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Autore	Forrest David
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Sommario/riassunto	This book presents a radical reappraisal of one of the most persistent and misunderstood aspects of British cinema: social realism. - - Through means of close textual analysis, David Forrest advances the case that social realism has provided British national culture with a consistent and distinctive art cinema, arguing that a theoretical re-assessment of the mode can enable it to be located within the context of broader traditions of global cinema. - - The book begins with the documentary movement and British wartime cinema, before moving to the British new wave and social problem cycle; the films of Ken Loach; the films of Mike Leigh; realism in the 1980's, specifically the work of Stephen Frears and Alan Clarke; before concluding with a discussion of contemporary realist cinema, specifically the work of Shane Meadows, Andrea Arnold and other recent exponents of the mode. These case studies give a thorough platform to explore the most prominent and diverse examples of realist practice in Britain over the last 80 years. The construction and critical analysis of this social realist canona creates the conditions to reassess and look anew at this most British of cinematic traditions. - -