

Throwback: Ray Charles-Hit The Road Jack

Ray Charles recorded the Percy Mayfield-penned “Hit The Road Jack” in 1961. Mayfield had recorded his acapella version one year earlier but Charles made it a number one hit. Charles’ backing vocalists The Raelettes and their star member Margie Hendrix were featured prominently on the song. “Hit The Road Jack” earned Charles another Grammy and is recognized as one of his signature songs and an R&B classic. The all-girl pop group The Chantels who were an all-girl pop and doo-wop group from The Bronx recorded a response record called “Well, I Told You.” Originally released as a single, it wound up on Charles’ 1962 *Greatest Hits* album. Ray Charles’ work as a soul pioneer has had an unlimited influence on pop music and “Hit The Road Jack” has been sampled prolifically and covered by more than 50 artists. In 2022, Charles was posthumously inducted into the Country Music Hall Of Fame becoming the third African-American to receive the honor.

