CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus comprising:

a body that is configured for complementary engagement with a pipetting head of a liquid handling system such that movement of the pipetting head effects a corresponding movement of the apparatus;

a base that is coupled to the body, the base comprising at least one engagement feature that is configured to mechanically engage a surface of a labware item to releasably couple the lab ware item to the apparatus.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the body and the base are integrally formed as a monolithic structure.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the base is secured to the body by at least one fastener.

4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the at least one engagement feature comprises a plurality of engagement features.

5. The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the plurality of engagement features are spaced along a transverse axis that is perpendicular to a vertical axis.

6. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the plurality of engagement features comprise first and second plungers that are respectively biased to extend outwardly relative to first and second engagement axes that are perpendicular to the transverse axis.

7. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the plurality of engagement features comprise first and second posts.

8. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the plurality of engagement features comprise first and second latch elements.

9. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the base comprises first and second legs that receive respective portions of the first and second plungers.

10. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the base further comprises at least one projection.

11. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the body defines a plurality of openings that are configured to receive a portion of a corresponding pipette structure of the pipetting head.

12. A system comprising:

the apparatus of claim 1; and

a labware item having at least one engagement feature that is complementary to and configured to releasably mechanically engage a corresponding engagement feature of the at least one engagement feature of the apparatus.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein the at least one engagement feature of the labware item comprises a plurality of engagement features spaced relative to a transverse axis that is perpendicular to a vertical axis.

14. The system of claim 12, wherein the at least one engagement feature of the labware item comprises at least one recess defined in a surface of the labware item.

15. The system of claim 12, wherein the at least one engagement feature of the apparatus comprises at least one latch element, and wherein the at least one engagement feature of the labware item comprises a surface that is configured to contact a corresponding latch element of the at least one latch element.

16. The system of claim 12, wherein the labware item has at least one release feature that is configured to releasably engage a corresponding engagement feature of the at least one engagement feature of the apparatus in response to translation of the apparatus relative to the labware item.

17. The system of claim 16, wherein the at least one release feature of the labware item comprises at least one groove defined within a surface of the labware item, wherein each groove of the at least one groove is spaced from a respective engagement feature of the at least one engagement feature of the labware item.

18. The system of claim 12, wherein the labware item has opposing first and second outer surfaces, wherein the at least one engagement feature of the labware item comprises at least one first engagement feature positioned along the first outer surface and at least one second engagement feature positioned along the second outer surface.

19. A method comprising:

using a pipetting head of a liquid handling system to engage an apparatus of claim 1;

using the pipetting head to position the apparatus relative to a labware item having at least one engagement feature that is complementary to a corresponding engagement feature of the at least one engagement feature of the apparatus, wherein the apparatus is positioned relative to the labware item such that at least one engagement feature of the apparatus

releasably engages a corresponding engagement feature of the at least one engagement feature of the labware item; and

with the apparatus releasably engaging the labware item, using the pipetting head to selectively move the apparatus and the labware item.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the pipetting head translates relative to a translation axis to engage the apparatus, and wherein the at least one engagement feature of the labware item comprises a plurality of engagement features spaced relative to a transverse axis that is perpendicular to the translation axis.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein the at least one engagement feature of the labware item comprises at least one recess defined in a surface of the labware item.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the at least one engagement feature of the apparatus comprises at least one plunger, each plunger having a head, the head of each plunger having a shape that is complementary to a shape of a corresponding recess of the at least one recess of the labware item.

23. The method of claim 21, wherein the at least one engagement feature of the apparatus comprises at least one post, and wherein each recess of the at least one recess comprises a slot that receives a portion of a corresponding post.

24. The system of claim 19, wherein the at least one engagement feature of the apparatus comprises at least one latch element, and wherein the at least one engagement feature of the labware item comprises a surface that contacts a corresponding latch element of the at least one latch element.

25. The method of claim 19, further comprising:

using the pipetting head to position the labware item within a receptacle that restricts movement of the labware item; and

using the pipetting head to translate the apparatus relative to the labware item, wherein the labware item has at least one release feature that releasably engages a corresponding engagement feature of the at least one engagement feature of the apparatus in response to translation of the apparatus relative to the labware item.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein the at least one release feature of the labware item comprises at least one groove defined within a surface of the labware item, wherein each

groove of the at least one groove is spaced from a respective engagement feature of the at least one engagement feature of the labware item.

27. The method of claim 19, wherein the labware item has opposing first and second outer surfaces, wherein the at least one engagement feature of the labware item comprises at least one first engagement feature positioned along the first outer surface and at least one second engagement feature positioned along the second outer surface.

28. The method of claim 19, wherein the labware item is an in-channel filter device.