

Award-winning photographer Fredric Robert conducts workshop

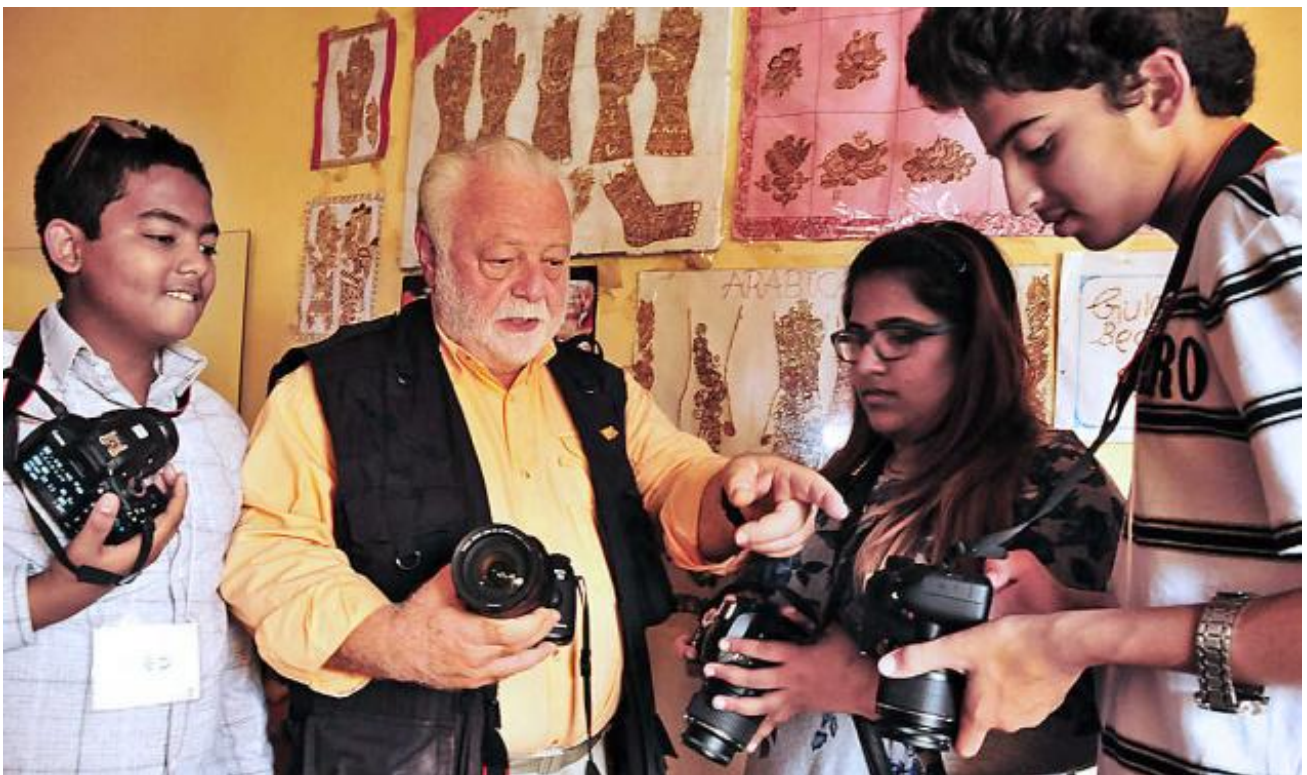
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Fredric Robert with his students.- PHOTO: G. Ramakrishna

Anyone who sees 73-year-old photographer Fredric Robert clicking pictures along with his students would probably think of him as someone who has been behind the lens since black and white photos were still in vogue. But not even as a wild guess could one image that the award-winning photographer was once the chairman of the board of governors of the National Association of Security Dealers (now succeeded by the PINRA), which used to regulate operations in the stock exchange market.

And on Thursday afternoon, Fredric was in the nondescript area of Maula-ka-Chilla in Talab Katta in Old City for a photography workshop organised by the Aga Khan Foundation (AGF) for high-school aged students. "I was at Wall Street for 30 years, and had my own investment banking firm. In the year 2000, I decided to quit, and someone suggested that I take up photography. I had travelled to third world countries, and I saw many people leading happy lives in spite of not earning much," said Fredric, adding that his work concentrates on capturing the lives of people who are content with what they have.

Fredric was at a vocational training institute run by the AGF and Mahitha in the area, where he was

directing students on how to click pictures . “I thought it would be boring. I would never shoot using a manual camera, but I learnt to do that as well as how a camera works,” said Saher Hirani, a student from the Aga Khan Academy who was part of the programme. Apart from clicking photographs , Fredric and his young team also visited households in Old City to capture the everyday lives of people . “When it comes to the Muslim community throughout the world, they have a bad reputation. But I see these kids here and they are wonderful. You don’t know if there is a Gandhiji among them ,” he said .

According to Fredric, the high-school students for the one-week workshop were chosen by the NGO partner.

“Normally, we do half city and half country (rural), but here we conducted it at the Aga Khan Academy and Old City,” he said. “The pictures clicked by the students will be given to the AGF to be used for public-relations, financial use or community development,” Fredric added. On Saturday, once the workshop is complete, a graduation ceremony would be held for the students here.