The first mosaic mural in *Elements*, entitled “Earth,” was completed on August 17th, 2012. The 84 square foot tile mosaic is located on one of three L-shaped walls in the cafeteria of the new Harriet Beecher Stowe Elementary School. “Earth” depicts an arching apple tree representative of one of three elements that will be installed in the cafeteria. Future planned mosaics will be created on the remaining two walls that will depict a wave and a volcano symbolizing the elements of water and fire, respectively.

“Earth” was constructed out of hand-cut, multi-colored ceramic glazed tiles, each individually hand laid. In line with conventional mosaic construction, this project used mortar adhesive applied to each tile in order to adhere the tiles in place. For a finished look, natural red grout was mixed to fill the joints and enhance the color palette of the overall mosaic. “Earth” also includes an additional structure, made of plywood and sheetrock, that extends 2 feet below the bottom edge of the existing overhang into the cafeteria space.

The focus of this project was to complete a public artwork that would enhance both Stowe Elementary School and the Brunswick community at large. The mural was designed to brighten up the cafeteria with vivid colors and dynamic patterns to provide an inviting and stimulating experience for Stowe’s faculty, staff, and students to enjoy. My intention for this mural is to inspire the students at Stowe Elementary School, fostering not only a love for the beauty and power of nature but instilling in them an awareness of their responsibility as stewards of the environment. Throughout the process I have gained a new appreciation and acquired a new skill set for working in the medium of mosaics.

This project would not have been possible without generous donations from the surrounding community. Contributors include Maine Building Materials Exchange in Lisbon, Maine, Old Port Specialty Tile in Portland, Maine, artist Joe Kievitt, Habitat for Humanity and several members of the Bowdoin and Brunswick community. Special thanks goes to my team that assisted me in completing this project: Mark Wethli, Rachel McDonald ’12, Joe Kievitt, and Kyle Downs.

**Faculty Mentor: Mark Wethli**

**Funded by the Edward E. Langbein Fellowship**