CLAIMS

1. A massage chair apparatus, comprising:

a seat portion for user seating;

a backrest portion mounted at a rear of the seat portion; and

a footrest portion mounted at a front of the seat portion,

the footrest portion being built as a leg massager for massaging the leg of a user,

wherein the leg massager comprises:

a lower massaging system for massaging a massage target area of the leg of the user, which includes at least the foot of the user;

an upper massaging system for massaging an upper massage target area located above the massage target area which is massaged by the lower massaging system;

a drive mechanism for driving the upper massaging system and the lower massaging system; and

a rockably supporting section for supporting the upper massaging system for rocking motion about a horizontal-pointing axis,

wherein the upper massaging system includes a first massaging member, and the lower massaging system includes a second massaging member,

wherein the rockably supporting section, located above the second massaging member, supports a base-end side of the first massaging member for rocking motion to permit rising movement of a front-end side of the first massaging member via a horizontally-oriented rock shaft,

wherein, at a position with the first massaging member leaning forward in adjoining relation to the second massaging

member, the first massaging member faces forward, and, at a position with the first massaging member raised away from the second massaging member, the first massaging member faces upward,

and wherein the upper massaging system comprises:

a horizontally-oriented first rotation shaft which rotates under a rotational driving force from the drive mechanism;

right-hand and left-hand first massaging members used in a pair, each disposed at an intermediate part of the first rotation shaft, that hold the upper massage target area lying in between while moving close to and away from each other under a rotational driving force from the first rotation shaft; and

a first conversion section for converting the rotational driving force from the first rotation shaft into mutually approaching and separating movement of the paired right-hand and left-hand first massaging members.

2. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the rock shaft and the first rotation shaft are constructed in one-piece of a single shaft body.

3. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the leg massager is mounted so as to be electrically driven for rotational movement in a front-rear direction.

4. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the leg massager comprises: the lower massaging system for massaging a massage target area of the leg of the user, which includes at least the foot of the user; and the upper massaging system for massaging an upper massage target area located above the massage target area which is massaged

by the lower massaging system, and wherein an upper part of the lower massaging system is provided with a safety switch for preventing a catching accident.

5. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 3, wherein a sensor is provided to recognize a rotational position of the upper massaging system in an electrically driven state, the upper massaging system being supported for rocking motion about a horizontal-pointing axis.

6. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 3, wherein a sensor is provided to recognize a rocking position of the leg massager in the front-rear direction, the leg massager being mounted for rotational movement in the front-rear direction.

7. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the leg massager is electrically driven by a vertical movement mechanism for moving action in a vertical direction.

8. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 7, wherein a sensor is provided to recognize extended and contracted positions of the leg massager in extending and contracting movement.

9. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 6, wherein a limit value of a rotation angle at which the upper massaging system is risingly rotated is determined in accordance with a vertical position of the leg massager and/or extended and contracted positions of the leg massager in a direction of extending and contracting movement.

10. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 3,

wherein the upper massaging system rotationally moves around a horizontal-pointing axis, and the axis coincides with an axis of the first rotation shaft.

11. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the upper massaging system and the lower massaging system are driven by one common drive motor.

12. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 10, wherein a massage span set for the upper massaging system is adjustable according to a width of the leg of the user, and wherein the upper massaging system is rotationally moved following completion of adjustment of the massage span.

13. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 3, wherein, upon its 90- to 180-degree turn about a turning shaft, the leg massager becomes ready to serve as an ottoman for resting the leg of the user.

14. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 13, wherein a sensor is provided to recognize a position of the leg massager in a state of serving as an ottoman, and, with the leg massager set in this position to serve as an ottoman, the upper massaging system is at a standstill.

15. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, after the paired second massaging members or air bags disposed in the lower massaging system are set close to each other to restrain the foot of the user, the paired first massaging members or air bags disposed in the upper massaging system are set close to each other to hold the leg of the user, and then rotationally moved upward.

16. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the paired first massaging members or air bags disposed in the upper massaging system, after being set close to each other to hold the leg of the user, are rotationally moved downward for forward-leaning action, during which period a main body of the leg massager is moved downward, or the leg massager is electrically driven so as to move to its extended position.

17. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 16, wherein, after achieving one of a condition where the paired first massaging members or air bags disposed in the upper massaging system are set close to each other to hold the leg of the user and a condition where the paired second massaging members or air bags disposed in the lower massaging system are set close to each other to restrain the foot of the user, the first massaging members or air bags are rotationally moved downward for forward-leaning action, during which period the leg massager main body is moved downward, or the leg massager is electrically driven so as to move to its extended position.

18. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 16, wherein, after the paired first massaging members or air bags disposed in the upper massaging system are set close to each other in a position facing the thigh of the user, an air bag mounted inside the seat portion is alternately inflated and deflated repeatedly, or a seat’s built-in massaging mechanism mounted inside the seat portion is driven for at least one of kneading operation in a horizontal direction, tapping operation, back-and-forth movement in the vertical direction, and travel in the front-rear direction.

19. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 3, wherein a no-kneading zone is provided to stop kneading operation of the paired first massaging members or air bags disposed in the upper massaging system in a position facing the knee of the user.

20. The massage chair apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the upper massaging system is installed with a heater for warming the leg of the user.