Gordon Parks, Life Magazine and Flávio: 1961 and Today

In June of 1961, Life Magazine published the photo essay “Poverty: Freedom’s Fearful Foe,” by photojournalist Gordon Parks. The essay focused on the da Silva family, who lived in poverty in a favela in Rio de Janeiro, and particularly on the family’s resourceful, asthmatic 12-year-old son, Flávio. Paul Roth, the Director of the Ryerson Image Centre and co-curator of The Flávio Story, an exhibition to open at the Getty in July, discusses the extraordinary impact of Parks’s essay in the context of Cold War politics, the cultural currency of Life, and the history of photojournalism.