

Call for Proposals:

Insular Practices, Archipelagic Networks

Artistic Research between Singular Autonomy and Social Resonance
11-12 May 2026, Siena, Italy

The 2026 Siena Jazz Symposium is an annual event organized by PhD researchers at Siena Jazz University. This year, the theme aligns with the Accademia Chigiana's focus on the metaphor of *Islands* in music. It invites to view artistic research as an archipelago: a constellation of distinct territories held together by precarious yet fertile dialogue.

Islands is not merely a geographical metaphor, but a way of questioning the relationship between isolation and connection, between identity and relation.

Each artist can be seen as an island: a private ecological system, with its own internal currents, its own rhythms of sedimentation, its own creative climates. A space where ideas, memories, techniques, and imaginations coexist and transform. At the same time, artistic research can also be viewed as an archipelago: a constellation of connections and relationships shared among these many individuals.

This symposium arises from the desire to trace connections between individual and collective practices, between the solitary gesture of the artist and the dynamics of a broader ecosystem.

Some questions arise from this reflection: can an artistic identity remain distinct without becoming self-referential? How can friction and disagreement become fertile ground for creation? In what ways do shared practices foster a sense of belonging without imposing uniformity? Can isolation be understood not as closure, but as a fertile condition from which to begin?

The symposium will be anchored by keynote presentations by Fred Frith, Katt Hernandez, Gianni Bertoni and Silvia Bolognesi, distinguished artists and researchers who embody the archipelagic metaphor. Each keynote represents a unique, highly specialized "island" of practice, yet they are collectively bound by their commitment to the broader ecosystem of international artistic research. They guide our shared navigation through the complexities of contemporary music and improvisation.

Presentation formats

- Academic presentations (20-minutes) followed by Q&A (10 minutes).
- Submission for performance/concert and discussion. Contributors to exhibition and performance events are asked to give a critical presentation about the work (40-min performance followed by 20-min presentation).
- Workshop or short duration laboratorial experiences (60 min max).

The board reserves the right to organize a roundtable with selected applicants.

Please note that only a basic backline will be available (basic amplification and grand piano).

Submission guidelines

- Title + abstract (300 words) detailing the relevance to the conference themes for both presentations and concerts. For a workshop proposal a description of content, workflow and broad timeline (1000 words).
- A short biography (150 words max).
- Technical or spatial requirements for performances and workshops.

English language is encouraged for presentations and workshops. Proposals should be submitted to phd@sienajazz.it .

Important Dates

Proposal submission deadline: April 1, 2026

Notification of acceptance: ongoing (latest April 7, 2026)

Hospitality/Conditions

Activities will begin at 10 am on May 11th and will end with an evening concert (7 pm) by Fred Frith on May 12th. Applicants are expected to participate in all symposium activities, and a certificate of participation will be provided.

There is no participation fee for presenters and audience.