Highly charismatic sculptures of Shôtoku Taishi (d.622), the putative founder of Buddhism in Japan, were produced in significant numbers in medieval Japan. These sculptures depicting the prince at the age of two were frequently constructed as icon-reliquaries containing caches of highly personal dedicatory objects. Working both literally and figuratively from the inside out, this paper builds upon the latest research findings into the spiritual activation of Buddhist sculptures through case study of the “Sedgwick Shôtoku” at the Harvard Art Museums, and proposes a revised model for analysis and conceptualization of immanent spiritual energy that far exceeded the bounds of physical size.

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