Microwave Oven, 2012 is one of three works by Los Angeles-based artist Kaz Oshiro included in the Haggerty’s current exhibition Between Critique and Absorption: Contemporary Art and Consumer Culture, on view through May 18. Oshiro makes three dimensional “paintings” that address notions of value. Fabricated completely from stretchers, acrylic paint, canvas, and Bondo (a brand of putty used in auto-body repair and carpentry), these shells (the backs are empty and unfinished) convincingly mimic the mundane objects they represent. Microwave Oven is stained with the splashes and drippings of re-heated food and drink, a telling detail that suggests this common household item has suffered from mistreatment. Inherent in this work is a tension between artistic labor— it is possible that the time spent to painstakingly craft the imitation microwave exceeds the factory labor required to produce the real thing — and the disposable nature of consumer products.
Microwave Oven, 2012, by Kaz Oshiro, Acrylic on stretched canvas, Courtesy of the artist and Artist Pension Trust Los Angeles