



From top left: The Seven Sisters; Amy and Zack's contemporary piece; chess-inspired hip-hop.

LORDS OF DANCE

SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE Season finale, 8/7c, Fox

A GREAT SEASON...or the greatest? It's finale night on *So You Think You Can Dance*, so we asked judges Nigel Lythgoe and Mary Murphy to reflect on this summer's most memorable moments. But first we had to get Murphy to stop crying. —Michael Logan

Which duet really knocked your socks off? "I was a blubbing wreck during the contemporary routine Sonya Tayeh choreographed for Zack and Amy—a tribute to Sonya's dead friend," says Murphy. "I couldn't do anything for the next 24 hours, not even take phone calls. I'm still a mess!"

Best group dance? Lythgoe sparked to

the funky hip-hop chess game choreographed by Pharside and Phoenix. "Magnificent!" he says. "This has been a strong year for dancers—maybe our best ever—and that has pushed our choreographers to go beyond what anyone could imagine." Murphy picks Mandy Moore's staging of the Seven Sisters number: "Those girls weaving and swaying as one, collapsing into each other, supporting each other... wow! Achingly beautiful."

Most egregious Emmy snub? "Sonya not being nominated this year," says Lythgoe. "When *The Daily Show* is up for a writing Emmy, all their writers are nominated. But if [SYTYCD] is nominated for choreography, it's for an individual

choreographer. That's not right! Choreography is writing."

Who was the perfect guest judge? Lythgoe picks *Modern Family*'s Jesse Tyler Ferguson and film director Adam Shankman. "I don't care if a celebrity judge knows the intricacies of dance, like where you should point your toe," Lythgoe says. "Jesse and Adam give a damn about performance and entertainment. That's what our viewers care about."

Nicest surprise? "After all these seasons, it still stuns me that our dancers have seven hours to learn a routine before it goes on live TV," Murphy says. "I spent many years as a professional dancer, and that would have given me a heart attack!"

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