

**COSWAY, Mrs Richard, née Maria
Cecilia Louisa Catherine Hadfield**

Florence 17.VII.1760 – Lodi 5.I.1838

Maria Cosway was the talented child of English parents, Charles Hadfield and his wife, Isabella Pocock, who had married in Siena in 1753 (not 1759 as found in many sources; they were married by the Rev. Thomas Lipyeatt, tutor to Lord Bruce, and a member of Lord Charlemont's circle); they kept an inn in Florence that hosted many British travellers, among them Gibbon, Boswell and Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn. The Earl of Corke's family provided several godparents to their children. Maria was inspired by Angelica Kauffman (*q.v.*) to take up painting rather than music. She was taught from the age of 8 by Violante Serres Cerroti (*q.v.*) and later by both Zoffany and Joseph Wright of Derby who were in Florence at the time. She also knew Ozias Humphry and Prince Hoare. Her father died in 1776. Maria was admitted to the Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze on 27.IX.1778, but the following year her mother decided to return to London.

There Maria moved in fashionable artistic circles, including Reynolds, Bartolozzi and Kauffman, and in 1781 she married the miniaturist Richard Cosway. She exhibited history paintings at the Royal Academy 1781–89 (and occasionally later, up to 1801). She travelled in Italy 1790–94, and after 1801 she spent much time in France, and even founded (with the support of cardinal Fesch) a religious teaching establishment, which subsequently moved to Lodi, where she travelled after her husband's death. The Austrian emperor ennobled her in 1834 for her services to education.

She was a prolific artist in oil, but the many miniatures and some pastels attributed to her must be treated with caution (although her earliest training makes it plausible that she had some acquaintance with the medium of pastel).

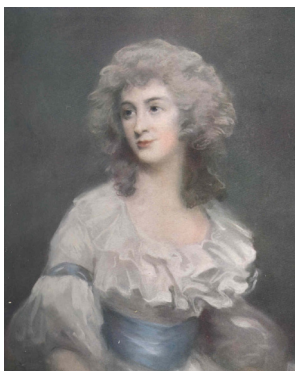
Bibliography

Bénézit; Diane Boucher, *Out of the shadows: rediscovering Maria Cosway*, London, 2025; Goodden 2005; Grove; Lemoine-Bouchard 2008; Oxford DNB; Saur; Sée 1911; Waterhouse 1981; Williamson 1905; Wright 2006

Pastels

J.2422.101 Lady Cooper [Countess COWPER, née Hannah Anne Gore (1758–1826)], pstl (Lodi 1845). Lit.: Williamson 1905, p. 62, citing letter by Francesca Colnaghi, .v.1845, reporting pastel “probably by the baroness” [cf. Hamilton]

J.2422.102 Angelina FAWCETT, pstl, 72x60 (comm. Lord Sandys. A.G.F. 1911). Exh.: Paris 1911, no. 13. Lit.: Sée 1911, repr. p. 131 Φαδ



J.2422.104 ~cop., pstl/ppr, 66x51 (Elgin, Illinois, Bunte Auctions, 27.XI.2011, Lot 1557 repr., anon., unknown sitter, est. \$1000–1500) φκν

