Isben Önen was born in Ankara, where he studied architecture at the Gazi University and Middle East Technical University. His first failing attempt to flee Vienna for good after an Inter-rail terminus in 1999 was followed by a second attempt after receiving the Avenir Foundation Grant by the Arnold Schönberg Center in 2005. It was through the consequences of this grant that the author is still settled in Vienna and working as an architect and jazz journalist. He holds a PhD from the University of Applied Arts, Vienna.