio 1910, photo by Matteo Balsarini.

# DAVID/NICOLAS

Rebuilding in Beirut and reassessing their “Why.”

By Katy Donoghue

This past year David Raffoul and Nicolas Moussallem of David/Nicolas had to contend not only with COVID-19, but also with the devastating aftermath of the blast in Beirut last summer. The design duo’s studio experienced serious damage, losing nearly all that was inside, including many important prototypes. The tragedy left them wondering if they should even stay in Beirut, having both a studio there and in Milan. Ultimately, they’ve decided to stay, making the choice to believe in the creative community of their country, city, and especially their beloved neighborhood.

David/Nicolas are known for their sophisticated, bespoke interiors that feature tactile material combinations and mesmerizing pattern. Outside of their rebuilding process, 2020 gave them the chance to assess their vision and focus, allowing them to have conversations like those they had when they first started designing together. Raffoul and Moussallem spoke with *Whitewall* in the new year while they were together in Beirut, about our renewed interest in interiors (after so much time at home) and the beginnings of an exciting new project in Riyadh.

**WHITEWALL:** *How is the process of rebuilding your studio going?*

**DAVID RAFFOUL:** As you know, our street was completely destroyed almost. Our office also, where we lost a lot of prototypes and really important pieces. Now we are rebuilding the studio with the help of an NGO, House of Today. They are helping studios in Lebanon to rebuild their offices. We want to keep the studio in the same space. We love the space and street, a particular street where you have creativity, café, a bookstore across the street, and good restaurants.