

Hope Nursing Love
c.1769
Sir Joshua Reynolds
Oil on canvas

This is one of three versions of a painting exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1769. The sitter was known to be an aspiring young actress, Miss Morris, who died shortly after the painting went on show.

Reynolds' inspiration for Hope's pose may derive from Renaissance depictions of Leda and the Swan, although there is surely a deliberate echo here, too, of the iconography associated with the Madonna and Child.

The picture was engraved in 1771 by Edward Fisher. Its implicit sentimentality proved very appealing after Reynolds's death and in 1808 it was copied in enamel by Henry Bone for the future George IV.

This version entered the Port Eliot collection in the nineteenth century.

