

En Avant Toute(s): Violence Against Women



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Shakespeare's World and Present Challenges

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"En avant toute(s)" offers several tools on their website to help the user find out whether their relationship is abusive or not with several online tests such as "Tester mon couple !", "Et le sexe dans tout ça?" or "Les hommes viennent-ils de Mars et les femmes de Vénus?" in addition to articles and, most of all, an online chat with which the users can directly talk to a person from the organisation about their doubts or fears concerning their relationship.

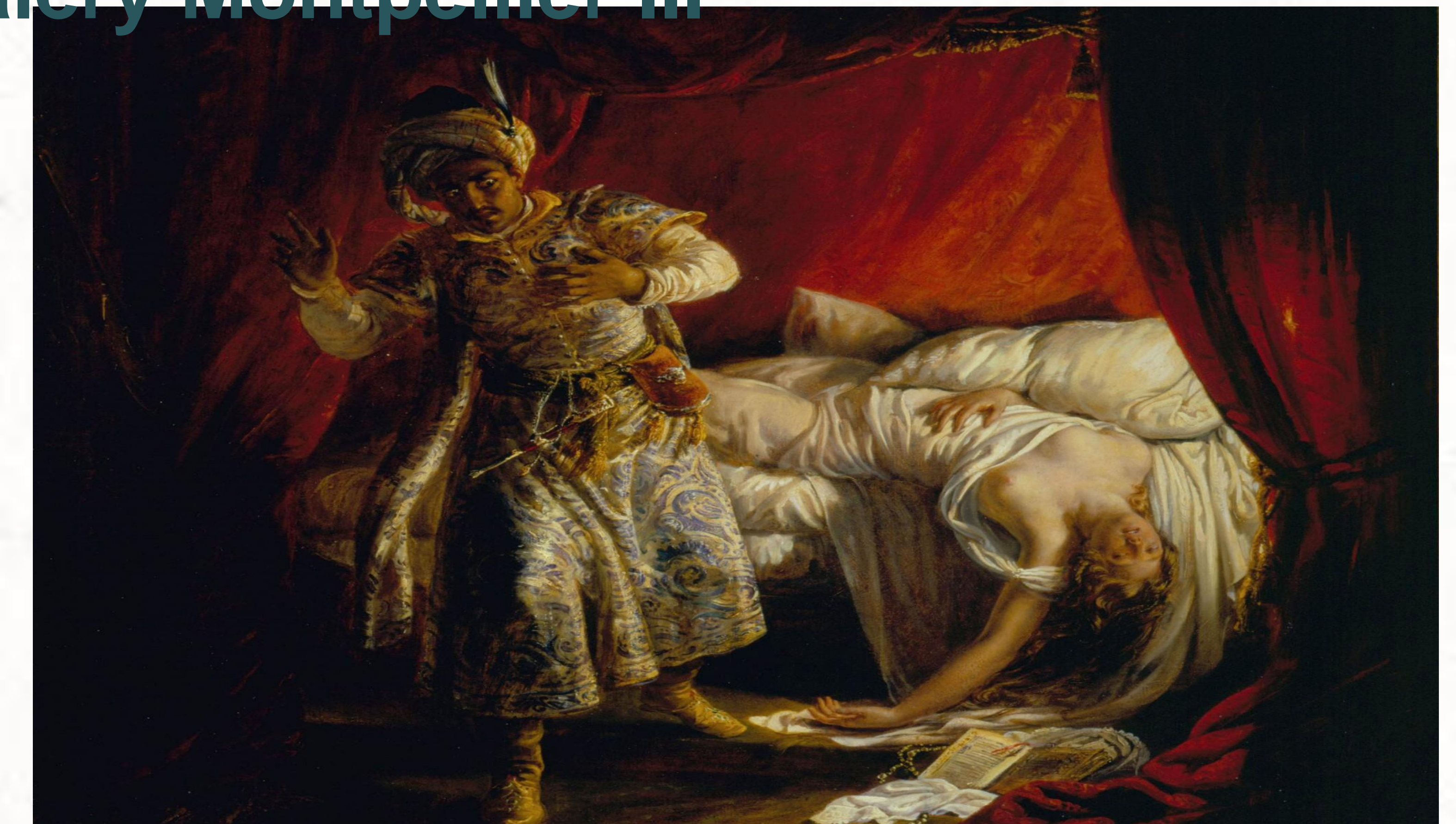
The organisation also has Instagram, Facebook and Twitter accounts in which they post weekly with the aim of shedding light on female representation in arts and media.



"En avant toute(s)" is an organisation that questions female-male relationships, inequality and abuse within the couple and the family. It is run by the young and for the young. It aims for a more equal world and is aware that we are all actors of change! Their website is for young people who question gender relations within relationships and within society, with no distinction of social class, culture, religion or sexual or emotional orientation.

*Damn her, lewd minx: O damn her, damn her!
Come, go with me apart; I will withdraw
To furnish me with some swift means of death
For the fair devil.
(Othello, 3.3, 478-81)*

What better example to illustrate conjugal abuse than Desdemona and Emilia in Shakespeare's *Othello*? Indeed, Desdemona tragically ends up strangled by her husband driven mad by jealousy, wrongly convinced that she has cheated on him. Righteous Emilia is also stabbed by her husband Iago for telling the truth and testifying against him. Violence in *Othello* is both physical – amounting to murder – and verbal whereby both women are called by different names such as: "wench", "whore" and "impudent strumpet" (*Othello*, 3.3, 18/ 4.2, 74; 82).



The story of Othello illustrates how women were utterly defenceless against male oppression or matrimonial violence. Neither Desdemona nor Emilia was given the chance to defend themselves or escape their male oppressors.

Othello

*Sweet soul, take heed,
Take heed of perjury; thou art on thy deathbed.*

[...]

*Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin;
For to deny each article with oath
Cannot remove nor choke the strong conception
That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.
(Othello, 5.2, 50-6)*

The example of these two fictional females echoes women's issues in the past but also today. Women are still being abused and killed by their partners. "En avant toute(s)" fights for abused women but also against oppressive acts against women such as sexism and misogyny as depicted in everyday culture.

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