

Raymond Wadih AUDI
Born November 6th, 1932, in Saida (Lebanon)
of Lebanese Nationality

Family Situation

Father of three children: Pierre, graduate of Oxford University, with a degree in Medieval History, Artistic Director of the Amsterdam Opera, holder of Teater Prijs decoration from Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands and “La Légion d’Honneur Française” on November 2001; Shérine, graduate in banking studies from Paris, Deputy General Manager at Bank Audi France SA; Paul, Ph.D. in Philosophy from the “Ecole Normale Supérieure” in Paris, Master of Conferences at Paris University, author of several pieces of philosophical works, holder of “Mérite des Arts et des Lettres Françaises”.

Professional Situation

Banker as a profession, Raymond Audi participated with his father Wadih Audi and his brothers Georges and Jean, in the development of the centenarian family enterprise, which became Banque Audi in 1962. He was the engineer of the early development of the bank, establishing, in 1974, the first merchant bank in Lebanon in association with renowned companies such as Nomura Securities Co, Renault (Sofexi), Hambros Bank, Caisse Centrale des Banques Populaires and Mitsui Bank and to undertake international issues in Lebanese Pound for international issuers like the European Investment Bank and Renault.

After having acquired extensive training in large international banks, he became the expert at expanding the activities of the Bank in Lebanon and abroad. Raymond Audi is currently the Chairman, General Manager of Bank Audi SAL – Audi Saradar Group (Lebanon), the mother company of the Group which owns three subsidiaries in Lebanon and seven subsidiaries abroad. Raymond Audi overlooked the overseas expansion of the Bank during the 1970s and recently within the context of the Bank’s regional expansion. He overviewed the expansion of the bank to Paris through Banque Audi France SA (1979) and Geneva through Banque Audi Suisse SA (1975) and more recently to Jordan through Bank Audi’s Jordan Network (2004), Syria through Bank Audi Syria SA (2005), Egypt through Bank Audi SAE (2006), Sudan through National Bank of Sudan (2006) Saudi Arabia through Audi Saudi Arabia (2006) and Qatar through Bank Audi LLC (2007). Raymond Audi is now overlooking the regional expansion of the Bank to other regional captive markets.

The Bank consistently grew over time to rank as the Top bank in Lebanon. The Bank has now total assets of US\$ 17.3 billion and total footings of US\$ 23.5 billion. It is henceforth figuring on the list of the Top 20 Arab banks by the various significant ranking criteria. The Bank has expanded its business lines towards a universal banking profile covering commercial, private, investment and retail banking activities. It played a dynamic role in the Lebanese banking sector consolidation process, acquiring three Lebanese banks, two branch networks of Lebanese banks, a Lebanese insurance company, two Egyptian and Sudanese banks, a regional investment company and its sister banks in Europe.

Raymond Audi was appointed President of the Association of Banks in Lebanon in November 1993. Among his other titles, Raymond Audi is:

- Founding Member of the Executive Committee and Treasurer of the Chronic Care Center since 1993,
- Board Member of N.D. de Jamhour since 1993,
- Board Member of the Lebanese American University since 1994,
- Board Member of the International College since 2000,
- Founding Member of “The 206 A Bone Trust” headed by H.R.H Queen of Jordan since 2000,
- Founding Member of St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital (Children Cancer Center) since 2000,
- Founder of the Audi Foundation dedicated to the promotion and revalorization of craftsmanship profession in Lebanon since 2000.

The Audi Foundation

The Audi Foundation, established by Raymond W. Audi in 2000, is dedicated to the promotion and revalorization of craftsmanship profession in Lebanon and particularly in the City of Sidon, the Capital of South-Lebanon. It aims to revalorize the historical sites of the city and to preserve and enhance the city's social and cultural heritage. The role of the Audi Foundation has been to develop projects along several axes:

- Initiating artistic and cultural activities through studies, conferences and exhibitions related to the preservation of cultural, social and handicraft heritage of the old city.
- Participating in the restoration of streets and mazes, in parallel to the rehabilitation works conducted by other foundations engaged in the process of the revalorization of the City of Sidon.
- Joining public and private efforts to the creation of a regional museum for the City and an archeological site open to the public, in a initiative that helps enhancing the touristic attraction of the city.

Voluntary Activities

With a continuous interest in arts and the encouragement of artists, he transformed his banks into museums. The Headquarters of Banque Audi (Suisse) shelters a prestigious collection of the masterpieces of the 17th century. The new Headquarters of Banque Audi Plaza in Beirut, considered as one of the jewel of the reconstruction façade of the down town area of Beirut, built up by a group of Lebanese and European architects, regroups the most varied and richest collection of Lebanese and French painters. Among the latter, works by Jacques Villon, Edward Vuillard, Gaston Chassaic, Raoul Dufy, François Rouan, Bernard Buffet, Jean-Pierre Pincemin, Martin Barré and Marwan Bashi are exposed, capturing the interest of local and foreign delegations who visit the bank regularly. The entrance hall of the Bank shelters the Tour Dentellière of Jean Dubuffet. The sculptures of Alain Kirili and Bernar Venet decorate the different meeting rooms.

Concerned about the preservation of the environment and the quality of life, he consecrates a significant part of his time for the improvement of the well being of his Lebanese fellow citizens and for the preservation of the historical heritage and the national culture. Treasurer of the Board of "The Friends of the National Museum Association-The Beirut Museum", he worked with perseverance for its restoration. He is also a Founding Member of the Executive Committee and Treasurer of the "National Heritage Foundation" headed by the former First Lady of Lebanon, Mrs. Mouna Elias Haraoui. An active member of "The National Heritage Foundation" presided by Mrs. Bahia Hariri, he renovated the ancient family house in Saida to become the Soap Museum.

Having a strong feeling toward the less advantageous population, he favors the equality of chances by financing some twenty university scholarships a year, taking into consideration the criteria of qualification and merit. He assists at a regular pace the following institutions:

- UNICEF
- Foyer de la Providence, Social Salvadorian Center
- Chronic Care Center, a specialized institution for the treatment of childhood chronic diseases: Thalassaemia and Diabetics
- UNDP Programme
- Saint Jude Children's Research Hospital, specialized in the treatment of cancer in Children.
- Help Lebanon, an association that embellishes the "façades" of Beirut "The Hill of Karm El Zeitoun among others".
- L'Association Libanaise des Chevaliers de Malte.

Honorable Distinctions

Holder of:

- “Ordre de Saint Grégoire de sa Sainteté le Pape” 1971
- “Ordre National du Cèdre Libanais - Grade de Chevalier” 1974
- “Chevalier de l’Ordre Souverain et Militaire de Malte - Grade de Chevalier ” 1980
- “Ordre National du Cèdre Libanais - Grade d’Officier ” 1998
- “Commandeur de l’Ordre du Mérite Civil Espagnol” 2001
- “Ordre National de la Légion d’Honneur de France – Grade de Chevalier” 2003
- “Freedom City of London” 2005
- “Hospitality Annual Award” 2006
- “Euromoney’s Award for Outstanding Contribution to Development of Financial Services in the Middle East” 2006
- “Doctoren Honoris Causa in Humane Letters” Lebanese American University 2007
- Distinguished “Saint Prince Daniel of Moscow” Medal on behalf of His Holiness Patriarch of Moscow & all Russia, Alexey II. 2007