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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Cover; Title; Copyright; Dedication; Contents; List of figures; List of tables; Preface; 1 Introduction; The institutions of art history; Breaking the theory-empiricism dichotomy; Depoliticizing epistemology; Suspicion of the aesthetic; 2 What is realism?; The need for Critical Realism; Untying the Gordian Knot; Meta-theory, discipline-specific meta-theory, theory, methodology; Ontological realism; Epistemological fallibilism; The stratification of the world; Critical naturalism; Ontology and emancipation; 3 A relational approach to history and truth The ontological project - relational determinationHistorical pluralism; Scales and facets in history; Shapes of history (fiat objects); Do scale and facet really interlock?; Reference and historical truth; 4 Structure and knowledge; Properties of historical periods; Properties of past historiographical practices; Traditional mode - affirmation; Exemplary mode - regularity; Genetic mode - transformation; Speculative philosophy of history; The work of art history as a literary document; 5 Art history and varieties of history, I; Understanding and explanation; Society and culture General and special historySpecial history; Style; The centrality of definition in special history; An example: the history of philosophy; The

problem of periodization; 6 Art history and varieties of history, II; "Directions" of inquiry; Causality and the arrow of time; Sequential history - what happened?; Explanatory history - what caused it?; Interpretive history - what was it like?; Direction of inquiry as emplotment; A case study; The ontology of ideology; A case study; 7 Historical evidence; Fact and interpretation; Facts; Facts as the cause of research; Warrant for belief

A case study: reconstructing Duccio's Maesta⁸ Resolving historical controversies; Levels and facets of explanation; A case study: Caravaggio; Disputing a definition of an object of study; A case study: Caravaggio again; Description, description, description; Progress in art history; Reflexivity in art history; Notes; Bibliography; Index

Sommario/riassunto

"As the theoretical alignments within academia shift, this book introduces a surprising variety of realism to abolish the old positivist-theory dichotomy that has haunted Art History. Demanding frankly the referential detachment of the objects under study, the book proposes a stratified, multi-causal account of art history that addresses postmodern concerns while saving it from its errors of self-refutation. Building from the very basic distinction between intransitive being and transitive knowing, objects can be affirmed as real while our knowledge of them is held to be fallible. Several focused chapters address basic problems while introducing philosophical reflection into art history. These include basic ontological distinctions - society and culture, general and 'special' history, the discontinuity of cultural objects, the importance of definition for special history, scales, facets and fiat objects as forms of historical structure, the nature of evidence and proof, historical truth and controversies. Stressing critical realism as the stratified, multi-causal approach needed for productive research today in the academy, this book creates the subject of the ontology of art history and sets aside a theoretical space for metaphysical reflection, thus clarifying the usually muddy distinction between theory, methodology and historiography in art history"--
