

Romanticism flows, touches audience

By Lawrence B. Johnson

The avant-garde of music has become the rear guard. Experimentation, futurism, composers writing for other composers — it's all behind us, a quaint incident from our century's artistic adolescence.

Call it the new romanticism, the new humanism or what you like, music that appeals directly to human experience and sympathies poured from every measure of a contemporary concert presented Wednesday night at the University of Wisconsin — Milwaukee.

From Sigmund Snopek III's evocative "SongSing to Doldrum King" Part I for solo flute (1974) to Jim Boubonis' well-crafted and songful Sonata for Violin and Piano (1981), this Music From Almost Yesterday affair left no doubt of the current trend in composition.

Even Snopek's "SongSing," the

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program's most venturesome work, casts its breathy eruptions and other technical tricks as a kind of foil to a dominant and richly poetic lyricism. Flutist Llena de la Madrugada gave the piece an elegantly poised and sensitive reading.

Boubonis' more conservative sonata received an assured performance from violinist Paul Primus and pianist Jayne Latua, as did Bruce Wise's darkly dramatic Sonata for Violoncello and Piano in the hands of Katherine Knight and pianist Alice Goldberg.

Lee Dougherty, doubling as soprano and pianist, touched the wistful, sensual, bluesy soul of Yehuda Yannay's "Eros Reminiscid," four settings of Greek poems in English translation.